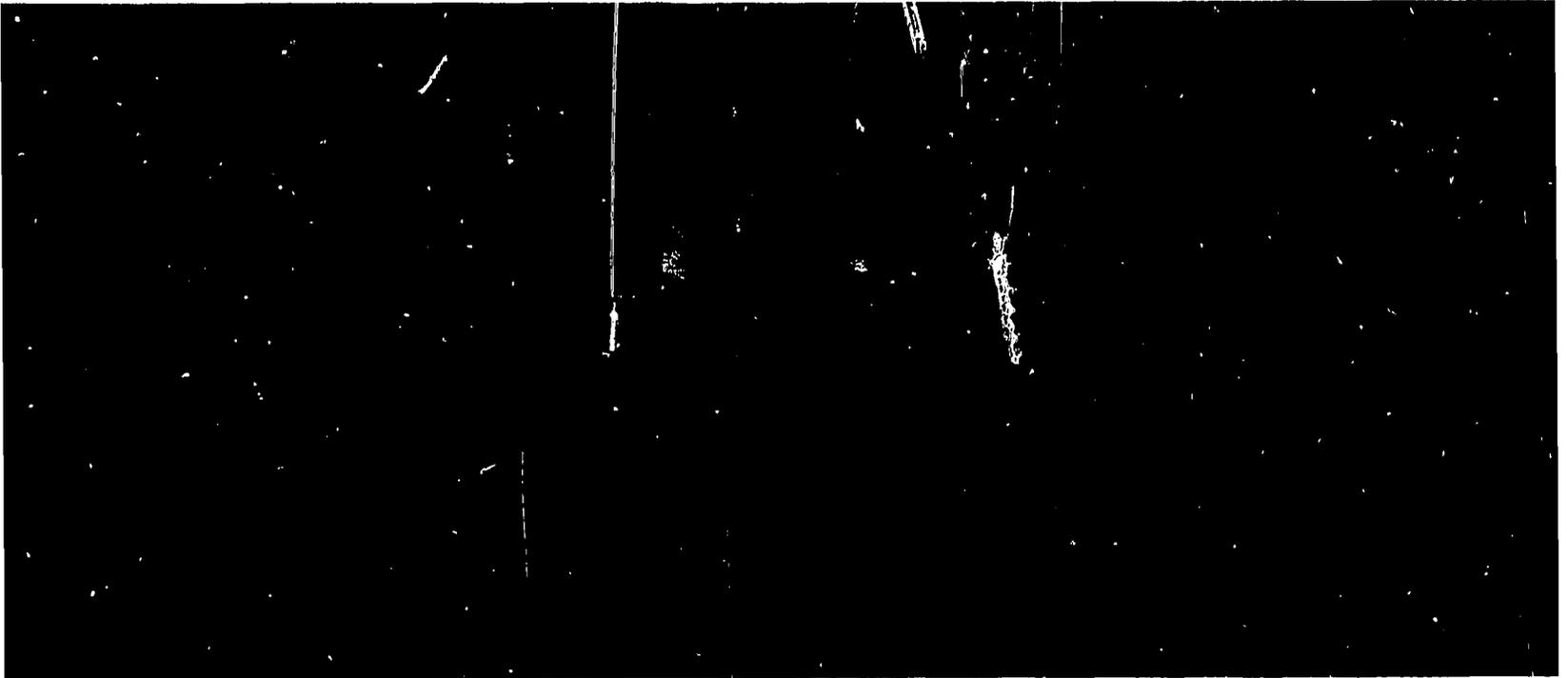


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**POLICY AND PRACTICE OF
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE
U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**



Prepared for the *Social Sector Policy Analysis Project*

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**Policy and Practice of
Community Participation in the
U.S. Agency for
International Development**

By

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IMPETUS FOR THIS REVIEW

One impetus for this exploration of community participation in USAID was the initiative the OECD Development Assistance Committee took on the issue during 1990 and 1991. (See Appendix A). There continues to be interest on the topic among some of the UN agencies. Presumably stimulated by the OECD/DAC interest and perhaps by pleas from developing country NGOs, aid agencies of the British, the CanadianS, the Dutch, the Swedes, the Germans, the Danes, and the Norweigans have recently been giving more attention to participation.

The World Bank has identified 20 Bank-financed projects in which, in the words of its Senior Vice President for Operations, "exceptional efforts are being made to involve poor people in decision-making." A 'learning group' has been convened consisting of project staff working on the 20 projects plus social scientists and others from throughout the Bank. The three-year exercise will gather evidence and weigh the case for steps the Bank might take to promote popular participation in appropriate types of operations more widely (See Appendix B). In February, 1992, the Bank brought representatives from 16 countries together in Washington for a two-day Participatory Development Workshop. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) funded the workshop.

Finally, although there is a considerable body of literature generated by NGOs and PVOs in the North, two significant documents have recently emerged from NGOs in the South. They may well provide the chief impetus for AID or any other foreign assistance agency to introduce or revive participatory development approaches. They are:

- 1) "The Manila Declaration on People's Participation and Sustainable Development. The June 1989 meeting that produced the document was co-sponsored by the Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC) and by the Environment Liaison Centre International (ELCI) with support from Canadian CIDA (see Appendix C).
- 2) "The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation" was a product of a conference in Arusha, Tanzania in February 1990 convened by the Economic Commission for Africa and supported by a number of UN agencies. It was the largest meeting of African NGOs ever held. Commonly referred to as the Arusha Charter, the document says "popular participation is the empowerment of the people to effectively involve themselves in creating the structures and in designing policies and programs that serve the interests of all as well as to effectively contribute to the development process and to share equitably in its benefits." (See Appendix D).

The OECD DAC paper notes that participation in grassroots organizations "can give people experience in democracy and empowerment which, in turn, could be a foundation for democratic life in their society as a whole." This point of view is currently echoed in one part of AID. Community participation is implicit in the Africa Bureau's approach to the development and implementation of a regional strategy under the agency's Democracy and Governance Policy. The Bureau is at this writing seeking to make more explicit the implicit links between community participation and the process of democratization and improved governance in Africa.

This paper treats the theoretical and practical origins of participatory development, deals with the definitional questions, and then traces the policy history of participation in AID over the last two and a half decades. It touches on 1980 as a high water mark for participation in AID, especially in the rural development sector. It briefly describes participatory elements in some current irrigation projects and the efforts by one part of AID to encourage private voluntary organizations (PVOs) that carry out child survival projects to adopt a participatory approach to their work. It highlights water and sanitation as the one place in AID where, for more than a decade, participation has remained a central operating principle. A final section offers some conclusions and recommendations.

T W O

O R I G I N S

ORIGINS OF PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE AND THEORY

Community Development and *Animation Rurale*¹

Development practitioners' first experiences of development participation were in the context of early efforts in community development -- particularly in Asia -- and in *animation rurale* in North and West Africa.

Community development had its origins in U.S. and British domestic programs of the 1930's and 1940's, in experiments by the British Colonial Service, and in activities of U.S. and European voluntary agencies. The term "community development" was introduced in the U. S. to denote community participation in municipal planning. The rural development efforts of the Rural Resettlement Administration under Rexford Tugwell (1935-37) and especially its successor agency, the Farm Security Administration (FSA) were particularly relevant. FSA was the most progressive, innovative, and controversial of the New Deal agencies. Its 20,000 employees included more social scientists -- especially sociologists, rural sociologists and anthropologists -- than have ever been in a single U.S. federal agency.²

Internationally, the term "community development" was first used in the 1948 British Colonial Office's Cambridge Conference on the Development of African Initiative. About 1950 a number of modest national community development efforts were launched primarily in British Territories in Africa. They were intended to help prepare the colonies for peaceful transition to independence by supporting the emergence of stable, self-reliant rural communities. Similarly, by the mid-1950's *animation rurale* emerged in the Franco-phone countries as a requisite on the part of the French for transferring powers to independent states. The philosophical underpinnings of the French approach was in socialist literature and in development theories held by French Catholic humanists.

According to Uphoff and his Cornell colleagues, an impetus for community development came from the "winning hearts and minds" concerns of the cold war period and with the "winds of change" that were ultimately to bring independence to Africa and Asia.

The most significant of all the community development efforts began in India in 1952 under funding from the Ford Foundation and the U.S. Government. The practice spread quickly to the Philippines and

then to other countries in Asia, and to Africa and Latin America. Between 1953 and 1959, the U.S. Government was largely responsible for the emergence of programs in 25 countries. Between 1952 and 1962, the U.S. foreign assistance agency spent \$50 million through its Community Development Division and channeled funds for community development to an additional 30 countries through UN agencies and other avenues.

By 1963, USAID had become disillusioned with its community development programs and abolished its Community Development Division in Washington and placed most of the division's field offices under agricultural and rural development activities. Within the countries served, many community development ministries were abolished and absorbed into ministries of social welfare or agriculture.

Uphoff, Cohen, and Goldsmith noted that the problems experienced with *animation rurale* and community development were often cited as reasons why "participation won't work." They contend that the two "were essentially top-down systems, no matter how much rhetoric about felt needs or popular mobilization may have been spoken." They continued: "Not that bottom-up approaches would have been more successful; but it is important to distinguish the rhetoric from the practice, for in fact participation was quite restricted. Time and again, programs were formed and targets set from above having little relation to people's willingness or capabilities, and when not met, were judged a failure."³

Holdcroft wrote that evaluations of the community development program reported that they were not accepted by the people, did not reach the poor, and were "top-down" bureaucratic empires which ignored agricultural production. He said:

Participation, a major goal in the CD strategy, proved to be a most difficult and elusive goal to attain. Participation by nearly all segments of rural society, including the landless and nearly landless, was rarely accomplished in any of the community development programs. In most instances, village development workers tended to identify with the traditional village elites to whom most of the program benefits accrued... While most CD programs espoused participatory democracy, self-reliance, and local initiative, in practice the village community development work was paternalistic... The experience of those relatively successful pilot community development programs suggests that villagers will participate when they perceive that the benefits of the program will accrue to them.⁴

By 1963, USAID had become disillusioned with its community development programs.

"Participation... was rarely accomplished in any of the community development programs."

In the participatory elements of those early attempts at community development and *animation rurale*, practice preceded theory.

Intellectual Underpinnings From International Educators

The contribution that theorists in international education made in laying intellectual groundwork for participatory development has not been adequately acknowledged.

"People, until now submerged by the tides of history, are becoming aware of their will and their power."

A 1972 report of a UNESCO-sponsored International Commission on the Development of Education headed by Edgar Faure turned out to be seminal for subsequent thinking and writing about education efforts in developing countries. The humanistic and ontological approach it took (the aim of education is to enable man to be himself, to "become himself" -- hence the report's title: *Learning to Be*) provides important intellectual underpinnings on the right of people to participate in defining education policies and in the management of education itself. Although the report itself did not draw the obvious connection to the right of the people to participate in all development efforts, it did serve to enlist educators in making the case for participatory development. The thinking and even the rhetoric of the report was to be later echoed in the literature of what has come to be called "people-centered development."⁵ The following quotes from *Learning to Be* reflect its thrust and its spirit:

There are immense possibilities for mass participation in the social and educational enterprise. People, until now submerged by the tides of history, are becoming aware of their will and their power. The size and strength of the potential to be unleashed through mobilizing the people through volunteer movements and spontaneous popular organizations, is clear from examples in many countries over the past years. Liberating the energies of the people, unleashing their creative powers, heads the list of future prospects for the development of education in the world of tomorrow.⁶

Action must be taken and progress made step by step -- not just through ministerial decisions or ministerial decrees, *but by the community at large* -- so that all those involved in the future of education -- users, practitioners, and promoters -- are brought together and carried along with the movement... 'only the person who has helped prepare for change will be able to accept it.'⁷

Democratizing education will only be possible if we succeed in shaking off the dogmas of conventional pedagogy, if free and permanent dialogue is set up within the educational process, if this enhances individual awareness

of life, if learners are guided toward self-education, and, in short, change from objects into subjects.⁸

In *No Limits to Learning*, Botkin and his co-authors see participation as necessarily anchored in the local setting and the fight to participate as "integrally linked to the right to learn." Reflecting the humanistic approach of *Learning to Be*, this book contends that effective learning "presupposes an individual's aspiration to integrity and dignity, as well as an ability to take initiative." And again,

The term participation is not new. Few words convey so powerfully the idea of an individual's aspiration to be a partner in decision-making, of the unwillingness to accept unduly limited roles and of the desire to live more fully. Few terms suggest so forcefully, people's claim to influence both local and global decisions that shape their environment and their lives, coupled with people's aspiration for equality as well as their refusal to accept marginal positions.⁹

Development and education theorists and practitioners associate participation with two individual writers, Ivan D. Illich, an American educator, and the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire. Illich urged deprofessionalism to make ordinary people responsible for their own well-being.¹⁰ It was Paulo Freire in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* who most effectively reinforced the Faure Commission's case for participation.¹¹ "At all stages of their liberation," wrote Freire, "the oppressed must see themselves as men engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human."¹² He argued that to alienate men from their own decision-making is to change them into objects, Freire pressed for a pedagogy which must be forged with not for the oppressed. For Freire the central problem was "how can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation."

In the United States, Philip Coombs and his staff at the International Council for Educational Development (ICED) clearly made the connection between the writings of the education theorists and the work of development practitioners. Coombs noted that by the end of the 1970s the new rhetoric of a new consensus had become common coinage throughout the world:

It included such phrases as 'meeting the basic needs of the rural poor,' 'growth with equity,' 'community participation,' 'integrated approach,' 'improving status of women,' 'protecting the welfare of young children,' 'helping the small farmer,' 'reducing family size,' 'primary health care,' 'generating rural employment,' and 'spreading basic education.'¹³

The term participation is not new. Few terms suggest so forcefully people's claim to influence both local and global decisions that shape their environment and their lives...

Coombs contended that the case studies done by the staff of the ICED strongly support the proposition that extensive community involvement and self-help are indispensable to the success of any broad gauged effort to transform a rural society and to meet the basic needs of its poorest families.

A Human Style

Some of the author's personal experiences are relevant here. In 1966, I was charged by the then new U.S. Economic Development Administration to start a program that would create multi-country development institutions in the rural depressed areas of the United States. The program was to involve the whole spectrum of the rural poor -- the Black in the Mississippi Delta; the poor white in the hills of Eastern Kentucky; the Spanish American in the Rio Grande Valley; the Hopi Indian on his Arizona mesa, and the Eskimo in his tundra village. It would also involve all the necessary actors for a development process in rural America including public officials at every level of the federal system. The initial challenges of the program were both practical and theoretical. First, how to assure board representation of the poor and minorities themselves in the new institutions and how to involve them in the development process. Second, how to provide the potential critics within the Administration the intellectual justification for the community development approach we wished to take. Beyond the organizing experiences of Saul Alinsky, there was very little of help in the U.S. literature. The Community Action Program of the Office of Economic Opportunity had started only a few months earlier and was already being judged as controversial. The most useful guidance we found was in the literature on U.S. and Ford Foundation funded community development efforts in India and the Philippines. A quote by President Magsaysay found its way into every speech we gave.

For myself, the most useful insight on why the poor should participate came not from any pieces on community or economic development but from a book that ostensibly had nothing to do with development. Titled The Empty Fortress, it was the psychologist Bruno Bettelheim's description of how he and his staff treated autistic children.¹⁴

For Bettelheim, the essence of being human is to act on one's own behalf in a context of mutuality, based on an accurate sense of causality. He wrote that the nursing infant, for example, is eminently active in what is to him a central act of his life. He may not feel he is moving mountains but as if he were sucking them dry. To the infant it is not his real dependence that counts, but the conviction that his efforts are monumental.

Gratifying needs is not itself a sufficient precondition for humanity. One must relate to others; there must be mutuality in the actions taken. Thus the child's reaching out and active grasping must be met with a parallel enjoyment in the mother at being clung to.

Emphasizing causality, he contended that what made us human was not simply that we recognized causal relations but what followed from it: the conviction that a sequence of events can be influenced through our influence. Bettelheim described the essence of their treatment: "Neither the actions of the therapists nor the satisfaction of instinctual needs...sparked the return of the children to life. They came to life only when we were able to create the conditions, or otherwise be the catalyst, that induced them to take action on their own behalf."

Bettelheim also drew on earlier experiences: the effects of Nazi concentration camps on their victims. He calls this experience an "extreme situation." It is characterized by its inescapability, its unpredictability, and a feeling of absolute powerlessness to ward off the most horrible of dangers. He describes how this combination of circumstances, which represent the very antithesis of the requirements for being human, had the effect of utterly dehumanizing and destroying the personalities of most of the prisoners. But those who remained convinced that they could act in their own behalf and did act (if it meant on a given day only stealing a piece of bread) remained free of the severest pathology. It hardly mattered how insignificant the advantage one gained through one's own action so long as one could rightly feel that by taking action he had ever so little improved his state.

"I believe it to be a distinctly human experience," wrote Bettelheim, "to feel with conviction: I did it and my doing made a difference."

I have a Commonweal book reviewer to thank for coming to realize how Bettelheim's The Empty Fortress is in effect a textbook on humanness. Understanding what the minimum requirements are for becoming and remaining a full human being provides insight into the parallel requirements for effective development or for any mechanism for social betterment. The crucial element remains style. It is not what we do, it's the way we do it. It has to be done in a human style.

THREE**D E F I N I T I O N S**

Among the world's aid agencies no clear consensus exists as to what is meant by community participation (CP). It is not consistently conceptualized, measured or evaluated in projects that use it. The OECD/DAC paper notes that because it defies a precise and all-embracing definition, most writers aim at offering working definitions. In USAID, however, a particular conceptual model found acceptance in the 1970's and continued to be cited in the AID Handbook and in some policy papers in the 1980's. It was first articulated by Cohen and Uphoff in 1977¹⁵ and became a working definition for the AID-funded Cornell studies on participation in subsequent years. The Cornell social scientists regard participation as a descriptive term denoting the involvement of a significant number of persons in situations or actions which enhance their well-being, e.g., their income, security or self-esteem. Their model breaks participation into several 'dimensions' and 'contexts'. These dimensions of participation are (1) what kind of participation is under consideration? (2) who is participating in it? and (3) how is participation occurring? 'Context' includes the project's task environment -- specifically the historical, ecological, and societal factors that strongly affect the emerging patterns of participation. It is the authors' identification of four different kinds of participation that is most frequently cited in AID documents in the succeeding decade. They are:

1. participation in decision-making
2. participation in implementation
3. participation in benefits
4. participation in evaluation.

In the current efforts at the World Bank to address participation, popular participation is defined as "a process by which people, especially disadvantaged people, influence decisions which affect them . . . Participation means influence on development decisions, not simply involvement in the implementation of benefits of a development activity."¹⁶

In the continuing debate over participation is the question of whether participation is an end in itself or simply a means to improve project results. The end-in-itself argument is linked to empowerment and contends that people have the right and duty to participate in the execution (i.e., planning, implementation, and management) of projects which profoundly affect their lives.¹⁷ (Both the Manila and Arusha NGO statements reflect this argument.)

Goulet argues that one may view participation as a hybrid reality which has the characteristics of both ends and means.

Even instrumentalist champions of participation have come to discover that non-expert populations, once consulted, insist on expressing their views when immediate expert intervention might, in a purely technical sense, prove more efficient. Conversely, those who engage in participation primarily because they view it as a value for its own sake will also, over time, come to realize its value as a goal and demand that it demonstrate some instrumental efficiency as well.¹⁸

Paul includes both empowerment and efficiency in the objectives of community participation in his 1987 review of World Bank experiences. He examined 50 projects in urban housing, health, and irrigation. He defined community participation as "an active process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of development projects rather than merely receive a share of project benefits." The objectives of CP as an active process, as he saw them, are empowerment, building beneficiary capacity, increasing project efficiency and project cost-sharing. Applying the objectives to the projects he reviewed, cost-sharing, project efficiency, and project effectiveness were dominant. Empowerment and capacity-building emerged as relatively less important objectives in Bank projects.¹⁹ A literature search of AID studies did not turn up any comparable effort to gauge which of participation's objectives might be dominant in any set of projects in which participation was tried.

Writing of community participation in health and population programs, Martin makes an important point which has wider applicability. She notes that while the rhetoric used in program and project documents gives the impression of community participation as community development and empowerment, most of the projects and programs she reviewed (including some AID projects) actually have a service delivery orientation requiring a quite different level and type of CP. "This incongruence between rhetoric and practice has helped promote the feeling among some practitioners that CP does not work or is impractical when in fact decision-making CP is not being seriously attempted."²⁰

"This incongruence between rhetoric and practice has helped promote the feeling among some practitioners that CP does not work or is impractical when in fact decision-making CP is not being seriously attempted."

FOUR

H I S T O R Y

AID'S POLICY HISTORY ON PARTICIPATION

To trace the policy history of community participation in AID is to discuss the broad Congressional mandates and internal AID policy directives of the past 25 years. The ebb and flow of attention to participation depended on broader policy considerations which resulted either in encouraging efforts at participatory development or discouraging them. Seldom did the success or failure of community participation initiatives themselves determine whether similar efforts would be made in future projects.

TITLE IX

A 1966 amendment to the foreign Assistance Act mandated AID to place emphasis "on assuring maximum participation in the task of economic development on the part of the people of the developing countries through the encouragement of democratic private and local initiatives." It had strong bi-partisan support in the Congress. A statement by 25 Republican Congressman described the participation need in the following terms:

The U.S. foreign aid program should place new emphasis on the need for the growth of popular participation in the development programs of the developing countries . . . Unless the people benefit from development efforts, no meaningful programs can result from foreign aid. It is equally true that unless people contribute to development efforts, no meaningful progress can result from foreign aid...²¹

In the summer of 1968, AID sponsored a six-week conference on the implications of Title IX under the chairmanship of the late Professor Max Millikan, Director of MIT's Center for International Studies. The final report of the conference at MIT, in which more than 30 prominent scholars and senior AID and State Department officials participated, was published under the title, "The Role of Popular Participation in Development." It concluded that although Title IX had been on the books for two years, it had not influenced the actions of AID in major ways, nor had it been adequately supported by the rest of the foreign affairs community. It said:

We have concluded that the central objective of Title IX should be to promote popular participation. We interpret this to refer to a number of interrelated activities -- increased participation in the whole range of social decisions, in the implementation of development, in the benefits of economic progress, as well as increased participation in decision-making.

A decade later, Uphoff, Cohen, and Goldsmith commented that the MIT report did give some useful definition of "development participation" but had no evident impact on AID programming. As for Title IX itself, they concluded that the concept was unclear and it gained little operational effectiveness within the agency. "To the extent it was equated with political participation and political development, the call for participation was liable to criticism as unacceptably interventionist or ideologically ethnocentric, pushing American 'liberal' ideals on the Third World."²²

The first coordinator of Title IX on his return to academia in 1969 presented a candid assessment of AID's failure to respond to the mandate. In a speech to the International Studies Association, Professor John R. Schott spoke of the internal restraints imposed by the organization and staffing pattern of the agency. He said that in AID there was a large contingent of people unreceptive to the new approach to development encouraged by Title IX. For them, Title IX "was an implied criticism (if not threat) to project activities with which they had long been involved." He saw this negative viewpoint buttressed by many program officers and senior officials imbued with a macroeconomic approach toward development. Many officials, he contended, saw Title IX as "hopefully no more than a passing fad which could be satisfied by relabeling or perhaps multiplying a few appropriate 'grassroots' activities already undertaken by the Agency." To counter these hostile attitudes, he said, "necessitates awareness at the most senior levels of AID -- an awareness that has not been fully demonstrated -- that Title IX is important and its objectives should be consciously pursued."

Schott allowed that even with strong support from the top a government agency like AID "constrained by civil service regulations and organizational inflexibilities requires several years to retrain existing personnel and to recruit new personnel with the requisite interest, imagination, and expertise to administer as complicated and delicate a mandate as Title IX."²³

1970'S AND NEW DIRECTIONS

In what came to be known as the New Directions changes in policy, Congress in 1973 amended the Foreign Assistance Act and ordered AID to focus its programs on the poorest, usually rural, majorities in the developing countries. In 1974, AID was directed to insure that to the greatest extent possible, this effort was to involve the participation of the poor in the aid process. Follow-up legislation in 1975 reaffirmed the 1973 reforms in the major functional categories of Agriculture, Rural Development

Title IX had no evident effect on AID programming.

AID had a large contingent of people unreceptive to the new approach to development.

and Nutrition, Population Planning and Health, Education and Human Resource Development.

AID was to become specialized, focusing on the functional sectors which were seen to affect the lives of the majority of the people in the developing countries. A second way Congress tried to turn the agency away from large infrastructure projects and toward such areas as agriculture and rural development was to enjoin AID to support activities aimed at increasing the participation of the poor in the development process. Much of Chapter 1 of Part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 was rewritten between 1973 and 1977 to reflect Congress' change of focus.²⁴

AID's Response

A Congressional Research Service report to the Congress in 1981 concluded that, "examined from any perspective, AID officials have been engaged in serious and continuing efforts to reorient the Agency since the passage of the New Directions mandate by the Congress in late 1973 . . . There appears to be a genuine effort by AID officials in Washington to ensure that New Directions policy is taken seriously."²⁵ And it can be said that the attempts made to implement the New Directions legislation of the 1970s provided a particularly congenial and supportive policy setting for community participation efforts.

"There appears to be a genuine effort by AID officials to ensure that New Directions policy is taken seriously."

AID's first formal response to the Congress came in 1975 when it sent its report on implementation of New Directions.²⁶ In AID's view at that time, participation appeared not simply as a desired goal, but as a crucial part of the strategy's potential success. The report argued that "programs most likely to succeed, and which receive highest priority emphasis under the Congressional mandate and AID policy, are those involving the active and effective participation of the poor in all facets of the development process."²⁷

In a 'Program Guidance' airgram on New Directions implementation sent to the missions in April 1976, participation was one of the issues addressed. The airgram acknowledged that:

There is a healthy debate within the Agency about the applicability of some definitions of the term to particular situations, how it can be used operationally in given projects, whether it is an objective per se or a means to an end . . .

Regardless, the airgram stressed the importance of participation noting that "at a minimum it is important to find out from the intended beneficiaries their thoughts on the problem to be addressed and their reactions to changes they are being asked to make."

Furthermore,

Recent comparative analyses have strongly supported the view that effective participation in local-level project decisions is one of the most important determinants of success of rural development activities . . . and individuals or groups are more likely to change their behavior if they feel some 'ownership' (or, in AID terms, participation) in the decisions and implementation plans. This would apply, for example, to use of new seeds or credit by farmers, and to desired changes in community and family health and family planning practices.

At the same time, the airgram cautioned the missions against going to extremes:

It is, of course, easy to carry our emphasis on participation too far, forgetting that like any other aspect of the development process, it is far from a panacea. It will not substitute for the need for profitable technologies, appropriate policies, etc.; and participation institutions in local areas must be combined with effective links that relate rural areas to the political centers which allocate resources and control services.²⁸

"... individuals or groups are more likely to change their behavior if they feel some 'ownership' (or, in AID terms, participation) in the decisions and implementation plans."

'Sectoral' vs. 'Participatory' Development

Attempts to implement the New Directions mandate prompted a running debate within the Agency on the nature of international development itself. There were two contrasting views, characterized as the 'sectoral' and the 'participatory' development strategies. Proponents of each strategy saw it as compatible with the New Directions mandate.

The sectoral strategy utilizes a more 'economic' approach, emphasizing increases in production and productivity, and focusing on selected sectors. Sectoral strategy proponents tended to see the production of an adequate supply of food as the most important development goal. They emphasized the need for new infrastructure such as rural roads or possibly rural electrification as well as improved technology.

The participatory strategy employed a more multi-disciplinary approach, combining economics, politics, and socio-cultural analysis to help bring about institutional and structural changes that increase the ability of the poor to manage their own lives. They emphasized not modern technology and infrastructure, but distributional questions, such as access to land and increased emphases on employment expansion and human resource development. They saw AID's role as enhancing the power of the poor through encouragement of responsive local institutions that would

enable the poor to participate meaningfully in development decision-making and benefits.²⁹

Basic Human Needs

When the 'basic human needs' focus surfaced in 1977, it was seen as attempting to create a synthesis between the sectoral and participatory views. An internal Task Force Report to the Administrator (commonly referred to as the Babb Report after its chair, Tony Babb) recommended that "AID's operational objectives be drawn from the Participatory and Sectoral approaches as appropriate within each recipient country context."³⁰ During 1977, the first year of a new Administration, a second report was done by the Development Coordination Committee³¹ and a third was written by the Brookings Institution for the Secretary of State.³² All three contributed to the thinking about the basic human needs approach. The following year, a Bilateral Assistance Policy Paper³³ and a subsequent Development Coordination Committee Policy Paper³⁴ placed AID squarely within the context of Basic Human Needs under the broad umbrella of New Directions.

A 1978 Agricultural Development Policy Paper is worth citing because of what it had to say about participation. It said that if the structural, institutional, and policy environment precludes a participation of poor people in the process and benefits of development, "development assistance is unlikely to benefit the poor, no matter how carefully specific activities are designed."³⁵

"I would like to make sure we are doing everything we can to encourage local people's participation in development projects supported by AID."

1980 Policy Efforts

Midway through 1980, AID Administrator Douglas J. Bennet, Jr., appointed a steering committee to oversee preparation of a Discussion Paper on Participation and Development. Its drafter was an anthropologist, Alice Morton, who had served as project monitor for the Cornell project on rural development participation. On December 9, 1980, Bennet sent this and one other paper to the Executive Staff and to Mission Directors. (Because these documents are not readily available in AID today, they are included in Appendix E.) In his cover memorandum, Bennet said:

I would like to make sure we are doing everything we can to encourage local people's participation in development projects supported by AID. Quite aside from the virtues of participation as a good in and of itself -- and in enhancing the prospects for human rights, equitable development, civic involvement, pluralism, private sector activation, etc. -- there are at least two purely pragmatic reasons for encouraging participation.

First, projects which incorporate substantial elements of local participation have been shown, through our impact evaluations

and other evidence, to work better and to enjoy enhanced prospects of becoming self-sustaining. . .

Second, participation acts as a force that generates additional resources for development overall; that is, people who are actively involved tend to contribute more to the process and thus magnify the impact of external resources.

While noting the progress that had been made in broadening participation, the Administrator said that on the basis of his visits to missions and projects, he found that participation in decision-making, including the planning, design, and implementation of AID-supported activities had been "relatively limited." He noted that "AID has a record of some accomplishment (probably more than any other bilateral or multilateral assistance agency) and a growing body of knowledge on participation on which to draw." His memorandum ended with the following:

The need for enhancing participation will be around as long as AID exists. The project design and approval process, as well as our evaluations, are, and should be, increasingly taking participation concerns into account. The Foreign Assistance Act requires us to do so, and Congress is interested in our progress in this area. The next Administration will be faced with the same challenge. Therefore, I am asking all of you to share these papers with your staffs, to convey to PPC any suggestions you may have, and meanwhile to see what you can do to enhance the participation elements in all projects on which you are working.

A key assumption in the Discussion Paper Bennet sent is "that AID will be able to operationalize a series of steps which, regarded and implemented in a systematic fashion, will yield a self-sustaining, participatory development process."

Morton wrote that AID can eliminate itself as a constraint to participation by:

- establishing clear criteria for review...
- making those criteria clearly understood in AID/W and in the field...
- requiring at the Project Identification Document stage a realistic and persuasive participation plan to be implemented during the Project Paper stage and implementation stages, and assessed during ex-post evaluations;
- informing the field that projects which have such plans will receive first rights of review, and first priority in funding, and sticking to it;
- initiating the above steps in the context of a learning process, which will be extended to intermediaries, such that the message is that this is something more than a fad, and such that tools are provided to carry it out.

"Participation in decision making... has been relatively limited... The need for enhancing participation will be around as long as AID exists."

Among the thirteen recommendations in the paper were these:

"Reward creative, risk-taking behavior on the part of AID personnel and AID contractors through an incentive system."

- Emphasize new guidelines on participation in PID and PP sections of Handbook 3, and amplify them with further guidance to the field.
- Cite successful examples of risk-taking, innovative field projects now in implementation or final stages of approval which are most likely to achieve participatory goals.
- Clarify the policy on use of intermediaries, spelling out options and appropriate matches of intermediary strengths and styles with development problems to be solved.
- Reward creative, risk-taking behavior on the part of AID personnel and AID contractors through an incentive system. If projects are realistically emphasizing participation are first reviewed and first funded, on a consistent basis for long enough to get going, a real incentive should thus be provided. Individuals in the system and its dependent organizations need also to be rewarded.
- Endorse the new social analysis guidance that is currently being prepared by AID social scientists.

The second paper the Administrator sent to his executive staff and missions was a memorandum written by Norman Uphoff summarizing what his Cornell team had learned in the first two years of the AID-funded Rural Development Participation Project.³⁶

Whatever impact the Bennet memorandum and the two papers might have had was doubtlessly diminished by the fact that a new Administration would soon be taking on the leadership of AID.

1981 - 1991

1982 Revisions of the AID Handbook

A particularly important step toward institutionalizing participation in AID was made in revisions to the AID Handbook in 1982. Guidance for the preparation of the Project Identification Document (PID) includes explicit material on participation:

Consideration of social factors, including the definition and examination of project participants and intended beneficiaries, is expected to begin in the earliest stages of project identification... The PID will promote participation of beneficiaries during project design, implementation, and evaluation.

A five-page appendix to this section elaborates on each of the four areas of participation during a project cycle. It also spells out the "who" of participation among four categories of people: local

residents, local leaders, local government personnel, and foreign personnel associated with the project.

The Handbook guidance is clear and straightforward and could serve any aid agency committed to participation. Guidance in "Social Soundness Analysis" for Project Papers had first been added to the Handbook in 1975 and had been refined in later years. Under "participation" the 1982 version directs:

A social soundness analysis must review the extent to which beneficiary participation has been achieved during project development. Also, the opportunities for and means by which beneficiary participation has been built into project implementation and evaluation plans must be addressed.

An appendix elaborates:

A central substantive concept of AID policy is the need to assure the wide and significant participation of the poor in the development process. In this sense, participation means not only sharing the economic benefits and contribution of resources but also involvement in the processes of problem identification and solution, sub-project selection and design, implementation, and evaluation. The participation approach to development demands that AID project designers and implementors have much deeper understanding of the socio-cultural setting of projects than has been required in the past.

"A central concept of AID policy is the need to assure the wide and significant participation of the poor in the development process."

1983: The "Four Pillars"

By February 1983 the new Administration had identified "Four Pillars" which were to undergird its foreign aid program:

- 1) Policy Dialogue and Reform (coming to agreements with host country governments on the policy constraints to development and practical improvements that could be made).
- 2) Institutional Development (focusing on decentralizing institutions and encouraging reliance on private and voluntary, rather than public institutions).
- 3) Technology transfer (seeking breakthroughs in such areas as biomedical research, agriculture, and family planning).
- 4) Private Sector (greater use of the private sector in solving development problems).

March 1983: Policy Paper on Institutional Development

One of a series of policy papers designed to mesh the Administrations emerging overall development strategy with particular sectoral and functional concerns, the paper on Institutional Development -- one of the Four Pillars -- contained some familiar language on participation. The role of local initiative and participation is cited as one of the most critical areas of concern in institutional development. A

"Local initiative and participation is essential in adapting development priorities, designs, and implementation strategies... and in communicating local needs, constraints, and priorities."

section titled "Capitalizing upon Local Capacities and Participation" includes this paragraph:

The development experience of the past two decades also indicates clearly that the impact and sustainability of public sector investments can be significantly improved if local citizens assume a role in needs assessment, project design, and implementation. Local participation (in both urban and rural areas) is essential in adapting development priorities, designs, and implementation strategies to particular contexts, and in communicating to planners local needs, constraints, and priorities.

March 1984: Policy Paper on Local Organizations in Development

A program evaluation discussion paper on "AID Assistance to Local Government: Experience and Issues" was released in November 1983. It included a five-page appendix on Beneficiary Participation that began:

It is now a common principle within AID that beneficiaries should be integrated into project decision-making. Four months later an AID Policy Paper on Local Organizations in Development was released. It was meant to increase AIDs capacity to undertake institutional development by focusing attention on the often overlooked category of local organizations. It states that in the last analysis "only local organizations and the people who support them can sustain and build upon the efforts of donors and central government; indeed, without the participation of strong, independent local organizations it is unlikely that the broadly based support which is also essential to meaningful development will ever emerge.

"It is now a common principle within AID that beneficiaries should be integrated into project decision-making."

The section on the role of local organizations in AIDs program acknowledges that it draws heavily on the ideas presented in the Cornell paper on participation by Uphoff, Cohen and Goldsmith: "Local organizations may contribute to a series of critically important development activities, including (a) informed planning and decision-making; (b) flexible and adaptive implementation; and (c) low cost, efficient monitoring and evaluation."

1983-1986: Asia Regional Committee on Community Management

This committee, created in 1983 by Rocky Staples, Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Asia Bureau, was to facilitate exchange of mission experience with efforts to strengthen community capacity to manage natural resources such as water, land, and trees or human services such as health and education. David C. Korten,

himself a strong proponent of participatory development, had taken on a contractual relationship with U.S.AID/Indonesia. Staples asked him to be secretary to the committee. Korten wrote about the committee in an unpublished memorandum, "Challenge of Institutional Change in Asia." According to Korten, "Staples had two basic questions: Can AID be effective in supporting community based development initiatives? If so, how?"

The committee involved a voluntary collaboration among AID missions in Asia in sharing and assessing their experience with community based projects. At one time or another, all USAID missions in Asia participated except for Burma. A major meeting held in Bangkok in November, 1984 produced a comprehensive assessment of the problem and what would be required for AID to become effective in addressing community management. Wrote Korten:

Basically it was agreed that getting more responsibility for the management of development resources in the hands of local communities was a development priority of substantial importance. but this need came into direct conflict with the fact that most existing development agencies in the region are centralized bureaucracies that have no capability in enabling local communities to play a more effective role in development. Indeed, the nature of their internal structures nearly assured exactly the opposite outcome from their interventions. Simply writing a requirement into project documents that they work in a more participatory mode was found to have little effect without substantial and sustained investment in helping them develop fundamentally new capabilities -- in essence transforming much of their basic structure and modes of operation. For AID to be effective in supporting such transformation, it would need to focus more on institutional change rather than on specific project outputs. This, in turn, would require using AID staff in facilitator roles working directly with counterparts on coalition and agenda building in support of needed changes. These staff would need to have access to funds that could be used easily and quickly to make small, flexible grants in support of the change process, such as for workshops, pilot projects, research studies, etc.

Korten reports that the findings of the committee were reviewed and endorsed in subsequent meetings of Asia region mission directors and senior bureau staff. He goes on to comment:

It was noted by numerous participants in these meetings, however, that though the committee was accurate in its conclusions regarding what would be required for AID to be effective in support of community management, these requirements did not fit with existing AID

"Getting more responsibility... in the hands of local communities was... of substantial importance, but this need came into direct conflict with the fact that most development organizations... have no capability in enabling local communities to play a more effective role in development."

capabilities, and the trends in terms of capability were running in the opposite direction. Staff cuts combined with ever growing administrative burdens and more cumbersome contracting procedures meant that AID staff had to devote their attention almost exclusively to AID's own internal administrative requirements. Continuing cuts in...funding resulted in a reduced capacity to make small grants on a flexible basis in support of program operations. No relief was in sight. We were caught in what seemed an irreconcilable dilemma.

Korten said that he and his AID colleagues searched for some way out of the impasse. "There did not seem to be any realistic solutions from within AID. The answer would have to be found in some class of non-AID organization to which AID could lend support in a sufficiently flexible manner." A March, 1986 Bangkok meeting of AID staff noted that the fundamental issues were defined by the competition between two fundamentally different ways of looking at the problem of organizing a society for resource management. Korten comments: "One centralized control under bureaucratic structures. The other sought broadly distributed ownership and management of productive assets, with an emphasis on the community level. It pointed up the importance of developing mechanisms that would hold government officials accountable to the publics they were supposed to serve and suggested the initiative in achieving such structural changes might well have to come from outside of government. NGOs were noted as one important option."

It was subsequently decided that Korten's continued work for AID's Asia Bureau was to strengthen networking among NGOs rather than among AID staff and to explore whether in fact NGOs were the answer to dealing with the agency's institutional agenda.

Nowhere in 77 pages of 1985 'Blueprint for Development' is there any reference to participation in development projects.

June 1985: Blueprint for Development

"Blueprint for Development: The Strategic Plan for the Agency for International Development" set out AID's long-term strategic plan. A section in the Introduction stated that AID had broken with any assumption that government was in all areas the most effective agent of development change. AID was to stress the contributions of the private sector to solving development problems. The document incorporated the Four Pillars. It set out specific targets for overall economic growth, and also nutritional, health, and literacy levels, and population growth rates. It argued that without economic growth, it would not be possible to deal with hunger, health deficiencies, illiteracy, and population pressures in any sustained way.

For the policy history of community participation the significance of this document is that nowhere in its 77 closely reasoned pages is there any reference to participation in development projects.

Later in 1985 Congress was convinced to incorporate into the

Development Policy section of the Foreign Assistance Act specific language recognizing much of the Blueprint for Development and the Four Pillars Approach. In 1988, a Congressional Research Service paper remarked: "At the present time, AID has the legislative authority to pursue either the New Directions programs, Four Pillars programs, or both."³⁷

1988-89: Toward a New Administration and New Approaches to Foreign Aid

As the Reagan Administration entered its final year there were underway three major reviews of the U.S. foreign assistance program:

- Within AID the focus throughout much of 1988 was on the preparation of a report by Administrator Alan Woods. It was released on February 17, 1989 under the title, "Development and the National Interest: U.S. Economic Assistance into the 21st Century."
- In the Congress, A Task Force on Foreign Assistance created by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs worked for a full year before issuing its report on February 1, 1989.
- The most ambitious of many reviews of foreign aid outside government was an effort headed by Michigan State University. It resulted in the publication in August, 1988 of "New Challenges, New Opportunities: U. S. Cooperation for International Growth and Development."

The introduction to Woods report uses language common to literature on participatory development. It refers to an emerging consensus: "the realization that real development must come from the bottom-up, not the top-down." But it is participation with a new twist. It describes development as focused on the efforts of individuals working for their own economic and social improvement. Drawing on the studies of Hernando de Sota of Peru, the introduction describes the poor, not as trapped, faceless proletarians, but as "builders and entrepreneurs who work to make development happen."

Woods contended that foreign aid is only one of many tools for development, and not necessarily the most important one. A few weeks after the reports release, he told a Heritage Foundation audience that "we do not need yet another layer of 'new initiatives or 'new directions piled on top of often conflicting executive and legislative priorities and guidelines." Summarizing his report, he said the U.S. needs a new overall policy, a new American model for development into the 21st century. It would be American because it builds on American strengths:

- our unequalled international presence in the private sector, where American multinationals train and employ the largest single global labor force in the world;
- the American higher education system, which already serves as

virtual "university to the world;"

- and the unsurpassed American ability to combine growth and prosperity with tested safeguards for the environment and health.

"It would be a model," said Woods, "because it would be a practical, rewarding blueprint for success."

The Task Force on Foreign Assistance recommended a new international cooperation act that would create a restructured foreign aid agency (an Economic Cooperation Agency) with four principal objectives: economic growth, environmental sustainability, and democratic and economic pluralism. "People can rise from poverty" said the Congressional report, "if they are healthy and educated and have the opportunity to participate in the economy." It noted with approval that "internationally oriented American PVOs and citizens groups in the Third World increasingly are pursuing the expansion of choice and participation to those traditionally least involved."

*NGOs support
grass-roots
participation in
U.S. develop-
ment assistance
efforts.*

The Task Force took a highly participatory, consensus-building approach to its work. Through hearings, informal meetings, and correspondence, it listened to dozens of organizations and citizens on the subject of foreign aid. The clearest plea to the Task Force for participatory development came from Nancy Alexander of the American Friends Service Committee on National Legislation.

Alexander convened a forum of NGOs on the subject of foreign aid. Reporting on the forum, she said that much of the NGO community would support a call for grass-roots participation in U.S. development assistance efforts, in particular the participation of Third World grassroots organizations in design, implementation, and evaluation of projects, programs, and policies. She said "the right of all people to participate in the decisions that affect their lives and their economic, social and political reality is central to the process of development, of democracy, and of global peace and justice."

The Task Force had two discussions of the then recently published *Aid for Just Development*. The book, by Steven and Douglas Hellinger and Fred O'Regan, which has been cited above, called for channelling development assistance through a publicly chartered foundation that would give intended recipients (i.e., the poor) a major role in planning and implementing development assistance.

The Michigan State University Report, written by Ralph H. Smuckler and Robert J. Berg (with David F. Gordon) involved eleven cooperating institutions and organizations. Scores of people participated in four symposia leading up to a national conference at Michigan State in May, 1988. The report set three major goals for development cooperation in the 1990s: to encourage growth, to protect the environment, and to alleviate poverty. Like the other two, this report did not directly address the issue of participatory development, but one of the values it said it sought to promote and

protect was "widespread citizen participation." The report also noted that increasing numbers of non-governmental organizations in developing countries were emerging "with capacity to plan and carry out programs in low cost, participatory ways conventional programs have difficulty in attaining."

December 1990: Mission Statement and Three Initiatives

Under a new Administrator, AID released in December, 1990, a Mission Statement and Three Initiatives that would help to guide the agency. The statement reads:

The mission of the Agency for International Development is to administer economic assistance programs that combine an American tradition of international concern and generosity with the active promotion of America's national interests. AID assists developing countries to realize their full national potential through the development of open and democratic societies and the dynamism of free markets and individual initiative. AID assists nations throughout the world to improve the quality of human life and to expand the range of individual opportunities by reducing poverty, ignorance and malnutrition.

The Agency's overall objectives are guided by six principles:

- support for free markets and broad-based economic growth;
- concern for individuals and the development of their economic and social well-being;
- responsible environment policies and prudent management of natural resources;
- support for lasting solutions to transitional problems; and
- humanitarian assistance to those who suffer from natural or man-made disasters.

The announced initiatives are:

- 1) The Democracy Initiative (AID will help promote and consolidate democracy as the legitimate organizing principle for political systems throughout the world.)
- 2) The Partnership for Business and Development Initiative (It is based on the belief that the Private Sector has a significant role to play in helping to create and sustain free-market principles, democracy and a broad-based economic growth in developing countries.)
- 3) The Family and Development Initiative (Its purpose is to use the family as a starting point for analysis of what people need, how they use the resources they have, and as an organizing principle for mobilizing the energy of the people to create progress.)

A fourth on the environment was subsequently added.

"The mission of the Agency for International Development is to administer economic assistance programs that combine an American tradition of international concern and generosity with the active promotion of America's national interests."


F I V E
P R A C T I C E
PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
1980: Highwater Mark

From the number of projects in which participatory development was being attempted, it would appear that 1980 was the highwater mark for community participation in AID. By that time it was most closely identified with the rural development program, but it was being tried also in projects in irrigation, primary health care, population, housing, and in water and sanitation. Perhaps because community participation was new, perhaps because its supporters, having argued for it, were reluctant to judge it, there was little done in way of rigorous evaluation of participation.

Rural Development

The most concentrated attention to community participation within AID was in the rural development sector. AID's Office of Rural Development and Development Administration took the agency's strongest initiatives regarding participation, including creating a cooperative agreement with Cornell University for a Rural Development Participation Project which ran from 1978 to 1982.

Of 106 rural development projects with an average life of three years, 13 started before 1975, 13 started after 1980 and 80 started in the period 1976-1980. The year 1980 was a high point with 80 projects underway.³⁸

It was in the context of agriculture and rural development that the case was most strongly made for community participation. Development Alternatives, Inc. conducted a survey of 36 rural development projects. The firm concluded that when a large number of possible success determinants were weighed, "small farmer involvement in project decision-making and his resource commitment to the project accounted for nearly 50% of the differences in success scores of the projects."³⁹

The case for participation continued to be made in later years although not exclusively in the context of rural development. Devres, Inc. in 1985 looked at 212 evaluation reports -- 50 of them in depth -- to analyze institutional sustainability issues in AID. Only 11% received highly positive sustainability ratings; 26% received strongly negative ratings. Among the factors militating against sustainability was inadequate attention to beneficiary participation. In the same year as the Devres study, the World Bank's Operations Evaluation Department issued a report on its analysis of completed projects, mostly in agriculture and rural development. It was based on impact evaluations of 25 projects five to 10 years after project comple-

tion. The conclusion: 12 of 25 achieved long-term sustainability while 13 did not. According to OED, one of the sets of underlying factors which had significant bearing on project sustainability was beneficiary participation.⁴⁰ Since 1979, AID undertook a series of 56 in-depth comprehensive impact evaluations. Harbison contends these evaluation support the participation thesis strongly. "They have almost uniformly testified to the proposition that grassroots level organizations of producers must be able to shape development projects to their particular local circumstances if development projects are to be both successful and sustainable."⁴¹

The Rural Development Participation Project (1977-1982) with Cornell University's Rural Development Committee was a massive academic effort to back up the work of AID's Office of Rural Development and Development Administration. The Summary Report on the project lists 35 studies and papers originating with the project though not all funded by it. Under "Applied Research and Consulting," the report lists 24 project activities in 19 countries. Participating in the project were 31 faculty, nine research associates, and 42 graduate students from Cornell in addition to 32 associates from other institutions. The project also published the Rural Development Participation Journal. Norman Uphoff, the Project Director, makes a modest assessment in the 1982 Summary Report:

Work on participatory rural development has been, we think, raised to a higher level of intellectual and operational sophistication and usefulness as a result of the various activities of the project, but it is an on-going task, and work on this subject is still in initial operational stages.⁴²

By 1980, staff of the Office of Rural Development and Development Administration regarded "community participation" as part of the conventional wisdom of development. The interest and enthusiasm may have outdistanced the actual performance. Community participation was, as Uphoff was to write two years later, "still in initial operational stages."

Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) since 1975 had been providing long-term technical assistance to integrated rural development projects. In a 1981 report on integrated rural development projects, DAI had this to say:

Participation and decentralization are two concepts that are very popular in development today, but there is no clear understanding of what they should mean and even less of how to realize them within the context of IRD projects . . . IRD projects have been characterized by a lack of participation, manifested in the following ways:

"Work on participatory rural development has been, we think, raised to a higher level of intellectual and operational sophistication and usefulness."

Did interest in and enthusiasm for participation out-distance actual performance?

By 1983, integrated rural development had come into disfavor in the agency.

- a) Unwillingness of project staff to allow potential beneficiaries to participate meaningfully in project activities;
- b) Reluctance or refusal of potential beneficiaries to participate; and
- c) Participation by only the more economically powerful who succeed in manipulating project resources and activities for their own ends.⁴⁴

By 1983, integrated rural development had come into disfavor in the agency. In the mid-1980's, impact evaluations were conducted on 11 IRD projects in nine countries. The paper summarizing the generally negative conclusions noted that one of the four premises crucial to the growth of the concept of IRD was that participation of the local population was essential for generating long-term, self-sustaining growth. People should be treated as active participants in the change process, not as possible recipients of benefits. The paper said the IRD projects were expected to combine multi-sectoral development activities into a coherent delivery system relying on grassroots participation of the target populations. "In actuality, however, most of the projects were agricultural development projects with limited scope for participation, designed to increase small farmers' production and incomes by addressing constraints on agriculture."⁴⁴

OBSTACLES TO PARTICIPATION

There may have been a supportive policy environment for participatory development in the 1976-1980 period, but many obstacles remained. Bryant looked at some of the organizational impediments to making participation a reality.⁴⁵ She contended that there were "almost no incentives for officials to design projects which are effectively participatory." She said the official who succeeds in designing participatory projects is "swimming upstream." She found it an irony that AID's efforts to meet Congressional directives calling for participation are caught up in responses to other Congressional pressures making for more hierarchical and less participatory management of program design and delivery.

When Uphoff summarized Cornell's "collective learning" midway through the AID-Cornell agreement, he wrote of the "distorting effects of pressures within AID (or within the World Bank and other development agencies) to 'move money'." He saw these pressures as built up by the organization's own procedures and reward structures.⁴⁷

Uphoff and Bryant both make the point that moving money is far easier to do in large projects. Large projects are too complicated or too technical to allow for participation by intended beneficiaries.

Time is also a factor. Participatory projects take more time to organize. Writing in 1980, Bryant found AID staff overworked. "The agency at its peak employed nearly 16,000; now it employs approximately 5,000 and spends far more money."

The obstacles to participation AID faced in 1980 and still faces today are not unique. The current OECD/DAC report (in Appendix A) states flatly that "the management, procedures, and career systems of aid agencies are not presently geared to such activities."

It should be noted that the Discussion Paper by Alice Morton on Participation and Development, which was sent by the AID Administrator to Executive Staff and to Missions in December, 1980, did attempt to address some of the obstacles outlined by Bryant and Uphoff.

S I X

T H E P R E S E N T

Overview

In water and sanitation, considerable efforts continue to be made to insure community participation. In present on-going irrigation projects, most started at least four years ago, AID supported both the notions of water user associations made up of farmer beneficiaries and of community organizers to form the water groups. The Private Voluntary Cooperation Office in AID has made serious efforts in recent years to encourage the private voluntary organizations (PVOs) it funds to do child survival projects to adopt a participatory approach to their work. The most promising new arena for community participation is in the context of the agency's Democracy and Governance Policy. As noted in the introductory section of this paper, the Africa Bureau recognizes the implicit links between community participation and the process of democratization and improved governance in Africa. No similar recognition of the linkage has yet been articulated by other AID bureaus in developing their regional strategies.

In addition to the new democracy initiatives, there remain some areas in AID with a built-in bias for community participation. One is Women in Development. Another is basic education, not so much because present programs lend themselves to participation but because some practitioners see some natural alliances with participation concepts in the future evolution of basic education programs. Like fugitive sprouts from last season's flower bed, participation initiatives pop up here and there in housing, forestry, and population programs. Introduction of fees for services in some sectors reintroduce some elements of participation. While some AID staff interviewed for this paper regard participation as having been in disfavor in the agency over the last decade, others did not regard participation as having been rejected by the agency. They contend rather that the nature of AID's present programs and focus do not lend themselves to participatory development. As one put it, "Aid moved away from 'hands-on' projects." The focus on private enterprise did not often result in participatory projects -- especially because individual farmers are not considered entrepreneurs. Also, some of AID's portfolio is now in non-project assistance and structural adjustment initiatives. Another AID staff person, who had earlier been regarded a proponent of participation within the Agency, said AID is not equipped to follow through on local participation. It cannot maintain a presence at the local level to insure that local elites do not dominate and take over. Not addressed was the question of whether U.S. PVOs or indigenous grassroots organizations might provide that local presence.

Three areas -- health, irrigation, and water and sanitation -- are worth specific treatment.

HEALTH

The centrally funded health program that at an earlier time had broad-scale primary health care projects that lent themselves to community participation now focuses on service delivery programs in ORT and immunizations. The emphasis is toward a social mobilization approach in conjunction with mass child survival campaigns. As Martin points out, "this approach makes use of mass communications and social marketing techniques to reach out and mobilize people quickly, to short-cutting the much lengthier community development/conscientization approach... While information is sought from families and individuals in order to make services acceptable and appropriate, the community has no active role, particularly as an organized entity, in selecting or planning services."⁴³ A review of 39 USAID Health and Child Survival Questionnaires in 1990 showed only five project respondents mentioning participation.

But in striking contrast to the centrally funded child survival programs, those funded by the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation and carried out by PVOs present a markedly different picture. In 1985, the Child Survival Action Initiative came into full force as Congress set aside special funds for growth monitoring, oral rehydration therapy, breast feeding, and immunization activities. Three successive PVC Child Survival and Health Coordinators (John Grant, Gerold V. Van der Vlugt, and John McEnaney) stressed community participation in the programs they monitored. They were reinforced in this by staff of the PVO Child Survival Support Program of the Johns Hopkins University.

In a 1988 "Lessons Learned Conference" on Child Survival Projects, 1985-1988, in Africa and Haiti, organized by Hopkins PVO Child Survival Support Program, it became clear that the two U.S. PVOs with the longest track record on community participation -- World Vision and Save the Children Federation -- had the most to teach the other PVO Child Survival grantees. In the reports given by the two PVOs of their child survival projects in Zimbabwe, both stressed the integration of those projects into ongoing community development programs.

The World Vision report said:

For the Child Survival project to have a demonstrable impact and to fulfill the long-term objectives, the community must be actively involved in all aspects of the project. Training at the village level, then, is based on the key strategies of community or social mobilization. This people-oriented approach in project implementation has truly given ownership of the project to the people...

In contrast to centrally-funded programs, community participation was stressed in PVO child survival programs.

The level of community participation resulting from the the social mobilization process is demonstrated in every contact with the villagers.

Save the Children Federation wrote in its report that its child survival program was "fully integrated into the SCF development program." It said its project involves the community at all levels and utilizes Village Development Committees and Ward Development Committees, many of whose members serve on the SCF Coordinating Committee. These committees mobilize the community as well as give feedback on all activities within their areas.

The PVO Child Survival Support Program reviewed final evaluations of 38 child survival projects funded in 1985 and 1986. Fifteen PVOs carried out 38 primarily rural projects in 18 countries in Latin America, Caribbean, Africa, and Asia with a total of \$18 million in funding. The evaluations showed there was community involvement in implementation and contribution of resources, but no substantial involvement in planning and design.⁴⁸

Gretchen Berggren, long identified with health and child survival programs for Save the Children Federation, headed the Final Evaluation Team in Bangladesh for the Kamalapur Child Survival project of World Vision Relief and Development/Bangladesh. Both the favorable performance under the project and the stress on participation by the evaluation team reflect well on both World Vision and Save the Children. The project is credited with making significant gains in achieving progress toward sustainability. "This has primarily occurred through the establishment of an indigenous infrastructure which has the potential for providing effective institutional capacity to continue to deliver health services, to address additional development problems as well as maintain linkages with the relevant local Government and community resources."⁴⁹

The section of the evaluation on community participation, written by Dr. Sam Voorhies of World Vision International Evaluation Staff, reported that "community participation is occurring through the establishment and training of Neighborhood Health Committees (50), Community Volunteers (100) and Focus Mothers Groups (45) which are emerging as a possible replacement for the community volunteers." He wrote that "while local leaders and beneficiaries have increasingly participated in the implementation of project activities, their participation in program planning and their contribution of local resources need to increase if project activities are to continue once Child Survival funding ceases."

This section of the evaluation noted that AID's proposal procedure "does not allow time for significant community participation in the initial program design." It goes on to suggest that it would not be advisable for any PVO to get into community involvement

until funding is assured. Yet funding is not granted until the program is designed. Nonetheless, a July 12, 1991 letter from the chief of PVC's Child Survival and Health Division,, in continuing to press grantees on the participation front asks: How have communities participated in the design and implementation of health services? The fact that that AID official and two of his predecessors continued to press for participatory development in a period in which there was little support for it in the Agency as a whole is remarkable. What is not surprising is that AID procedures (in this case relating to the time frame for proposals) militated against it. As noted above, even in an earlier period when the policy climate for participation was most congenial, obstacles loomed at every step of the way. The OECD DAC report was quoted above as stating that "the management, procedures, and career systems of aid agencies are not presently geared to such activities."

IRRIGATION

The period of AID's heavy involvement in irrigation projects has passed. Few new irrigation projects are being funded. There are currently five on-going projects in Near East and Asian countries of Egypt, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Philippines. A project in Nepal recently ended and a new project started. A new project in Morocco is in the design phase.

According to Peter Reiss, Deputy Director of Irrigation Support for Pacific, Asia, and the Near East (ISPAN), AID's contractor technical assistance arm, AID over the years has led other donor agencies in institutionalizing farmer participation and has influenced government irrigation agencies on participation and on the use of community organizers. Noting that the five on-going projects all started four or five years ago, Reiss said that in contrast to earlier days he doubted that a project that focused on participation as a primary objective would be approved. On the other hand, he thought it unimaginable that any new AID-funded project would be designed without farmer participation elements.

There have been very few assessments of irrigation projects that have focused on the participatory development aspects. (One exception is a case study, "Community Participation and Irrigation Development," in which Michael Morfit of AID and Mark Poffenberger of the Ford Foundation examined a project called the High Performance Sederhana Irrigation Systems (HPSIS) in Indonesia over a three-year period from 1981 to 1984.) In general there remains uncertainty about the long term effectiveness of farmer participation. What difference did their participation make? Is there proof that irrigation projects involving user

It is unimaginable that any new AID-funded irrigation project would be designed without farmer participation elements.

groups are more sustainable than projects that did not use them?

Then there is the important question of how early the farmer beneficiaries became involved. Most government irrigation agencies willing to go along with participation began to involve the farmers, not at the design and planning stage, but only in the construction and maintenance stage. Their aim was not community participation but providing cheap labor. And some wanted farmers to work on maintenance without having been involved in any of the earlier decisions. Anything like full-scale participation has been rare.

In December of 1985, AID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) did a study of 140 irrigation projects. Community participation and other key factors were coded and correlated with the percentage of Log Frame purposes these projects were able to fulfill.⁵⁰ The following were identified as "success" factors in AID's irrigation projects:

- Presence of a local Water User's Association
- Local responsibility for operation and maintenance
- Clear and non-conflictive roles and responsibilities

"Failure" in these projects correlated with the absence of these factors and related issues of community participation and decision-making:

- No perceived local control or ownership
- No local control over water allocation.

Involvement at the design phase is underscored in a midterm evaluation of a current project. The evaluation of Small Scale Irrigation Management Project (SSIMP) in Indonesia notes that the Project Paper "calls for beneficiaries to be involved from design through operations and maintenance." It goes on to comment: "There are few instances anywhere in the world where farmers have been involved as early as the design stage of projects as large as SSIMP surface sub-projects."⁵¹ (The HPSIS project that Morfit and Poffenberger evaluated did include involvement of farmers in the design phase.) The SSIMP project used an Indonesian NGO (the Institute for Economic and Social Research, Education, and Information) experienced in recruiting, training, fielding and supervising community organizers to assist in the organization of the user groups.

In a midterm evaluation of a Nepal project Water User Associations are described in some detail but the question of how early they are involved in the process is not addressed.⁵² The midterm evaluation report for the Irrigation Systems Management Project (ISMP) in Sri Lanka notes that Sri Lanka was one of the first countries in Asia "to form institutions to specifically address farmer participation in the improvement and management of irrigation systems."⁵³

WATER AND SANITATION

It is in water and sanitation that one can see the best current examples of community participation. It is the place where both the theory and practice of participation continues to be advanced.

Water and Sanitation for Health Project (WASH) began in 1980 as an AID response to the proclamation by the United Nations of an International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade. Although run by a consortium of organizations headed by Camp Dresser & McKee International, it has operated for all intents and purposes as the water and sanitation "unit" of AID's Office of Health.

Lessons Learned From the WASH Project summarizes its first ten years of experience in more than 600 activities in 60 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. WASH describes the central feature of its methodology as but a specific application of a broad democratic premise: that whatever the level of decision-making, ordinary people can be trusted to solve their own problems if they are given the chance, and no policy or program is likely to succeed unless they are.

When WASH began it had an engineering orientation and that was reflected in the number of engineers on its staff. Gradually, WASH shifted its emphasis (and its staffing) to reflect "the realization that bringing about improvements in water and sanitation is mainly a human rather than a technical problem."⁵⁴

J. Ellis Turner, WASH Project Director, cites an article by the head of the Water Section of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) analyzing the high rates of failure of SIDA water and sanitation projects in Tanzania where the majority of installations are not in use, either because they do not work or they do not meet the real needs of the population. The SIDA official blames in part the almost complete lack of community involvement, in particular that of women. "A major overall problem," said the official, "has been that improvements in water supplies have been treated as purely technical problems, rather than as a problem of social change requiring the full participation of the communities involved." Turner regards the Swedish analysis as reading like a litany from WASH's own *Lessons Learned* volume.

WASH stresses the essential role of active community participation at every step of a project and its corollary: that sustainable development programs also require active client participation at every stage beginning with planning. WASH contends that a participatory approach results in greater support for the solutions arrived at and a greater likelihood that the effort will continue

WASH stresses the essential role of active community participation at every step of a project.

after the technical assistance team has departed.

There is a refreshing frankness about both failures and successes in a steady stream of WASH-sponsored studies and evaluations.

What distinguishes WASH from many other development programs that use the rhetoric of participation is: a) that they have produced concrete guidelines on how to bring about participation,⁵⁵ and b) that there is a refreshing frankness about both failures and successes in a steady stream of WASH-sponsored studies and evaluations.⁵⁶ WASH hooks into the participatory process and institutions that are already there. May Yacoob, WASH Associate Director for Community Participation and Hygiene, pointed out that early WASH studies by herself and others stressed that achieving participation was very complex compared to the relative simplicity of the technical tasks involved in water supply development. Water is a community resource that raises basic issues of household and community behavior and control. The WASH studies emphasized the role of women as central to changing behavior, and urged that their role and needs be addressed as a *sine qua non* of successful water supply and sanitation projects. Yacoob later wrote that these views became "widely accepted" but they addressed only participation at the user level and focused on achieving project benefits. "It soon became clear," she wrote, "that this was not enough, that in addition to participation as users, participation as owners and managers was required to sustain project benefits."⁵⁷

Yacoob notes that a report done for WASH and for PROWESS, a UNDP project that promotes women's interests, pointed to a shift in pattern within the development community that de-emphasized the operational premise which for 40 years had focused on project initiation (the number of systems in place) in favor of project responsibility (the role of the community in sustaining systems).

A 1991 article that Yacoob co-authored with J. Walker examines projects that failed despite having been held to a strong community participation focus. They hypothesize that such failures may have been due to the lack of appreciation of the costs of time to rural communities. Such costs need to be identified and recognized at the outset by donors and central governments.⁵⁸

A recently completed WASH paper, "Evaluating Community Participation," reflects an expanded vision of participation that includes both capacity-building and community organizations - goals far beyond the hardware installation. This new emphasis on community participation, linking responsibility to sustainability, redefines the process in which communities learn to control and deal with technology, change and development. WASH's view of participation is now this:

"If community members develop the managerial skills necessary to sustain benefits created by a Water Supply and Sanitation Project (WS&S), they will in the process also

become more capable of undertaking other development activities in their community, a critical goal of WS&S projects. To achieve this kind of goal, community management requires a greater investment in time and resources by both implementing agencies and local communities.' '59

C O N C L U S I O N S

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**ONE**

Two decisions in AID's history had a dampening effect on community participation. In both cases they were decisions to phase out major programs which had provided the most opportunities for participatory approaches. The first was the 1963 decision to close down AID's extensive community development program. The second came 20 years later when integrated rural development won the disfavor of the AID Administrator. In each case, community participation itself was seen in some quarters as tainted, as guilty by association. The irony is that both programs were subsequently criticized for not being truly participative.

Holdercroft, in his paper on the rise and fall of community development, wrote of what he termed the widespread internal conflict and animosity in AID in the early 1960s between the community development personnel on the one side and the technical services personnel, particularly agriculturalists, on the other side. He described it as an "ideological battle which pitted the generalist against the specialist, the social scientist (excluding the economists) against the technologist." The paper on the rise and fall of rural development in AID has yet to be written. However, to an outside observer it does not appear that the demise of rural development was the result of any ideological battle within the agency. But the observer is also struck by the fact that there is little evidence of staff discussion of it. Nor did rural development's fall occasion much in way of substantive discussion by development practitioners and academics outside the government.

The section of this paper on the policy history of participation in AID begins with the observation that the ebb and flow of attention to participation depended on broader policy considerations which resulted either in encouraging efforts at participatory development or discouraging them. Seldom did the success or failure of community participation initiatives themselves determine whether similar efforts would be made in future projects. But like the demise of rural development, one could say that the shift away from participation in the last decade has prompted very little in way of substantive intellectual discussion of community participation within the agency or in the broader international development community outside of government.

TWO

Had the momentum on community participation fired by the New Directions mandate of the 1970's continued, AID would be in the forefront of aid agencies in both the theory and practice of participatory development. This assumes that with a continued momentum, AID would have produced

clearer operational guidelines and would have begun to deal with the organizational and procedural obstacles to participation. Even under the most benign policy umbrella, community participation would not have been very successful if those obstacles had not been faced and overcome.

THREE

If it has the will to do so, AID can catch up and surpass most of its sister aid agencies on community participation. To begin to accomplish this, AID can find a useful model at the World Bank. Two years ago a search for three recent Bank-financed projects that were "exceptionally participative" and could serve as models of best practice proved to be difficult.⁶⁰ Today, as noted in the introductory section of this paper, a learning process has been created on popular participation and 20 new projects with an exceptional focus on popular participation in various sectors and countries have been selected. The "learning group" (composed of project staff working on the 20 projects and specialists on participation from throughout the Bank) are gathering evidence and weighing the steps the Bank might take to promote popular participation. An underlying hypothesis of the exercise is that effective popular participation may require modifications in the Bank's typical operational practices (See Appendix B).

Essential to the start of the process is that a particular unit in the Bank took the initiative and became the catalyst. It was the International Economic Division, Department of External Affairs, designated EXTIE. It was the office responsible for NGO liaison. That unit first became involved because the topic of popular participation had emerged as a central issue among advocacy NGOs that follow the Bank and in the Bank/NGO Committee.

FOUR

A first step toward a revival of the practice of participation in AID is for a unit or person in the agency to take the first initiative and become the necessary catalyst. Before attempting to institute a formal process with approval and support from on high, the AID catalyst might begin by convening an informal, unofficial learning group. Among those invited might be some staff from the WASH project and any other current programs employing participation, including staff and consultants involved in the Africa Bureau's Democracy Initiative. Among some natural allies and potential learning group participants are the agency's anthropologists and others who have been involved in writing the Social Soundness Analysis for projects, a continuing requirement at AID that began in 1975. (The importance of these analyses should not be underestimated. By providing a factual analytical profile of the beneficiary population, they become a crucial step in any subsequent participatory process.)

FIVE

Convening an informal learning group could prove to be a major step in creating a consensus for participation at AID. Various changes and shifts in AID, particularly the shift in emphasis away from some of the village level "hands-on" projects of the 1970's, means that there are fewer projects that lend themselves to participatory approaches. Therefore, the task

of focusing on those projects that do lend themselves to community participation should prove relatively easy. An early task for such a group might be the preparation of a list of current projects that are employing participatory features. This is difficult to assess because many such efforts do not seem to be widely publicized. One AID staff person who noted that some field staff are making quiet attempts at participation, said that because participation is not on the list of current "buzz words," it may be practiced more than it is talked about. Another staff person said that there was currently more support for participation among AID field staff than among Washington staff. In the minds of many AID staff, participation is linked to New Directions or to rural development and is therefore part of the lexicon of the past. A learning group would need to grapple with the fact that participation is not contrary to the Four Pillars, the Blueprint for Development, or the current four initiatives, but enhancing of them all.

If AID does not deal with the issue of participation today it will need to do so tomorrow. The OECD/DAC initiative and the various NGO statements are but the latest indications that pressures for more people-centered development will continue.

SIX

There is something particularly attractive in the idea that a revival of participatory development in the agency might bubble up from a growing consensus for it from within the agency. The last time around, it was mandated from the top. It is reported that more than one AID official at that time made a point of saying that there certainly had been no participatory consultations with the staff before it was instituted. The endorsement of AID's leadership for the work of the learning group and indeed for the revival of participation will eventually be necessary. Only with full support from the top is there a likelihood that the obstacles to participation that revolve around the management, procedures, and reward system of the agency will be removed. With that endorsement, the group might move along the lines of the Bank model to select certain projects from various sectors and regions that would attempt full scale participation.

SEVEN

What does not appear to be needed in reviving participation are more policy documents. The legislation regarding participation is still on the books. The language on participation in the AID Handbook remains valid and compelling, although additional operational guidance might be useful. A speech by the Administrator on the subject may be all that is needed to legitimize participation in the minds of AID staff once again.

EIGHT

As noted above, at least one Regional bureau in AID recognizes the implicit links between community participation and the process of democratization. A learning group would find it fruitful to monitor this initiative carefully. Another important task of a learning group would be to look ahead and see how participatory practices might fit in new sector initiatives -- in health, for example, as it moves to address problems in urban areas or in basic education

as it evolves. Environment now and in the future provides particular opportunities beyond social forestry which has long had participatory elements. Of relevance to AID is the fact that the World Bank, compared to AID a relative newcomer to environment projects, is deeply involved in participation as it pursues some of its new initiatives. For example, it recently selected 40 projects, many of them large infrastructure projects, that will require full scale environmental assessments. One of the most important chapters in a new World Bank Sourcebook on such assessments is titled, "Community Involvement and the Role of NGO's in Environmental Reviews."

* * *

AID's long experience with participation means it has much to offer the community of donor agencies. It cannot position itself to take such a leadership role without some explicit initiatives. A beginning can be the informal learning group if some person or unit in the agency becomes the catalyst for it.

NOTES

¹ This section draws primarily from two sources: Lane E. Holdcroft, "The Rise and Fall of Community Development in Developing Countries, 1950-65: A Critical Analysis and an Annotated Bibliography," Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University, 1973, pp. 5-8; and Norman T. Uphoff, John M. Cohen, and Arthur A. Goldsmith, "Feasibility and Application of Rural Development Participation: A State of the Art Paper," Rural Development Committee, Cornell University, Ithica, N.Y., 1979, pp. 14-21.

² See Sidney Baldwin, Poverty and Politics: The Rise and Decline of the Farm Security Administration, University of North Carolina Press, 1968.

³ Uphoff, Cohen, and Goldsmith, op cit., pp. 22-23.

⁴ Holdcroft, op cit., p. 30.

⁵ Two significant and recent books on people-centered development are Stephen and Douglas Hellinger and Fred M. O'Regan, Aid for Just Development, Boulder & London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988' and David C. Korton, Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda. West Hartford, Conn: Kumarian Press, 1990. (Korten is President and founder of the People-Centered Development Forum. The Hellingers direct the Washington-based organization, The Development Gap.)

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⁷ Ibid., p. 178.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ J. Botkin, M. Elmajdjra, and M. Malitza, No Limits to Learning, N.Y." Pergamman, 1979, pp. 30-31.

¹⁰ Ivan D. Illich, Medical Nemesis and Toward History of Needs, N.Y.: Pantheon, 1976 and 1978; and Deschooling Society, N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1983. Also see comment by Denis Goulet in his "Participation in Development: New Avenues," World Development, Vol 17, No. 2, 1989, p. 166.

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¹³ Philip H. Coombs (Ed) Meeting the Basic Needs of the Rural Poor: The Integrated Community-Based Approach, International Council for Educational Development, 1980, p. 12. See also Philip Coombs and Manzoor Ahmed, Editors, Attacking Rural Poverty: How Non-formal Education Can Help, ICED, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1974.

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¹⁶ Memorandum to the World Bank Popular Participation Learning Group from David Beckmann, EXTIE, May 10, 1991, p. 1.

¹⁷ Caroline O. Moser. "Approaches to Community Participation in Urban Development Programs in Third World Countries," paper commissioned for a World Bank Economic Development Institute Workshop on Participation, September, 1986.

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¹⁹ Samuel Paul. Community Participation in Development Projects: The World Bank Experience. World Bank Discussion Paper No. 6, 1987. World Bank, Washington, D.C.

²⁰ Patricia A. Martin. "Community Participation in Health and Population Programs." Paper commissioned for World Bank Economic Development Institute Workshop on Participation, September 1986.

²¹ Congressional Record, March 15, 1966.

²² Norman T. Uphoff, John M. Cohen, and Arthur A. Goldsmith. Feasibility and Application of Rural Development Participation: A State-of-the-Art Paper. Rural Development Committee, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 1979.

²³ Speech to the International Studies Association, San Francisco, CA, March 27, 1969.

Stephen and Douglas Hellinger and Fred M. O'Regan in Aid for Just Development. Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988, p. 21, describe another reaction to the failure to implement Title IX: "In 1969, a few individuals from Congress, the State Department and NGO's, disillusioned with the Alliance for Progress and AID's rejection of the principles and practices embodied in Title IX, drafted legislation to create a new institution." Congress authorized it by late 1969 and in 1971, the Inter-American Foundation (IAF) was in operation. In its first 15 years, it provided over 2,000 grants in support of some 1,700 NGO's in Latin America and the Caribbean. It was a model for the creation of the African Development Foundation which started operations in 1984.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 22.

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²⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

²⁸ Airgram A-239. "Program and Project Issues in AID's 'New Directions.'" April 28, 1976, pp. 7-8.

²⁹ CRS Report, pp. 226-228

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⁴² Cornell University Rural Development Committee. Introduction to Summary Report, Rural Development Participation Project, 1977-82.

⁴³ Elliott R. Morss and David Gow. "Integrated Rural Development: Nine Critical Implementation Problems." Washington, D.C.: Development Alternatives, Inc., February 1981, pp. 5-6.

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⁴⁵ Coralie Bryant. "Organizational Impediments to Making Participation a Reality: Swimming Upstream in AID." Rural Development Participation Review. Cornell University, Vol. I, No. 3, 1980, pp. 8-10.

⁴⁶ Uphoff memorandum of November 24, 1980. Printed in Summary Report, Rural Development Participation Project. Also in Appendix E of this paper.

⁴⁷ Martin, op. cit..

⁴⁸ PVO Child Survival, Technical Report, December, 1990, Vol 2, No 1, PVO Child Survival Support Program, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md., p.7.

⁴⁹ World Vision Relief and Development/Bangladesh, Final Evaluation of the Kamalapur Child Survival Project, September 14, 1991, p. 14)

⁵⁰ Cited in Goddard and Cotter, op. cit., p. 141.

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⁵² "Irrigation Management Project Midterm Evaluation Report," Nepal, ISPAN Report No. 16, July 1989.

⁵³ "Irrigation Systems Management Project Evaluation Report," Sri Lanka, ISPAN Report No. 34, July, 1990.

⁵⁴ Lessons from the WASH Project: Ten Years of Water and Sanitation in Developing Countries, Water and Sanitation for Health Project, 1611 N. Kent St., Room 1001, Arlington, VA, 1990.

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⁵⁶ For example, Paula Donnelly-Roark, "New Participatory Framework for the Design and Management of Sustainable Water Supply and Sanitation Projects."

⁵⁷ "From Users to Managers: Community Involvement in Water-Supply and Sanitation Projects," Waterlines, Vol. 9, No. 1, July, 1990, p. 30.

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⁵⁹ May Yacoob and Tom Cook, "Evaluating Community Participation," WASH Technical Report (# not yet assigned), June, 1991.

⁶⁰ See William J. Nagle and Sanjoy Ghose, "Community Participation in World Bank Supported Projects." Discussion Paper No. 8, Strategic Planning and Review Department, The World Bank, June 1990.

APPENDIX A

**OECD/DAC Paper on
The Role of Development Co-Operation in
Contributing to Participation Development**

**ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC
CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION
DIRECTORATE**

**DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
COMMITTEE**

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Or. Eng.

**THE ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION IN
CONTRIBUTING TO PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT**

(Note by the Secretariat)

The attached paper contains background information on Participatory Development. It is to be used as Chapter III of the 1991 DAC Chairman's Report [cf. Outline in DCD(91)3]. It may also be useful as background for the discussion of Participatory Development at the Senior Level Meeting on 17-18 June. Comments from Delegations on this draft are invited.

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**The Role of Development Co-operation
in Contributing to Participatory Development**

1. Participatory development: A lead theme for development co-operation in the 1990s

1. In its "Policy Statement on Development Co-operation in the 1990s", adopted at the 1989 High-Level Meeting, the DAC noted that "the economically advanced countries cannot live in enclaves of prosperity in a world where other countries face growing mass poverty, economic and financial instability and environmental degradation". According to the World Bank more than an estimated one billion people live in poverty comprising a third of the developing world's population. Over 600 million of them are "extremely poor". The essential conclusion of the DAC's Policy Statement was that the vicious circle of underdevelopment linking high population growth, poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy and environmental degradation can be broken through pursuit of three basic, interrelated themes as central objectives for development co-operation in the decade ahead:

- promoting sustainable economic growth;
- enabling broader participation of all the people in the productive processes and a more equitable sharing of their benefits; and,
- ensuring environmental sustainability and slowing population growth where it is too high to permit sustainable development.

The DAC approach to participatory development

2. Ultimately, development and development co-operation succeed only if they ensure broad participation and sharing in development and its benefits, as well as decent conditions for life, income and employment for the whole of the population, including vulnerable and underprivileged groups. Participatory development encompasses these and other related objectives, and was the principal subject of discussion at the 1990 High-Level Meeting which concluded:

3. "DAC Members reaffirm their conviction that there is a vital connection between open, democratic and accountable political systems, individual rights and the effective and equitable operation of economic systems with substantial reductions in poverty. Participatory development requires strategies and approaches which combine effective economic policies, equitable access to basic social and economic services and broader popular participation in decision-making on the orientation of government policies and programmes. DAC Members are encouraged to note that there is a large consensus on these values and orientations as is evidenced *inter alia* by the recent United Nations Conference on the Least-Developed Countries.

4. DAC Members will work with their developing-country partners to achieve more participatory development, in particular in the following areas:

- priority for programmes providing affordable, effective and sustainable services, such as for education, training and health, for the masses of the people, including the poor, and broad participation in selection, administration and financing of these services;
- promoting conditions for a dynamic private sector, strengthening the role of individual and community-based initiatives, private enterprise and the market system, and facilitating broad access to productive assets;
- establishing an enabling policy environment and the necessary support for the micro-enterprise and informal sectors;
- establishing appropriate boundaries for the role of central government and a greater role for local organisations and NGOs;
- associating users through appropriate organisations with the design and implementation of aid-financed projects;
- enabling active participation of women in the processes of development as decision-makers, producers and providers of basic care;
- assisting developing countries in strengthening institutions, policies and practices leading to good government at central and local level;
- respect of human rights, including effective and accessible legal systems;
- strengthening the fight against corruption.

The High-Level Meeting asked the DAC to consider in more detail the operational implications of incorporating issues of participatory development into programme planning and management; and also the best ways of carrying out donor co-ordination, and dialogue with recipients on this issue."

5. The DAC discussion also showed Members' conviction that participatory development cannot be achieved without the development of good government. The definition of good government is a complex issue but competence and honesty, public accountability, broader participation in discussion and decision-making on central issues and generally the encouragement of individual and community-based initiatives are clearly integral features. This in turn implies the strengthening of extra-government institutions and organisations to assist in the development of good government and improved management capabilities at all levels.

A widely shared concern

6. The DAC's interest in broad-based participatory development reflects a common and widespread concern with the shortcomings of development in the past

decades. The concerns with its future orientations centre largely around the notions of the organisation of society; opportunities for private initiative; popular participation in development; and the accountability and efficiency of governments as major and relatively new subjects for development practitioners. These concerns are shared by international and bilateral aid agencies as well as by rapidly growing groups of people in developing countries, including some prominent leaders.

7. The precise focus of approach may vary in each case. The World Bank's work on long-term prospects for sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa led it to explore the role of "governance" in development. Under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, a major conference convened in Arusha in 1990 attended by over 500 representatives of African grassroots organisations adopted an "African Charter" of popular participation in development. In their report "The Challenge to the South" (1990), the 29 leading Third World personalities of the South Commission examine the defects of development in the 1980s and the strategies needed to redress them. These strategies stress sustained economic growth, good government, equity and popular participation. The UNDP and UNICEF concentrate their recent analyses and prescriptions on human resource formation as the central and essential feature of broad-based development.

8. A current of political liberalisation, underway or demanded, contributes positively to this global rethinking of development strategies. Coincidentally, a number of countries, many of them in the developing world, are introducing policies of economic liberalisation centered around market-oriented approaches. The historic changes in central and eastern Europe appear to create a fundamentally new East-West political climate. In that region and in Latin America, in particular, initiatives are underway to establish more open, democratic societies. Strong aspirations towards more accountability in government and more equity in development are also manifest in a number of African countries. Benin's political developments entailing an innovative process of transparency and consensus building are apparently quite attractive to people of other African countries. This process culminated in free elections and the formation of a new government in Benin in March 1991.

9. Leading political figures of DAC countries have publicly and explicitly linked development co-operation with changes required by developing nations in respecting human rights or in improving governance. At the conference of French-speaking Heads of State in June 1990, the President of France stated that his government would extend aid more enthusiastically to African countries that were moving towards democracy. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary of the United Kingdom stated in September 1990: "There is no reason why we should expect the Third World to accept lower standards than those which apply elsewhere. Poverty does not justify torture, tyranny or economic incompetence." He added that hard evidence of the damage wrought by economic mismanagement continued to accumulate. "The question now for the developed world is how best to encourage the trend toward better government. The principle of conditionality has been clearly laid down by the British government, by the European Community, and by the United States".

The notion of participatory development

10. Considering that popular participation defies a precise and all-embracing definition, most writers on the subject aim at offering working definitions. Of the latter an important one is "empowerment", defined by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development as "the organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control". The notion of participation extends beyond technical/economic considerations into the political realm. Demanded or actual changes in power relations are often resented as a threat by those who already hold power and control resources.

11. Is participation an end, a means or both? When it is directed from above it becomes mobilisation, a means of getting things done. When it arises from below, it is a way for people to obtain a larger share of the benefits of development. Participation can assume different degrees and forms. It may be passive, such as using a service or attending a meeting and accepting decisions made by others. It may entail more active stances such as involvement in the delivery of a service or, as UNICEF defines it, "in real decision-making at every stage -- identification of problems, the study of feasibility, planning, implementation, and evaluation". In the real world, the latter definition most often applies to activities and decision-making at the local level. At higher levels the power to take decisions is usually reserved for a select few. Through participation in a fuller way at the local level, people gain knowledge and awareness of their own social, economic and political conditions and learn to address them. Thus, participation in grassroots organisations can give people experience in democracy and empowerment which, in turn, could be a foundation for democratic life in their society as a whole.

12. Participatory development involves complex economic, social, political and institutional issues. There is growing acceptance of the notion and its underlying elements in developing countries. It is also clear, on the other hand, that effective progress towards the realisation of the objectives of participatory development has so far been limited and diverse. Owing to economic, political, social and cultural traditions in developing countries, fundamental changes in basic attitudes towards the role of government, private initiative, equity and equal rights, will often take a long time.

13. The notion of participatory development has important implications for donor-recipient relations. A key issue for donors is to find new approaches to ensure that aid-financed projects and programmes contribute more decisively to the three key requirements: effective economic policies, equitable access to services and resources and broader popular participation in decision-making. The DAC's Principles for Project Appraisal, Programme Assistance and New Orientations in Technical Co-operation together with other adopted guidelines provide direction.

14. The remainder of this chapter develops further essential components of the participatory development concept: appropriate economic policies; access to essential services; broader participation in decision-making; strengthening the role of women; larger use of "less governmentalised" channels for aid; fostering NGOs; co-operation in strengthening legal and democratic institutions; and implications for policy dialogue.

2. Effective economic policies

15. Broad-based economic growth is a prerequisite for equitable and sustainable development. It fosters the structural transformations which make up the development process, generates remunerative employment and produces the resources required to extend adequate economic and social services and raise standards of living. Growth is "broad-based" by virtue of its qualitative character. The 1989 Chairman's Report noted that equitable development requires broad-based, sustained economic growth which itself "cannot be maintained unless there is participatory and equitable development in which the masses of people are involved in the productive processes and in the sharing of its benefits".

16. Developing countries and the aid community recognise the central importance of effective policies for broad-based economic growth. Developing countries are themselves responsible for determining their development objectives and the policies to meet them, but many of them continue to need external help. Assisting them in their efforts to improve their economic and development policies is a high priority of development co-operation in the 1990s.

17. The precise policy mix needed for broad-based growth depends on each country's particular circumstances. It is the central conclusion of DAC work, confirmed by the experience of the newly industrialising economies and other successful developing countries, that private sector development is an essential, common ingredient of effective policies for this purpose. Market-based, efficiency-oriented policies generate broad-based equitable growth and help alleviate poverty. They contribute to greater equity by involving the masses of the people in productive processes and reinforcing the employment content of economic growth. They can tap the productive potential of the poor, for it is in the private sector where most of the income earning opportunities for the poor are found. Productive use can be made of the poor's most abundant asset, their labour, through appropriate measures (e.g. wage, price and regulatory policies) which increase the labour intensity of the productive processes. Increased competition enhances efficiency and a broader distribution of the economic benefits of growth.

18. DAC Members have agreed that a major focus for future aid should be the private sector, with a view to promoting dynamic and sustainable development and the equitable diffusion of the benefits of economic growth to more people. DAC Members are actively reviewing and developing their policies in key areas related to private sector development. A first set of results is contained in "Enhanced International Co-operation in Private Sector Development and Foreign Investment in Developing Countries: Recommended Policies and Action" (Chapter I of "Promoting Private Enterprise in Developing Countries", OECD, 1990). Aid policies and programming in support of developing the private sector, especially micro-enterprises and the informal sector, are discussed in Chapter IV.

19. Many countries are pursuing structural adjustment programmes entailing economic policy and institutional reforms centered around a transition from a "dirigiste" state-dominated economy to a liberal, market-oriented one. These programmes encompass not only short-term stabilisation measures to redress

external and internal payments imbalances, but also basic structural reforms at macro and sectoral levels to enhance the economy's flexibility and productivity, including infrastructural and sectoral investments for long-term development. Their basic goal is to establish the economic conditions and policy environment in which sustainable longer-term development efforts by developing countries supported by donors can bear fruit. It is vital that they continue to receive the required assistance from donors, usually in the form of co-ordinated, policy-based programme support.

20. Efficient allocation of public resources is an integral aspect of effective policies and of improving the supply of domestic financing which they need. One way for governments to enhance efficiency is through some reallocation of resources to sectors which contribute more to broad-based growth and development. In their 1990 High-Level Meeting Statement DAC Members underlined "that in the context of a persisting world capital shortage, efforts to support and encourage increased domestic savings in developing countries are especially important; for example, in many cases, large resources could be released from military budgets." The UNDP estimates that these countries devote a larger share of their combined GNP to their armed forces (5.5 per cent) than to education and health combined (5.3 per cent); and that many countries spend two to three times more on the former than on the latter.

21. Thus there is clearly scope for shifting resources from military uses to economic services for the poor and infrastructure supporting economic activities in which the poor are engaged, e.g. agriculture and the rural and urban informal sectors. Resources could also be reallocated to the provision of education, training, health care, water and sanitation, and family planning services. Indeed, human resource development is a critical dimension of a strategy for participatory development, as it endows the poor with the health, education and skills they need to participate more fully in the economy's productive processes. This is manifestly demonstrated by the experience of successful developing countries. Just where the marginal dollar should be spent is a difficult choice which depends on each country's particular needs. In its study "Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth", the World Bank calculates that African countries need to double the share of their GNP devoted to human resource development (to about 8-10 per cent) through the year 2000 and beyond, if they are to realise universal primary schooling, health and family planning goals, food security and improved nutrition. In its "Human Development Report 1990", the UNDP argues that 25-30 per cent of total development outlays should be allocated to spending on social services in order to maintain an appropriate balance between economic and social development.

22. Developing countries, especially the poorest ones, will not have adequate resources to translate well conceived policies into effective practice for broad-based growth and human resource development without a favourable external economic environment. In their 1990 High-Level Meeting Statement DAC Members pledged "their active support within their own governments and countries" to obtain from the Uruguay Round "a substantial package of trade liberalisation, including important steps to improve trade access for products of significance to developing countries." They welcomed "consideration in the Paris Club of proposals for further bilateral official debt relief to severely indebted low-income countries implementing adjustment programmes". These countries will continue to require concessional aid in support of their efforts to achieve policy reforms and participatory development.

23. In their 1990 Statement, DAC Members also recognised that "in view of the huge development tasks ahead, particularly given the strong efforts towards democratisation and economic policy reform throughout the developing world, substantial additional aid efforts will be required both quantitatively and qualitatively". They stressed at the same time "that in view of the scarcity of resources, developing countries' own development efforts, including structural efforts, should be an important consideration in the provision of aid." In this regard, issues of aid allocation both to and within countries will merit careful reconsideration.

3. **Broad-based access to essential services: implications for the design of aid-financed projects and programmes**

24. The extent to which aid-financed projects and programmes, and indeed public investment and expenditure programmes generally, reach the vast majority of people depends both on the nature of the activities and on specific choices of target groups.

25. Experience with attempts to direct projects and programmes at specific target groups, in particular the poor, has been mixed. Clearly, a prerequisite is the political commitment of developing-country governments. Donor attention to distributive impacts could strengthen the hand of those elements in host societies and governments which work at improving equity. Donors and recipients face a whole range of political, technical and organisational problems which must be addressed continuously with full transparency and at all levels.

26. A related strategy is for donors to emphasize activities which are likely to have broad-based impact, especially on the poor. Improving access and affordability of essential economic and social services implies giving priority to some activities over others. DAC Members agreed in Development Co-operation in the 1990s:

-- higher priority is needed for making available, on the widest possible scale, sustainable and effective education and training, basic health care, and credit and advice for small farmers and entrepreneurs including women;

-- improved food security and adequate nutrition through broad-based agricultural and rural development, creating increased production and income, remain an elementary development co-operation objective."

27. The battle continues over the priorities for activities which favour the greatest number of people over those which benefit more politically powerful groups. This remains a constant challenge for aid agencies in the policy dialogue and in project/programme negotiations. Recipient governments should reconsider the inequitable patterns of development which have often been marked by an urban middle-class bias in resource distribution, including a preference for high technology. Inequitable patterns in the provision of essential services are also associated with an inefficient use of resources.

28. Where governments become truly committed to broad-based development donors can assist them in designing and implementing sectoral and sub-sectoral strategies to develop a more equitable provision of essential services. Such strategies could entail more cost-effective social spending aimed at making services accessible and responsive to the needs of larger numbers of people, especially the poor. Rather than concentrating resources on costly, curative health services benefiting the few, governments could reallocate public expenditure to less expensive primary health care. The latter emphasizes prevention-oriented services and other public health measures that use low-cost technologies and are addressed to the major health problems of the masses.

29. Governments should also rationalise very high cost tertiary, especially university education, and concentrate more resources on primary schooling and other basic education (adult literacy, skill training) towards meeting the learning needs of the majority, in accordance with the targets internationally agreed upon at the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand, in March 1990. Those targets include *inter alia* the attainment of universal access to, and completion of, primary education by the year 2000. Ghana is one example where multilateral and bilateral donors support the formulation and implementation of a programme to reform the educational system along those lines.

30. In practice, while there have been some remarkable individual successes, much more determined efforts are required to emphasize activities to which the broad masses of the people have access. It is clear also that programmes which meet popular demand, and in whose design, implementation and financing users are involved, are more likely to be sustainable. The aim must thus be to develop programmes with broad and sustained impacts. This will require co-ordinated, multi-donor approaches in support of committed recipients.

31. There are many ways in which aid design could further the objectives of equitable access and popular participation. By way of illustration, the DAC Expert Group on Women in Development has suggested the following:

- Institutional reform of ministries providing essential services should be given higher priority and ministries traditionally neglected could be given greater assistance to become active agents for social development, e.g. ministries for women's affairs and community development.
- Health and population programmes should focus on self-respect, needs and choice, and services should be designed to enhance the participation of beneficiaries.
- Better communications cut down isolation and enhance participation. Therefore, due attention should be paid to rural roads and electrification in the planning of investments.
- A "learning by doing" approach to project design and implementation enhances participation and allows for local diversity. More projects could be designed along these lines supporting devolution and participatory local government.

Design of health and education programmes

32. The difficulty in designing health and education systems and related aid programmes aimed at poor majorities cannot be underestimated. Aid programme design in support of sectoral and sub-sectoral strategies often involves a variety of different objectives and emphases. This is reflected in the conclusions of DAC's meeting on primary health care ("Strengthening Development Co-operation for Primary Health Care: A DAC Concern", OECD, 1989). Having noted that scope exists for increasing the effectiveness of aid for primary health care, the report suggests that donor agencies review the level of their ODA committed to the health sector against the priority given to it. The report notes that for their part recipient countries face difficulties in reallocating resources within their health systems. Donor-recipient dialogue can strengthen the reallocation process. To facilitate dialogue, as well as consistency between donors and other interested parties in supporting primary health care, donors' health aid policies have to be made quite explicit.

33. DAC Members also agreed to focus their aid on initiatives that are designed to reduce inequities in access to health care, that are oriented to the needs of the poor, and that emphasize local-level activities which can be undertaken and controlled by the people themselves. Further, priority must be given to strengthening national capacities for the formulation and execution of coherent and comprehensive policies and plans for primary health care. Thus, donors should help recipients develop management capacities. Lastly, the likelihood for long-term sustainability of primary health care, especially financial, will be increased if full use is made of the private sector, NGOs, women's groups and similar organisations to provide information and services to communities not adequately covered by primary health care. Donors could help private companies to establish health programmes for their workers.

34. Documentation prepared for the World Conference on Education for All and related studies argue for donors to re-examine their aid practices in order to help recipient countries attain the Conference targets (Conference "Background Document", 1990; and, "Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries: A Review of Policy Options", World Bank, 1990). Given the multiple contributions of education, especially at the primary level, to social and economic development, donors should allocate more of their total ODA to education and more of their education aid to primary school programmes particularly in the poorest countries. These programmes tend to be dispersed geographically and to demand more local cost rather than foreign exchange financing. In supporting them, donors should focus their funding on the most cost-effective inputs for improved learning and efficiency, i.e. recurrent costs of qualified teachers, didactic materials and the introduction of better administrative and pedagogical methods as well as curricular reforms.

35. A concrete education strategy comprising sector-wide policies and goals is critical both for a country's own efforts and for the co-ordination and effectiveness of external aid. Donors should assist recipient governments in strategy formulation by providing technical advice for preparing policy options and by financing research studies and policy analyses. Priority should also be given to helping countries build up their national capacities to plan and implement educational development. Policy-based, sector and sub-sector programme aid appears to be more suitable than project assistance for long-term

support of sector-wide strategies encompassing different, yet inter-related policies and reforms between and within sub-sectors. It could enable a donor to respond flexibly to a recipient's diverse needs including those for recurrent cost financing of geographically dispersed programmes. It could also facilitate donor efforts to promote improved sector-wide policy-making, resource mobilisation and management.

36. The documentation referred to above notes that during most of the past decade education assistance barely exceeded an average of 9 per cent of total ODA per annum. More than 95 per cent of it went to post-primary, especially tertiary, education. Flows to primary schooling in the low-income developing countries with rapid population growth and with the least developed primary education declined in relation to flows those to other developing countries. These flows financed individual and often unco-ordinated project interventions mainly for physical infrastructure and for non-educational and non-salary recurrent outlays. Limited both in scope and geographical spread, interventions were heavily reliant on donor technical assistance with long-term experts filling recipient competence gaps to the detriment of national capacity building.

37. Donors should collaborate with a recipient government to foster the active participation in basic educational development of key interest groups and clients at the community level, such as student, parent, teacher and other associations; employers; co-operatives; religious bodies and local and international NGOs. By helping to identify learning needs, and to assess the potential availability of community resources for sharing the burden of education costs, these groups could contribute to sector strategy design. By mobilising their own financial and human resources, and by providing certain basic education and training services themselves, they could contribute to strategy implementation as well as programme sustainability. It follows that they would be closely involved in the design and execution of donors' aid programmes which support the sector strategy. Active participation of this kind would facilitate a commitment and a consensus of support at the community level to the planned goals. It could also enhance popular demand for a higher quality of educational services.

38. The DAC will hold a meeting in 1992 in order to discuss how donors can best assist in the national implementation of the consensus reached at the Jomtien Conference.

4. Broader popular participation in decision-making

39. Participatory processes must come from within a country, they cannot be imported. But as a result of increasingly integrated global communications, developments in one part of the world may quickly influence people in other countries. There are encouraging signals from the Third World of a new interest in democratic political systems.

The problems in developing countries

40. The report of the South Commission notes that over time a number of developing countries moved away from popular participation. "Linked to the

failure to make people central, as both the instruments and the purpose of development efforts, was the tendency to move away from democratic government towards various types of autocracy or dictatorships, military or civilian." The report lists several reasons and features for this process starting with the historic legacy of colonialism. Some governments felt nervous about the fragility of states composed of different ethnic groups, or perceived popular participation as a threat to themselves. Dissatisfaction with lack of broad-based development led to radical and even armed movements in several Latin American countries, to which, in many cases, the elites responded with military dictatorships. In a number of countries, serious shortages of qualified manpower led to overcentralising administration and planning. There was inadequate appreciation of the need for clear and predictable procedures for public action and intervention, for accountability to the people, and for an independent and competent judiciary protecting people from arbitrariness.

41. Excessive centralisation led to a slow pace in decision-making, inefficiency, and in some cases to widespread apathy within the society. Inadequacies in administrative and implementation capacities also tended to discredit planning and public intervention. These factors, together with laxity of tax administration, authoritarian regimes, the underpayment of civil servants and corrupting external influences (for obtaining contracts, arms sales, etc.) created the conditions for corruption. As to this latter problem, which is common to most, if not all societies and states, the South Commission, like many other observers, believes that improved accountability in public finance and a free press are essential safeguards.

42. Other leading Third World personalities concur with the analysis of the South Commission, as exemplified by statements at conferences of the Africa Leadership Forum held in 1990. In the words of Mr Adebayo Adedeji, UN Under Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the political crisis of the African region is at least as important as the economic crisis. Poor governance, lack of accountability and of popular participation, and an increasingly narrow basis of decision-making have led to a crisis of confidence between the governed and their government. As the crisis deepened, the pervasive lack of democracy led to the marginalisation of the people in the development process.

A new resolve

43. Increased popular participation is now being advocated on a broad front. The South Commission views a democratic environment guaranteeing fundamental human rights as an essential goal of development centred on the people as well as a crucial means of accelerating development. In addition to strengthening governmental public democratic institutions, governments should encourage non-governmental and grassroots organisations to assume responsibility for economic and social advances. By mobilising local human and financial resources, such organisations help to meet the felt needs of their members and are important parts of the democratic system. The aforementioned conference of the Africa Leadership Forum selected "basic ingredients of democracy" as one of its main themes. Similar principles are expressed in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries in the 1990s, approved at the Paris Conference in September 1990. And over the past few years, there

were many instances of street demonstrations in developing countries expressing the demands of groups of people, often led by students, for democracy and against institutionalised violence and privileges. In several countries, there ensued the introduction of more democratic political systems.

44. It has long been recognised that participation is also required at the level of aid-financed activities to ensure closer matching with needs, possible savings in project costs and, above all, sustainability after aid has been phased out. Greater determination is required to associate users through appropriate organisations with design and implementation of development programmes. This important point was prominently established in the DAC Principles for Project Appraisal (cf. the 1988 edition of this Report). A similar concern is stressed by the DAC Expert Group on Aid Evaluation. In their opinion, participation in evaluation has significant implications for long-term sustainability since recipients are solely responsible after the donor has left. Participative evaluations provide opportunities for learning by doing and strengthen skills and capacities in the host countries.

5. Strengthening the role of women as an essential aspect of participatory development

Participation and gender

45. The UN Decade for Women led to belated recognition of the multiplicity of women's contributions to development as main producers of food, providers of drinking water and firewood and having a major responsibility in health care, nutrition and hygiene. It also drew attention to their activities as entrepreneurs in the informal sector and their key role in the management of natural resources, not to mention their critical influence on fertility rates and the education of children.

46. It became clear that women's many tasks and responsibilities, as well as their needs and constraints, had been seriously undervalued in conventional development approaches. This affected the overall effectiveness of development efforts and particularly reduced benefits accruing to women. Donor agencies have reconsidered their previous development approaches and have formulated WID strategies, along the lines of the *DAC Guiding Principles on Women in Development*, which are essentially built on the premises of participatory development.

47. For long it was assumed that the socio-economic environment acted equally upon people irrespective of their gender. In reality, the situation of women is exacerbated because their status is different to that of men in terms of their roles in both the household and the economy. To gain access to services, resources and opportunities, women face unique problems. Continuous and extensive childcare and other domestic responsibilities combined with income-earning activities overtax their time and energy. The cultural environment, social values and legal systems are often biased against women and impede their access to key resources or services such as land, credit, education, training and technology.

48. Improving the situation of women requires strategies that take gender differences fully into account. If development projects that benefit

low-income women are to succeed, they must, however, not only be gender aware but must also be based on women's own clearly expressed demands and priorities. Participatory methodologies of project design and implementation are proving to be an effective strategy for expanding opportunities for women because they feel more committed and their needs, abilities and concerns are addressed from the outset. Gender analysis and participatory methodologies are indeed increasingly used by donors to ensure women's full participation in their community and national development.

Enhancing women's involvement in economic activities

49. There are several compelling reasons for explicit efforts to expand employment opportunities for women and, particularly, to support their income-generating activities in the agricultural and informal sectors where they play a predominant role as economic agents. Women are often primary income earners. A large number of households in Africa are headed by women due to divorce or the migration of men to the cities. In Latin American towns, women head nearly 50 per cent of the households. Even in male-headed households, the men's earnings are usually insufficient to meet basic survival needs of the family. In addition, it has been documented that income earned by women is most likely to be spent on essential goods for the nutrition and health needs of their families.

50. Major constraints have to be overcome in order to improve women's productivity and enable their participation in economic activities. Issues related to their restricted access to credit, their limited time availability or transport constraints, for example, have been addressed successfully in the framework of development projects as illustrated below. Institutional and legal constraints which limit women's access to productive resources, on the other hand, will have to be addressed at the policy level. The policy dialogue between donor agencies and recipient governments can play a key role in this context.

51. Lending policies of most commercial banks require collateral in the form of land titles, capital goods or savings. Those resource requirements are outside the reach of the majority of the poor and especially of women. Both governments and donors have supported innovative credit programmes using grassroots organisations and women's groups in, e.g., Bangladesh, India and some parts of Africa. Credit under such schemes is extended on the basis of individual credentials as well as project viability and not necessarily on the availability of collateral. Peer pressure ensures high repayment rates.

52. Women spend excessive amounts of time in unpaid domestic and agricultural work. In many parts of the developing world women must walk several hours a day to fetch water. Deforestation also means that they have to spend more hours collecting wood for fuel. These burdens can be substantially alleviated through access to low-cost labour-saving household and farm technologies. Particularly promising technologies include energy efficient cooking stoves and shorthaul means of transport such as carts and wheelbarrows for carrying water, firewood and farm produce. Some of these technologies can be used in the context of women's income-generating initiatives and enable them to move from low-return activities into more profitable enterprises. A variety

of simple and efficient devices have been introduced for food processing such as cassava peelers and chippers, solar platform driers for fish and vegetables, rice mills and oil presses adapted to women's physical strength.

Women's access to basic services

53. Unequal access to education remains a critical issue in most developing countries. The disparity between the numbers of girls enrolled in school compared with boys has been growing even though evidence worldwide confirms the developmental value of female education. Only one out of three women in Sub-Saharan Africa is literate. Education for women is associated with improvements in community health and reductions in family size. If girls can be better educated, their chances of earning higher incomes from agriculture or modern sector jobs improve. They are not only more qualified but also better equipped to overcome traditional obstacles and break into the labour force in a wider variety of fields. Education empowers women to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

54. If the benefits of educating women are so great, why is the education gender gap so wide? The answer lies in a complex mix of economic and cultural factors. The cost of education includes direct expenses such as tuition and school supplies, lost work by daughters at home or in the market place and the cultural costs of going against prevailing social norms regarding female behaviour. To be effective, governments and donors must take all these costs into account while gradually convincing parents of the benefits of sending girls to school. Many countries have experimented with incentives such as scholarships for girls. But much more needs to be done. For example, evidence presented at the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien in 1990, shows that in Islamic countries, culturally appropriate facilities and the presence of female teachers often remove disincentives for parents to enroll daughters in school.

Participation of women in decision-making

55. Women traditionally enjoyed important decision-making rights within their recognised fields of competence and influence. But the externally-supported process of modernisation has tended to erode many of these traditional rights, while there has been little or no extension of women's rights into new spheres.

56. Women's extensive workload forces them to stay away from many occasions where formal decisions are made. The democratisation of participation thus often passes them by. When they do attend public meetings, they are not expected to speak up, whereas their formerly more discreet exercise of influence no longer works. Furthermore, for lack of education and information, they do not always understand the extent of their rights under modern constitutions and statute law. Unless ways are found at the operational level to secure the active participation of women in projects and programmes, policy intentions will remain idle, resources be wasted and harmful unintended effects persist.

57. One positive approach in this connection is the growing involvement of women's organisations. Women's traditional organisations as well as their newly formed interest groups turn out to be effective in soliciting and channelling the delivery of services and inputs. They also appear to be strong platforms for the articulation of women's own priorities at household, community, national and international level. There are numerous instances of women's groups enhancing the opportunity for women to participate in decision-making. Well established groups in the Central Highlands of Kenya, for example, are successfully integrating themselves into the Ministry of Agriculture's Training and Visit Extension Programme.

58. One could ask whether the rapid advancement of women into positions of leadership should not be a gender issue priority for the 1990s? In a related way, donors could reflect on what might be done to prepare women's organisations to engage more actively in the public debate on national development strategy and policy. Much could be achieved, e.g. through encouragement from leaders and women role models to help more girls and women enter university and engage in broader fields of vocational and advanced training, including scientific fields. In the political sphere, affirmative action has been undertaken by some governments. For instance, the Government of Uganda has required by law that each district elect at least one woman to sit in parliament. They now represent some 25 per cent of the membership. But in a large number of countries, laws discriminate against women. In Thailand, for instance, women are forbidden to hold some higher-level government offices.

Social values, legal frameworks, human rights

59. It is often the legal status of women, many of whom effectively remain legal minors throughout their lives, therefore unable to act on their own behalf, which calls for adjustments in the delivery of services. In many countries women cannot become members of co-operatives because they do not hold registered title to land. Thus, absence of control over means of production determines the limited access to services and facilities. In other countries, women are discouraged from becoming members by the requirement that husbands or a male kin countersign their applications. In yet other cases, women are allowed to sell to co-operatives, but payments go directly to their husbands or other so-called guarantors. Thus, women's access to services does not extend to control over the benefits.

60. It is important that donors support efforts to create a legal framework that guarantees equal rights for women, and especially to remove legal restrictions on the full economic and political participation of women. Denial of inheritance and property rights is not only discriminatory but it has adverse economic consequences on income-generating activities undertaken by women who are denied access to credit for lack of collateral in the form of land titles. Such restrictions are a critical constraint to national development and may merit a reconsideration of development assistance to those governments that do not act to remove them.

61. The right to control one's fertility was recognised as a basic right by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 1980, which was ratified by 104 countries. The Convention states

that women "have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information and the means to do so". Yet in many societies women are denied, or lack reliable, easy access to safe and effective family planning services. Too many, too early, too late and too frequent pregnancies constitute a major health problem for women as well as for their offspring. The unmet need for contraception drives many women to seek abortion. Illegal abortions, carried out under appalling conditions, are a major cause of death among women of child-bearing age in developing countries. This serious infringement of their reproductive right is also contributing to escalating population growth which seriously threatens the well-being of present and future generations.

62. Special attention should also be given to government-sanctioned violations of human rights which are gender-specific, such as sexual abuses that women face while in custody or gender discrimination in trial proceedings in which women's testimony requires male corroboration. Donors could support groups fighting traditional practices which threaten women's lives such as bride-burning in India, or which hurt their physical integrity and self-respect, such as excision in parts of Africa.

63. As more women reach out for equality and participation in their respective societies, they become more visible as activists, feminists, students, labour leaders and lawyers. They also become more vulnerable to intimidation and repression. Amnesty International indicates that it is undertaking an increasing number of actions on behalf of women activists, political prisoners and refugees. According to UNHCR reports, women in refugee camps suffer many of the same violations as women in detention (rapes, forced prostitution), having to submit to the whims of authorities in order to obtain food and relief goods for themselves and their families.

64. Social and legal constraints are difficult to address since they require a change of attitude which may take longer to achieve. Increased sensitisation of recipient governments, with the aim of bringing about a reform of legal frameworks, needs to be vigorously pursued. This could be done through gender awareness training programmes and through policy dialogue.

6. Extending partnerships with less bureaucratic actors

65. Development Co-operation in the 1990s points out that new emphasis on participatory development does not imply by-passing governments. Indeed, effective development requires competent and efficient governments and public services. At the same time, a more careful nurturing of local initiatives and private sector promotion will require greater use of "less-governmentalised" channels of aid even as part of government-to-government co-operation. Aid agencies are themselves bureaucracies that specialise in the transfer of financial resources and work primarily with developing-country bureaucracies. Bureaucracies are not always well suited to promote participation and a serious commitment will therefore be needed on the part of aid agencies to overcome their own inherent limitations.

66. The difficulty bureaucracies have in participatory approaches derives in part from the very nature of the latter. While not necessarily absorbing large

amounts of foreign exchange, participative approaches are highly time-consuming and require continuity and familiarity with local contexts -- even when the intention is to entrust a local partner with implementation. The management, procedures and career systems of aid agencies are not presently geared to such activities. Indeed, the skills needed for encouraging participatory processes may be quite different from those of articulate doers and achievers. The requirement may be for people who are able to facilitate change and communicate with local groups and leaders in developing countries and whose outlook favours enabling rather than achieving. But it is unlikely that aid agencies themselves would recruit great numbers of people with the required skills to directly fine-tune and control a myriad of participatory activities. Indeed, participation implies the creation of situations in which local people are able to take decisions on their own. The answers lie in part with changes in the aid agencies such as experimenting with new ways of structuring and managing aid that allow for the patience, flexibility and responsiveness needed. For example, Swiss co-operation has at times entrusted funds to a lead organisation in a developing country which then in turn allocated resources to a number of smaller organisations to support initiatives at the local level. Over the past few years Germany has developed an action-research programme on poverty alleviation through the promotion of self-help activities. One of the findings is that excessive and premature funding can jeopardise promising approaches. In-service training of aid agency staff may be needed to discuss the new orientations so that they can be more broadly applied.

67. Many questions are being raised in the aid agencies for which answers have not yet been drawn together from the experience of the innumerable local initiatives nurtured over the years, mainly by the private non-profit sector. What innovative approaches can be envisaged? Is there scope for channelling more aid through NGOs of donor, and increasingly also, those of recipient countries? Are there other institutions which could be more fully used, such as co-operatives, professional associations, foundations, local development banks, especially those catering for the needs of small farmers and firms? Are there opportunities to support private provision of social services? Which channels should be used? Is there a case for more aid at the provincial and municipal level? Is there a role for the provincial and municipal structures of donor countries? How could these be helped in the choice of suitable technologies and the identification of priorities? What is the experience with various twinning arrangements? These are difficult issues and it may not be easy to reconcile decentralisation with the requirements of efficiency, effective co-ordination and accountability. Yet the nature of participatory development suggests the need for the devolution of more responsibilities to decentralised levels, closer to the people concerned.

7. Fostering non-governmental organisations

The emergence of grassroots movements

68. Much of the experience in participatory development so far has been acquired by NGOs. In the wide array of NGOs, some of those from donor countries have specialised in supporting local initiatives at the grassroots level and their networks and federative associations within and across developing countries. In the developing countries, as a result of this work

and of the vision of countless local innovators at various levels in their societies, "the most exciting phenomenon in the NGO sector over the last two decades has been the birth, growth, and maturing of grassroots organisations", to use the words of John Clark in his recent book Democratising Development - The Role of Voluntary Organisations (Earthscan, 1991). In joining a grassroots movement, the poor acquire collectively an ability to take action that radically alters their situations, even where the starting point may be modest -- a savings club, a literacy or a credit programme, or a farmers' or women's group set up for raising income.

69. Drawing lessons from Bangladesh, where several national and some foreign NGOs operate significant programmes for building grassroots movements, the process described by Clark entails several steps: start with an activity which people readily relate to; build awareness-raising and empowerment into the process (functional literacy programmes are particularly appropriate); foster strong leadership especially by providing training to leaders chosen by villagers; tackle internal as well as external injustices: support to women's income-generating activities, in particular, may trigger a chain of related changes in perception, status and options; encourage groups to chart their own course, leading at times to new unforeseen activities; develop action research conducted by the groups themselves on problems of interest to them; forge alliances of local groups; seek influential allies among politicians, senior officials, judges, journalists or others who are sympathetic to the poor; explore the use of state instruments, e.g. by using skillfully the legal and police services. After reaching a certain critical mass, grassroots development organisations can also develop a political strategy, for example by presenting their own candidates at local level. They need to balance external and internal contributions to maintain self-reliance and ensure future viability. Grassroots groups should expect threats and be prepared to respond by such means as legal aid and financial support for the families. They should develop international support where necessary, especially where the reprisals from the local elite are becoming serious, and where the authorities are slow to side with the poor. For example, local authorities in an area of Bangladesh were galvanised into action -- e.g., releasing the imprisoned leaders of a group of landless labourers -- after viewing a British television documentary on their struggle to obtain entitlement to land which was their due according to the law, and after learning of the concern of international NGOs for their protection.

Stages in the development of local movements

70. Also worth studying are the successive phases of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), which together with the Grameen Bank is among the largest and best known NGOs of that country. As related by a BRAC leader, they illustrate the gradual building of roles at national levels for organisations which start from the grassroots. Founded by a Bangladeshi, BRAC was initiated as a relief agency to alleviate the misery of displaced persons in a village in post-war Bangladesh in 1971/72. Moving from relief work to community development, BRAC realised that its action would benefit the poor to a very limited extent unless it focused on working for and with them. Accordingly, it has chosen to work with the poorest 50 per cent of village populations, men as well as women. BRAC's core programme continues to focus on rural development

and on helping communities get organised to achieve their goals. The main tools for this programme, which now covers 5 000 villages, are basic adult education and rural credit. BRAC was then chosen by donors for implementing major aid-funded programmes in selected primary health care activities and basic education for children. By accepting to act as implementor of these programmes, BRAC acquired national significance while broadening the package of measures which it can offer to villages. It also acquired direct experience of the problems which made the health services ineffective in the rural areas. In response, BRAC set up an in-service training programme where it now reorients staff of the health services and shares its insights with them. By extending an experimental programme for children's education, it also aims at changing the perception of authorities on the need for educational material and improved teaching methods. In so doing, BRAC is playing an innovative role in attempting to reform essential social services in the country and gaining allies for the rural poor among civil servants and decision-makers.

71. These illustrations from Bangladesh are not unique. Many of the same lessons can be derived from experience in other countries in South and South East Asia, Latin America and Africa, especially in the Sahel region and Zimbabwe. In a number of countries, grassroots movements have matured beyond small-scale local activities and are now in some cases shaping national institutions. They have laid the ground for reforms in commercial banking so as to make credit accessible to people lacking collateral, or are pursuing what have been defined as "micro-policy reforms" requiring institutional change, for example reforming the ways of operating of irrigation services so as to serve users more effectively (David Korten). Examples underline the importance of alliances between grassroots groups and/or technical services at the local level, decision-making echelons in the host country's administration and external support from an NGO, a foundation, or an aid agency. Increasingly, the value of the work of NGOs and grassroots groups is seen to lie with these more strategic approaches, rather than the implementation of isolated projects.

How aid can help

72. Official aid can foster the NGO sector, through direct measures such as co-financing arrangements, and indirectly by encouraging donor country NGOs to support developing-country partners. For example, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has had for a number of years, alongside the co-funding of Canadian NGOs, a programme to help international NGOs strengthen their affiliates in developing countries. Many aid agencies have put more emphasis in recent years on the strengthening of developing-country NGOs, and a number of them also fund them directly. As recalled above, DAC Members have stated that they will work with their developing-country partners to achieve more participatory development in promoting a greater role for local organisations and NGOs.

73. A DAC review in 1988, in rounding up a cycle of several meetings on aid agency co-operation with NGOs, concluded that enabling developing-country NGOs to define their own objectives and gain recognition from their governments as partners in development were among the major goals in aid agencies' co-operation with NGOs. Donors should encourage steps towards a policy setting that facilitates the building of a dynamic and independent voluntary sector

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Declaration consists of 30 articles providing the following basic rights and fundamental freedoms to which all men and women are entitled without any discrimination:

- The right to life, liberty and security of person;
- Freedom from slavery and servitude;
- Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- Equality before the law and the entitlement to equal protection under it;
- Freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention;
- The right to a fair trial by an independent and impartial tribunal;
- The right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty;
- Inviolability of the home and secrecy of correspondence;
- Freedom of movement and residence;
- The right to seek in other countries asylum from persecution;
- The right to a nationality;
- The right to marry and found a family;
- The right to own property;
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- Freedom of opinion and expression;
- Freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- The right to vote and to participate in government;
- The right to social security;
- The right to work and to form and join trade unions;
- The right to an adequate standard of living;
- The right to education;
- The right to participate in the cultural life of the community.

with less restrictions on registration and access to funds. NGOs' distinctive development roles depend on their integrity and autonomy, but prevailing modes of donor co-operation with them do not always support such independence. NGOs may be diverted from their original goals by growing administrative demands from donors, while at the same time being persuaded to assume the role of implementors of officially-designed projects as a condition for funding.

8. Co-operation in strengthening legal and democratic institutions

The current debate

74. As illustrated above, donors, NGOs and foundations have long been involved in a range of activities to nurture local NGOs and grassroots organisations, trade unions and the whole range of associations on which democratic life and local initiatives are built. Furthermore, bilateral donors as well as the appropriate services of the UN system have traditionally extended legal advice on request. Some donors report increasing requests by developing countries for support in such areas as drafting proposals for reformed legislation or finding ways to enable national parliaments to better monitor developments in the country's economy. More recently this interest has extended to components of participatory development which can be disaggregated into issues of:

- governance or "good government";
- democracy;
- the protection of human rights.

75. The current debate about "governance" was prompted partly by the World Bank's 1989 study on long-term prospects for sustainable growth in Africa, although the respective roles of the State and the private sector had already been much studied in recent years in connection with structural adjustment programmes (for example, Arturo Israel's study of *The Changing Role of the State*, World Bank Working Paper 1990, based on experiences in Latin America). Key components of good government include in particular the rule of law; accountability of public officials to the people whom they are supposed to serve, and transparency in the use of public funds. For convenience, a separation is often drawn between governance in its narrowest sense, i.e. "the capacity of the administration to undertake effective management of the economy" and the type of political system that is in power in a given country at a given moment. Arturo Israel's study underlines the importance of "good government" for development: "practically no country has been able to develop in a sustained way without a political system that functions with a minimum level of effectiveness and ethical standards".

76. In his recent article on "Governance and Economic Development" (*Africa Forum*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1991), Pierre-Claver Damiba of UNDP notes that, although the two are not synonymous, there exists a symbiotic relationship "between democratisation in the form of people's participation in the political process, accountability, respect for human rights, freedom of speech, rule of law, tolerance of alternatives, succession of office, etc., and governance in the form of administrative capacity to formulate, implement and monitor socio-economic policies." He also suggests that the symbiosis may be

specially relevant for participatory development, as "mobilising the development capacity of the people" is only possible in a context where the blatant abuse of human rights and the adverse consequences of conflicts are checked, while accountability, probity and transparency in government are ensured. These views concur with the 1989 Policy Statement of the DAC on the subject. Research and debate on the relevance of governance to development, and the links between governance, democracy, human rights and participation are likely to continue and to contribute needed insights on interactions. It is also likely that there will be broad agreement on the legitimacy for donor countries to press for "good government", which involves transparency and appropriate control of aid procedures.

77. In several DAC countries, a more active stance in the protection of fundamental human rights and the promotion of democracy through aid is advocated by leading political figures, as illustrated by speeches quoted earlier in this chapter. In others, these issues are being debated. Others yet are wary of any posture that may be looked upon as trying to impose values on a foreign country. Perhaps the most articulate proponent of democracy through its foreign aid programme at present is the United States with the AID Democracy Initiative being launched in 1991. The US AID states that it is not attempting to export American institutions and that there will have to be a delineation of the permissible limits, and identification of preferred approaches, in providing direct support for the development of democratic institutions. A major component of the initiative will consist of providing support to "strengthen institutions directly supportive of democratic values and practices, such as effective electoral bodies, informed capable legislatures and independent judiciaries, civic and professional associations, business and environmental organisations, free trade unions and labour associations, think tanks and a free and responsible press". Indeed, more adequate, free and pluralistic media is one of the foundations of a responsible, accountable, democratic society and embodies some of the basic human rights to freedom of expression in the contemporary world.

78. In April 1991, Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu informed the Diet that Japan would take into account in its future foreign aid allocation such factors as the level of military expenditure of the potential recipient country, its adherence to agreements on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and its effort to promote democracy and secure basic human rights, as well as to introduce a market-oriented economy.

Fundamental human rights

79. Internationally recognised human rights are defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1946), and the two Covenants of 1966, which, together, constitute the "International Bill of Human Rights". Essential provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are quoted in the box. The Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognises, inter alia, the right of every human being to life, liberty and security of person; to freedom from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and from torture; to immunity from arbitrary arrest; to a fair trial; to immunity from retroactive sentences; to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; to freedom of opinion and expression; to liberty of movement including the right

to emigrate; to peaceful assembly and to freedom of association. The second set of rights relates to the individual's economic, social and cultural rights. It stipulates among others the right to work and a livelihood, and the right to a reasonable standard of living, which the State must endeavour to fulfil within the limits of existing economic possibilities.

80. Unless they have been incorporated in national laws, these provisions for human rights are not binding, with a single exception mentioned below. In the formulation of jurists, "the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not a legal instrument", but "some of its provisions either constitute general principles of law or represent elementary considerations of humanity" [Ian Brownlie, *Principles of Public International Law*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1979].

81. As for monitoring violations of human rights, the "nearest approach to permanent machinery for supervision of the problem of protection" is the Commission on Human Rights, established by the Economic and Social Council in 1946, and which has drafted a number of further Conventions on human rights, subsequently adopted by the General Assembly, such as those against genocide or torture. The Commission has a Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. A further organ, the Human Rights Committee has been set up for investigating complaints by individuals for alleged violations of human rights.

82. The main limitation to the monitoring functions of UN machinery lies with the predominance of the principle of national sovereignty over all other principles. This is underlined by the fact that members of the Commission represent their governments. The UN machinery acts by means of hearings, investigations, persuasion, the submission of proposals, and conciliation. Its operations are more akin to the world of diplomacy and pressure among peers than to a judiciary. The single exception on the international scene is the European Court of Justice, established in the framework of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950), to which the member states of the Council of Europe are parties. Individuals may petition the Court, whose decisions are mandatory for the parties concerned.

83. However, the investigative and persuasive functions of the UN machinery should not be dismissed lightly. They represent a hope for the future. Success depends on maintaining momentum through the informed involvement of public opinion, the press, academic experts, specialists and non-governmental organisations among which Amnesty International, with over one million members in 150 countries and territories, figures prominently. The most urgent necessity is to give some practical meaning to the ever-growing rhetoric of covenants and declarations. There is a clear link between massive flows of refugees and violations of human rights in their countries of origin. Two of the recommendations of the Mass Exodus Study conducted by Sadruddin Aga Khan were that the UN should create a Special Representative for Humanitarian Questions whose task would basically be to forewarn, to monitor and to de-politicise humanitarian problems; and also a corps of "humanitarian observers". The tragic flight of hundreds of thousands of Kurds from Iraq in April 1991 may foreshadow a more active stance by the international community in the protection of human rights and minorities.

Illustrations from donor activities

84. The following paragraphs give some examples of activities currently undertaken by donors, by looking first at how one DAC Member, Denmark, has integrated human rights in its aid criteria and programmes, then at how other donors (especially Sweden and the United States) are providing assistance in these areas in Latin America. Many of the programmes are conducted in co-operation with NGOs and host-country institutes specialised in the relevant sector of activity.

85. In 1987, the Danish parliament urged the government to include the question of human rights in its bilateral aid co-operation and its policy in the international aid organisations. Consequently, furthering of human rights has been included among central principles and objectives for Danish development assistance. Danish development assistance seeks to obtain further respect for human rights at various levels:

- in the international debate on development aid policies;
- by raising the question in its annual aid consultations with developing countries receiving its aid;
- by considering human rights among the criteria in the selection of new recipients countries;
- through specific aid projects and in the management and training of Danish aid personnel.

86. Emphasis in projects is on support for positive measures (although in cases of gross violations of human rights, aid from Denmark as well as other donors to the country concerned is known to have been suspended at times). Some Danish projects have provided assistance to individuals and groups who have been subject to torture; a much larger number have aimed at enabling populations to better defend their rights. Examples include support to training of para-legal personnel in Namibia, legal training programmes in Tanzania and Zimbabwe, and to registration and issuing of land titles to indigeneous Indian communities in the Amazon area.

87. Many DAC Members are involved in various ways in assisting countries in Latin America in restoring democracy and strengthening respect for human rights. Belgium, Canada and Switzerland seek to integrate their approach to poverty alleviation with the new dimension of fostering protection for human rights. The CEC has established a budgetary line for Chile to support activities linked with protecting individuals and helping restore democracy. The protection of human rights and the promotion of democracy constitute a major objective for Swedish assistance in the region which started in 1973 with humanitarian aid to refugees from Chile and is now directed at the consolidation of democratic structures in various countries. An important element in this programme is the Latin American Research Programme, run by the Swedish Agency for Research Co-operation with Developing Countries (SAREC), which during 1978-90 provided institutional support to some 25 research centres. This programme is recognised as having helped maintain intellectual integrity and dissent through long years of repression in several countries.

88. In compliance with legislation integrating human rights in US economic aid, AID has programmes for some \$70 million per year in Latin America and the

Caribbean for democracy activities. A major area is helping improve the administration of justice (\$20 million), for example improving criminal investigation procedures and techniques, training judicial personnel, upgrading local law libraries, publishing case reports and textbooks. Through small grants repeated over the past ten years, and in co-operation with other donors, AID has been helping the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights (IIHR), a regional, non-governmental, academic institution dedicated to promoting human rights for example by education programmes starting in elementary school. In 1983, IIHR created an affiliate body to encourage and provide technical support to the electoral process with activities such as training of local-level electoral officials and poll-watchers in Guatemala or assisting a voter education/registration programme in Chile.

9. Implications for the policy dialogue

89. "Development Co-operation in the 1990s" was put forward by the DAC as a contribution to a constructive dialogue among developed and developing countries. With its emphasis on participatory development, the new policy statement suggests that there may be a "vital connection" between open, democratic and accountable political systems, individual rights and the effective and equitable operation of economic systems. The statement integrates such dimensions as encouraging a trend towards more democratic political systems, a greater role for local organisations and self-government, respect of human rights including reliable and accessible legal systems, competitive markets and dynamic private enterprise.

90. The policy dialogue with individual developing countries offers a suitable venue for discussing many of these issues in depth and in context. Already the past decade has seen an unprecedented degree of external intervention in internal economic policies, with new finance and debt reduction provided conditionally on governments' commitment to economic reform. The message from donors was that more open competitive systems will improve effective resource use, growth and employment as well as more favourable conditions for a more equitable income distribution. The policy dialogue offers opportunities to state the case for giving priority to programmes providing sustainable, affordable and effective basic services for the masses of the people.

91. Advocacy for redistributive policies is not a new feature in donors' dialogue with developing countries. A review of the items discussed in aid co-ordination fora such as consultative groups shows that social concerns, women in development issues and private sector promotion have at times formed part of these discussions in recent years.

Two recent studies

92. The debate continues on the appropriateness of donor advocacy in the policy dialogue of the broader conditionalities which are likely to be pressed in the 1990s. A major recent study sponsored by DANIDA on the effectiveness of multilateral aid at country level suggests that a key task is to ensure effective and direct co-operation between the two bureaucracies of the donor

and recipient governments. The study recommends achieving "an open compromise" between the donors' political demands for democracy, human rights and accountability in public resource management, and the recipient governments' demand for politically untied resources to be managed by national institutions. "This compromise requires transparency in the policy dialogue: full publicity, sharing of information, and mutual respect."

93. Another recent study [Joan M. Nelson ed., *Fragile Coalitions - The Politics of Economic Adjustment*, Transaction Books, 1989, for the Overseas Development Council] is doubtful on the longer-term usefulness of attaching conditions to structural adjustment loans additional to the goal of adjustment, such as poverty alleviation, environmental protection and democratisation. In countries lacking strong commitment and corresponding political and administrative capabilities within the government, there may be a danger that additional conditions may win small and temporary victories at the price of deep resentment and additional complications in the ongoing domestic debates on such issues. Nevertheless, external agencies should encourage and assist debtor countries to analyse the effects of adjustment measures on poverty and the environment. And they can find opportunities for pressing important goals as elements of project or sector loans. Believing that the policy dialogue is probably the most important means available for external agencies to gradually shift governments and public opinion towards consensus and commitment for structural change, the study advocates more selective use of broad conditionality. To make the policy dialogue more effective, it should itself become more participative, in the sense of being more genuinely a two-way exchange: less of an effort at persuasion and more of a mutual effort to define key problems and consider alternative solutions. Another interesting point made in this study is the importance, for improving the lot of the poor, of devising strategies that benefit the general publics of developing countries. Such an approach has potential for generating political support for needed reforms.

The need for coherence

94. Co-ordinated, multi-donor approaches to participatory development issues including governance, human rights and corruption could promote acceptability as well as transparency, continuity and impact. This would imply defining the programmatic content of the various components of the broad notion of participatory development and the search for effective strategies for broaching some of these components. Integrating such issues in a serious policy dialogue would presuppose sufficient determination on the part of donors to ensure consistency between the rhetoric and the aid actually offered. It would also require the building up and sharing of relevant competence. The analytical capacity required for assessing equity factors in proposed investment in the social sectors reinforces the argument for a co-ordinated approach, so as to make the full use of the analyses conducted in major sector studies by lead donors in a given country. The ODC study quoted above recommends that external agencies assist research on key country-specific issues in adjustment processes, including local university personnel or other private participants.

95. Advocacy for essential components of the new approach may also be a feature of broader political initiatives, encompassing but not limited to

development co-operation. For example, control of the proliferation of mass destruction weapons and the development of a common approach to human rights, in terms of both concepts and practice, are among the main orientations suggested by France, Italy, Portugal and Spain in the current initiative for a Conference for Mutual Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean.

96. Not least among benefits to be gained by enlarging the policy dialogue to effective consideration of participatory development aspects, public opinion in DAC countries would no doubt be better motivated to support aid. As the Dutch Minister for Co-operation advised the UN General Assembly in October 1990: "The public in donor countries are becoming less and less willing to accept the channelling of aid money to countries where the eradication of poverty is not a priority ... The issue is not aid fatigue, but 'aid-to-the-non-poor fatigue'."

97. The leader of the women's branch of a self-help grassroots movement in Burkina Faso seems to respond to this concern: "I think that the world increasingly needs people who are responsible, balanced, and sufficiently independent to act with a maximum of freedom. The world also needs a flow of exchange of understanding, and a sharing of ideas and know-how."

98. The Nordic Ministers of Development Co-operation emphasized the importance for development of open democratic systems and respect for human rights in a joint statement in September 1990. Noting that the development of democratic societies had always been a central goal in the development policy of the Nordic countries and that the past year had been characterized "by profound political change which has proven that the popular demand for democracy carries tremendous influence both at the national and international level", the Ministers emphasized that "the connection between democracy, human rights and sustainable development has become more and more evident". They concluded: "In the context of international development co-operation it has now been recognized that open democratic systems and respect for human rights give impetus to efforts to achieve development, economic efficiency and equitable distribution."

99. Support for participatory and democratic development is becoming an essential part of the aid mission. Although the causal relationships between democratic development and social and economic development remain unclear, historical experience suggests that democracy has been compatible with every stage of economic and social development. A consensus has developed that human rights and democracy are valuable in themselves and constitute legitimate goals for aid. This suggests the appropriateness of integrating the development of human rights and democracy into aid policies that have until now been concerned primarily with social and economic development.

100. Participatory development will continue to be a central subject for work in the DAC.

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APPENDIX B

**World Bank Documents on
Popular Participation:
September 5, 1990
November 16, 1990**

75

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 5, 1990

TO: Mr. Moeen A. Qureshi, Senior Vice President, Operations

FROM: Alexander Shakow, Director, EXT

EXTENSION: 81368

SUBJECT: Strengthening the Bank's Work on Popular Participation

1. Reviews of the Bank's experience by OED and others show that greater beneficiary participation would improve many Bank-financed projects. This is a major issue between the Bank and NGOs, and government interest is also on the increase. Participation will be the main topic at the next DAC High Level Meeting, for example. There is an external affairs argument for the Bank to act on this issue now, while we are still ahead of a growing wave of international concern.

2. We keenly appreciate the many demands placed on operational staff and budgets, so the attached paper recommends four lines of action which build on ongoing efforts:

- (a) effective implementation of the public consultation provision in the Bank's environmental assessment policy;
- (b) COD/EXTIE review of plans for beneficiary participation in selected projects at the preappraisal stage (beginning with projects subject to environmental assessment);
- (c) continuing the Bank's expanded work with NGOs, with emphasis on involving beneficiary groups and other NGOs in project planning;
- (d) a Bank-wide process of learning from 20 exceptionally participatory projects in various countries, sectors, and stages of preparation or implementation. The Regions would identify ongoing or planned projects that might provide models of successful approaches to participation. The task managers for these projects and specialists from several PRE departments would form a learning group to share experiences, bring outside expertise into the Bank, and disseminate what they learn. EXTIE would contribute resources to leading this process, and we would seek trust-fund assistance to help the task managers involved devote more-than-normal attention to participation.

3. This paper has been developed in consultation with senior staff from PRE, the Regions, and your office. Mr. Thalwitz has asked us to work out with you how best to proceed. I would appreciate your guidance on next steps and, of course, your support.

cc: Messrs. Thalwitz (PRESV); Isenman (PRDDR); Wyss (CODDR);
Raphaeli (CODOP); Ms. Okonjo-Iweala (OPNSV)

Attachment

September 5, 1990

Strengthening the Bank's Work on Popular Participation

International Economic Relations Division
External Affairs

Executive Summary

1. It has long been argued that greater popular participation would improve the design and implementation of many development projects. Yet there are few examples of large-scale governmental programs that promote popular participation in decision-making. Mainly because of the recent spread of democracy, some developing-country governments are newly interested in popular participation, and donor governments are eager to support such efforts.
2. The Bank is not in the business of promoting democracy, of course, but the Bank's operational experience shows that popular participation is important to the success and sustainability of many Bank-supported development activities. The Bank has limited, but growing experience with beneficiary participation in some sectors, notably agriculture, urban development, rural water supply, and environment. This experience confirms that popular participation is never simple or straightforward, but that there are ways the Bank can improve the sensitivity of its operations to what beneficiaries want, and that such efforts do enhance project effectiveness.
3. Some of the Bank's operational practices (tight administrative budgets, for example) limit what Bank staff can do to foster participation. Yet other agencies have not been much more successful than the Bank on this issue. Encouraging popular participation in decisions is inherently difficult, and many governments have been reluctant to try very hard.
4. Operational staff time and budgets are already stretched, and our knowledge about how to strengthen the Bank's work on popular participation is limited. This paper thus recommends pursuing this issue along four lines of action that are already under way:
 - (a) implementing the Bank's new environmental assessment policy, which calls for consultation with affected communities and local NGOs in the planning of environmentally sensitive projects;
 - (b) COD/EXTIE review of plans for popular participation in selected projects at the preappraisal stage (beginning with projects subject to environmental assessment);
 - (c) continuing the Bank's expanded work with NGOs, with emphasis on the involvement of beneficiary groups and other NGOs in project planning; and
 - (d) a Bank-wide process of learning from a diverse sample of 20 projects (at various stages of design and implementation) that illustrate different ways of overcoming the practical problems of popular participation.

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Strengthening the Bank's Work on Popular Participation

1. Political scientists extensively debate the meaning and modalities of participation. "Participation" is here defined to mean influence on development decisions (not simply involvement in the implementation or benefits of a development activity). The term "popular" refers especially to poor people, but also to a broader range of people who have relatively little wealth, education, or influence.

2. EXTIE's analytical work on participation grew out of its work on Bank-NGO cooperation. Popular participation is a broader topic than Bank-NGO cooperation. Governments can promote popular participation without involving NGOs. Elections, for example, are one of several ways to increase participation. Yet NGOs, especially beneficiary groups, are often an effective channel for communication. In addition, the topic of popular participation has emerged as a central issue among advocacy NGOs that follow the Bank and in the Bank-NGO Committee.

3. The Bank has recently begun to speak about "governance" and "empowerment," notably in the long-term perspectives study on Africa and in speeches by Mr. Conable. The Bank has no mandate to promote democracy as an end in itself. However, the Bank's experience (as documented by OED and others) does indicate that popular participation is practically important to the success and sustainability of many Bank-supported activities. This paper suggests that the Bank continue and strengthen operational work which encourages participation in this limited, pragmatic sense.

New Interest in an Old Idea

4. It has long been argued that greater popular participation could make a much-needed contribution to development. Popular participation makes government programs more responsive to the needs of citizens. Affording people the opportunity to voice needs also encourages community initiative. Rhetoric is often far ahead of practice on this issue, and many efforts to involve low-income groups in decision-making have failed. Yet the salience of popular participation in development decision-making is becoming more prominent once more. The factors behind this trend may be strong enough to allow for practical progress.

5. The most important of these factors is the dramatic spread of democracy. At the start of the 1980s, nearly all Latin American countries had authoritarian governments. Today there are few dictators left in Latin America. The democratic movement in communist countries has been even more dramatic and less expected. There have also been more tentative and fragile democratic stirrings in Asia and Africa. While African representatives at the African conference in Maastricht expressed concern about political conditionality, the Economic Commission for Africa recently organized a continental conference on popular participation. No one

knows how durable the trend toward democracy will be, but the worldwide surge of democracy has definitely changed the political context of the Bank's work.

6. Even some authoritarian governments are allowing for greater community influence. Where fiscal constraints are compelling public agencies to improve cost recovery, they have more incentive to pay attention to what the public wants. Also, many governments (Indonesia, for example) have learned from ill-designed and poorly implemented projects that could have been improved through consultation with the intended beneficiaries.

7. Industrial-country aid priorities are changing too. Funds are shifting to new democracies in Eastern Europe and elsewhere, and there has been donor concern about Bank lending to China. Donor governments are finding various channels (often through NGOs) to strengthen pluralism and democratic institutions in the developing countries. At the last DAC High Level, the ministers expressed great interest in participation. It is the top priority for DAC's work program for 1991.

8. Finally, the growing role of NGOs has made a difference. In many countries, organizations of the poor (farmers' groups, urban neighborhood associations, women's organizations) have grown much stronger and more numerous over the last two decades. Many have received help from national and international NGOs. Most NGOs plan their projects in consultation with local communities, and some NGOs focus primarily on strengthening organizations of the poor. Now that NGO influence on official aid agencies has increased, NGOs are pressing hard for more public access to information and influence in the planning of official projects.

9. In the 1950s, USAID and the United Nations promoted "community development," but the movement foundered and came to an abrupt end. Community development programs underestimated conflicts within rural communities, overestimated the effectiveness of low-level government officers as community organizers, and concentrated funds on social facilities to the neglect of investments in agricultural production. Wars in Asia, especially the Vietnam War, also contributed to the movement's demise. As development assistance was refocused on poverty in the 1970s, there was a revival of interest in community participation, but it generated more speeches and policy studies than practical action. Aid agencies expanded grant funding through NGO channels, but the great majority of developing-country governments of that period were little disposed to popular participation. By the early 1980s, most developing-country governments and international agencies were preoccupied with financial and macroeconomic problems. But some developments that encourage the growth of local organizations -- literacy, increased mass media, and the growth of cities -- were preparing the way for renewed interest in participation.

10. As of today, there are myriad small-scale, often NGO projects which involve beneficiaries in project planning, but few large-scale government programs which do so effectively. The literature on popular participation returns repeatedly to the same 20 or 25 examples of programs which promote popular participation on a large scale.

The Case for Participation from the Bank's Experience

11. Meanwhile, evidence has been accumulating about the negative effects of not consulting with the affected public, and the Bank has been a leader in documenting these problems. OED's first sustainability study in 1985 was a milestone in this regard. OED stressed institutional factors, including beneficiary organizations, as the key to project sustainability:

A major contribution to sustainability came from the development of grassroots organizations, whereby project beneficiaries gradually assumed increasing responsibility for project activities during implementation and particularly following completion. . . Where grassroots organizations thrived there were certain distinct qualities inherent in their growth and in their relationship to project activities. These included some form of decision-making input into project activities, a high degree of autonomy and self-reliance, a measure of beneficiary control over management of the organization, and the continuing alignment of the project activities with the needs of beneficiaries.

12. Other studies of Bank projects by OED and PRE staff (notably Michael Cernea, Samuel Paul, Michael Bamberger, Lawrence Saimen, and David Beckmann) have added evidence to the case for beneficiary participation. They have argued that participation is most feasible and most important to success for projects that are designed to help a specific group of people, especially for projects that depend on cost recovery or some other change in people's behavior. This includes most projects in family planning, local irrigation, agricultural extension, urban upgrading, and community water supply. Many of the examples of successful poverty-focused interventions cited in the WDR 1990 (in both the productive and social sectors) feature the participation of beneficiary groups.

13. Public participation is much more difficult and costly to arrange for large-scale infrastructure and industry projects, and the benefits are not usually as obvious. Yet the environmental and related social problems associated with some of these projects convinced the Bank of the need for environmental assessment, including consultation with affected communities and local NGOs.

14. The Bank has almost never urged public participation in the discussion of national economic policy. In some countries economic issues have been subject to open political debate, but other

governments have agreed to adjustment programs without much public understanding or support. The political process by which a country decides broad policies is beyond the Bank's scope of action. Yet the main recommendation of the Bank's first and second reviews of adjustment lending has been to make sure that governments really "own" adjustment programs, partly by checking that they discuss the adjustment reforms with the public, and partly by developing consultative processes among a wider range of actors.

Operational Experience with Popular Participation

15. Relatively few Bank-financed projects have successfully promoted popular participation in decision-making, but the Bank's experience is growing and significant, mainly in agriculture and a few other types of projects.

16. Agriculture. Many Bank-financed agriculture projects feature a role for beneficiary groups (cooperatives, herder or pastoral organizations, water users' associations, or village councils). The involvement of groups sometimes gives local people increased scope for influence, and a growing number of projects make explicit provision for farmers to have a voice in project decisions. In the irrigation subsector, the Bank now often tries to strengthen water users' associations. The Philippines Irrigation Administration is the best-documented success along these lines. In the livestock and forestry subsectors too, the Bank now emphasizes the role of beneficiary groups. This approach has been basic to successful livestock and pastoral development projects in a number of African countries. One recurrent problem is that better-off producers sometimes dominate producer groups and project benefits. As local people gain experience in producer groups, they themselves sometimes begin to correct this problem.

17. The Bank made a significant effort to promote popular participation in Mexico's PIDER program. PIDER funded infrastructure in rural communities, but some of the infrastructure was inappropriately designed, of low priority to the communities, and thus poorly maintained. PIDER's administration was successfully decentralized to the level of the states, which made it easier for local communities to influence plans. In appraising its second loan in support of PIDER, the Bank also helped get an effort underway to directly ask communities what they wanted. A participatory approach was successfully tested and, at one point, applied throughout one state. But a change of government led to a restructuring of PIDER which made it less focused on poverty and reduced the scope for community involvement. The Bank's own level of effort had dropped to the supervision level, and the Bank staff who were then responsible were less convinced of the importance of participation.

18. EXTE reviewed the completion and OED reports from 1988 and 1989 for agriculture projects that included a role for beneficiary groups. We found that the role beneficiary groups actually played

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in these projects had seldom been accurately anticipated at appraisal. In some cases, beneficiary organizations were much more active and influential than expected. In more cases, official planners intended beneficiary groups to play a stronger role than they proved able to play.

19. Urban development. Quite a few Bank-financed urban projects have drawn on beneficiary views, partly because the urban poor tend to be better organized than the rural poor. Some of the most successful slum improvement and sites-and-services projects in the Bank's experience (Bolivia, for example, and El Salvador) promoted beneficiary participation. The Bank's insistence on cost recovery helped motivate consultation with project beneficiaries.

20. As the Bank's urban projects have shifted from improving specific neighborhoods to strengthening municipal governments and housing finance institutions, they have sometimes involved beneficiary participation on a larger scale. The earthquake reconstruction project in Mexico City was successful in reaching low-income families, partly in response to a dramatic, city-wide surge of neighborhood activism. In Indonesia, the Bank financed a major neighborhood (kampung) improvement program in the 1970s. It was a top-down program, but provided better streets, water, and drainage for many ill-served kampungs. Under the financial constraints of the 1980s, Indonesia cut back on kampung improvement. But two UNDP-financed projects demonstrated a participatory approach which costs the government less and fills gaps left by the kampung improvement program of the 1970s. The approach emphasizes health education and public sanitation, two elements of community improvement which depend on active community involvement. The Bank is now supporting the expansion of this approach in Jakarta and other cities. Indonesian officials have contracted with local NGOs to help neighborhood associations cope with their new responsibilities and function in a more participatory way.

21. In some countries (Nigeria and Colombia among them) the Bank is helping to strengthen local governments. These efforts are justified on efficiency grounds, but local governments also tend to be more accessible and responsive to local views than are agencies of national government.

22. Rural water supply. The Bank, UNDP, and USAID have learned together that popular participation is fundamental in water and sanitation projects. The developing world is littered with handpumps that have fallen into disrepair. The local water supply systems that keep working often involve active community participation from the start. Kenya's Kwale project helped convince the Bank. This project engaged an NGO to consult with local women's groups. Pump installation comes last, only after a local group has decided that it really wants a pump and has demonstrated its capacity to operate and maintain it (including the levying of maintenance fees). This was a Bank-implemented, UNDP-financed

project, so a Bank staff member was resident in Kenya and deeply involved in project implementation.

23. Population, Health, and Nutrition. Nearly all the Bank's recent population projects include support for NGOs. NGOs that are organizations of the people to be served (women's organizations, for example, or religious organizations) are often more participatory and more sensitive to people's sentiments and beliefs than official outreach programs. Among the Bank's early nutrition projects, two of the most successful (Tamil Nadu and Indonesia) depend on groups of women to help with outreach. Neither of these projects allows much scope for bottom-up feedback about program design, however. One of the issues that needs more attention is learning how to install processes for feedback in the next generation of projects.

24. Planning for the Guinea health project began with the formation of village-level committees. These included chiefs, religious leaders, and women leaders. The committees from all the project villages met together with government and Bank planners several times during project preparation -- to identify priority needs, to review alternatives suggested by consultants, and to launch project implementation. These committees have assumed responsibility for some aspects of implementation, operation, and maintenance.

25. Grassroots Initiative Projects. The Bank has begun financing government programs of funding for projects which local communities propose. In the Togo Grassroots Initiative Project, a joint Government-NGO committee oversees the selection and financing of projects developed by NGOs and the communities they serve. Bolivia's Emergency Social Fund is being copied by a number of other countries undertaking adjustment programs. In Bangladesh and Guatemala, promising initiatives along these lines ran into difficulties (mainly the complexities of NGO-government-Bank relations) and have been indefinitely postponed.

26. Environment. Public consultation has featured in the planning for all the Bank's new environmental protection projects. In Lesotho and Madagascar, a wide range of NGOs and community groups helped formulate national environmental plans. Brazil's National Environment Program was hammered out amid wide-ranging public involvement and political controversy.

27. The Bank's guidelines on involuntary resettlement mandate consultation. Implementation is not yet fully in line with policy, but a number of recent cases -- such as the Upper Krishna Program, Punjab Irrigation, and the Mexico Hydroelectric Project -- illustrate that the Bank's current guidelines are feasible and indeed improve project quality.

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Lessons from Experience

28. Some general lessons emerge from the Bank's experience with popular participation. First, in all the Bank-financed projects which successfully involved the public in planning, participation has enhanced project effectiveness. In the Philippines, the costs and quantifiable benefits of developing farmer-managed irrigation have been calculated, and participation yields high returns in terms of both farm output and cost recovery.

29. A second general lesson is that popular participation is never simple or straightforward. Efforts to listen to "the people" are complicated by competing views and interests within any community. Individuals who are richer, more articulate, politically savvy, or just plain stubborn often twist participatory processes to their own ends. Very poor people can seldom afford to devote much time to participation. Participation takes time, energy and interest, and, as such, levels of participation will always vary within communities.

30. Third, the Bank's experience illustrates several broad approaches to finding out what people want. One approach has been to gradually increase the extent to which the Bank and its borrowers draw on social sciences other than economics. The Bank's staff has gradually come to include more sociologists, anthropologists, institutional-development specialists, political scientists, and environmentalists. The Bank has promoted "beneficiary assessment" (a mix of anthropological and quantitative methods) to help administrators understand the perspective of people affected by a project. Although social scientists cannot adequately speak for the poor, their inquiries supplement other ways of finding out what poor people think and need. In Bolivia, for example, beneficiary assessment drew attention to low-income groups which were not represented by neighborhood associations. Social scientists can also help to identify local institutions that are promising conduits for participation.

31. Increasing the involvement of NGOs is another way the Bank has approached popular participation. The involvement of NGOs in Bank-financed projects is not the same as beneficiary involvement in project decisions (para. 2). Yet organizations of the poor are one type of NGO, and their involvement in project decisions is an important form of popular participation. NGOs that provide services to the poor often work to strengthen organizations of the poor, and service NGOs themselves can sometimes provide valuable insights regarding what poor people want and need.

32. Since the start of 1988, the Bank has been making a systematic effort to increase NGO involvement in Bank-supported activities. Markedly more Bank-financed projects now involve NGOs, mostly beneficiary organizations and other local NGOs. Experience to date suggests that NGO involvement usually does help projects

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reach low-income beneficiaries. In some projects, such as kampung improvement in Indonesia or the Emergency Social Fund in Bolivia, NGOs are directly strengthening popular participation in development decisions. The Bank's interest in NGOs has had a significant effect on government attitudes and policies toward community groups and other NGOs in some countries. In Indonesia, for example, the Bank's recent report on poverty reviews the contribution which community groups have made and encourages Government to allow more scope for community initiative and participation. Official attitudes in Indonesia are changing, partly because of the Bank's influence.

33. Efforts to increase the involvement of beneficiary groups and other NGOs in project and policy planning have been relatively slow. When SVPOP reviewed Bank-NGO cooperation in January 1989, and again when the President's Council did so in February 1990, they highlighted the need for more attention to the involvement of beneficiary groups and other NGOs in planning. Yet a review of the projects approved in FY89 and FY90 indicates only modest change in this direction, except in Asia.

34. The most important tack the Bank can take -- more difficult than expanding the involvement of social scientists or NGOs -- is to help governmental agencies become more responsive to the public. What the Bank does to improve the general effectiveness of project agencies is often relevant, and in nearly all the participatory projects in the Bank's experience the project agency has also made specific efforts to improve interaction with its clients. The Philippines National Irrigation Administration developed a new category of staff (social extensionists), invested in the strengthening of water users' associations, and simplified and publicized its procedures for dealing with farmers. Some of the Bank's most participatory projects depended on special project units, however, which limited project impact on permanent institutions.

35. A number of specific features reoccur in most of the Bank projects which have fostered participation:

- > Effort. In each case, participation required significant and sustained effort from the Bank, the project agency, and communities. In Mexico's PIDER program, consultation with local communities stopped because of reduced government and Bank effort. Where participation has been successful, project agencies have often made explicit budgetary provisions for the cost of consultation.
- > Flexibility. In the Bolivia slum upgrading project, all the neighborhoods originally selected decided against improvements on a cost-recovery basis, while other neighborhoods later petitioned for inclusion in the project. The Bank stood firm on the issue of cost recovery and other important conditions, but allowed numerous

exceptions to details in the project's legal agreements and restructured the project halfway through implementation to expand funding for the most successful project agency.

- > Local initiative. The most attractive feature of the grassroots initiative projects cited in para. 25 is that they are demand-driven by communities (often with assistance from NGOs or local governments), not planned in advance from a capital city. The Bank's role in successful participatory projects has often been quite limited, usually building on prior efforts. The Philippines Irrigation Administration developed its participatory approach over the course of a decade with help from the Ford Foundation, NGOs, and local research institutes. When they were ready to replicate their new approach on the national level, the Bank's contribution was mainly to be supportive and finance some of the costs.
- > Institutional development. In the course of successful participatory projects, the project agency often changes its systems and staffing significantly, and beneficiary organizations typically need to become more competent and inclusive. New intermediaries are often needed, such as the Emergency Social Fund in Bolivia (which linked the national government to NGOs and local governments) or KENGO in Kenya's Kwale Project (the NGO which mediates between the official project agency and communities).
- > Committed leadership. In most cases, one or several committed people (usually local people, but sometimes also Bank staff) play crucial roles.
- > Conflict. Participation usually involves some conflict. In the Philippines and Mexico, protest movements helped to shape successful urban development projects. Intermediaries can, and frequently do, acquire skills in conflict resolution.
- > Cost sharing. Cost recovery shifts power to project beneficiaries. This theme emerges clearly from urban development and irrigation projects.

36. The lessons of experience suggest that some of the Bank's operational practices add to the difficulty of encouraging popular participation. Tight operational budgets, especially for supervision, militate against the extra effort and flexibility that is often entailed in coping the complexities of public involvement. Project timetables sometimes discourage the waiting that may be required to support local initiative and institutional development. While the Bank now has some social scientists other than economists on its staff, more such people would be needed to appraise and

monitor participatory processes if they were more prevalent in Bank-financed projects.

37. The Bank's limitations are not the only constraint, however. Developing-country governments have not evolved many effective participatory programs on their own, and other multilateral and bilateral agencies have not done much better than the Bank in helping governments promote participation on a large scale. Many governments have been reluctant (at least until recently) to invite popular participation in decision-making. Moreover, promoting participation is inherently difficult, and there is a paucity of experience-based knowledge about the practicalities of participation in large-scale government programs.

Recommendations

38. The Bank's operational budgets are already stretched, and our knowledge of how to promote popular participation is limited. Thus, we suggest pursuing this issue along four lines of work which are already under way. First, the Bank should effectively implement its new environmental assessment policy, including the provision that borrowing governments are expected to consult with affected groups and local NGOs. The policy is ambitious, because there is relatively little successful experience even in the industrial countries with public participation in the planning of large infrastructure projects.

39. Second, as the Bank shifts from Operational Manual Statements to Operational Directives, COD and EXTIE have been checking the adequacy of guidelines regarding popular participation. COD has identified 20 ODs which might include references to popular participation, but the main discussion of participation will continue to be in the directives on Project Generation and Design and on Project Appraisal. The existing Operational Manual Statements on these topics include ambitious exhortations regarding popular participation, but the ODs could be more specific about the difficulties the Bank has encountered and ways Bank staff might need to depart from past patterns. Since the Bank's existing policy guidelines are already far ahead of practice, it is proposed that COD call attention to this issue at the preappraisal stage for selected projects. This might begin with projects subject to environmental assessment. EXTIE could do much of the actual review work, but only as advisors to COD and operations managers.

40. A third line of action is to continue the Bank's expanded work with NGOs. It is time for the routine updating of the "List of World Bank-financed Projects with Potential for NGO Involvement." The OVPs could take this opportunity to again commend operational staff for the expanded involvement of NGOs in Bank-supported operations, highlighting what the Bank has done in some countries to foster governmental policies which are conducive to community groups and other NGOs (para. 32). At the same time, the OVPs could once

more urge greater efforts to involve beneficiary groups and other NGOs in development planning (para. 33).

41. Finally, we need to expand experience-based knowledge about popular participation. At the last meeting of the Bank-NGO Committee, the Asia Regional Office committed itself to identify several projects under preparation in which the Bank will make a special effort to foster popular participation. One of the Bank members of the Committee later suggested that NGOs be invited to give advice on how to strengthen the participatory elements of several projects in the design stage. There was also tentative discussion at the Bank-NGO Committee of an NGO-initiated process of NGO-Bank collaboration in developing a model project in Francophone West Africa.

42. Our fourth recommendation is that such efforts be expanded and formalized. Specifically, we suggest a Bank-wide process of learning from about 20 exceptionally participatory projects in various countries, sectors, and stages of preparation and implementation. Each of the Regional Offices would identify some projects that might provide models of successful approaches to participation. This could also be done as the "List of World Bank-financed Projects with Potential for NGO Involvement" is updated. The task managers for these projects and specialists from several PRE departments would form a learning group. They would share their experiences, compare their projects to similar projects with less participation, bring outside expertise into the Bank, and compare the Bank's experience to that of other agencies. They would disseminate their findings through staff working papers and reports to management. The Bank would have to commit itself to this process of experimentation and learning for three years to get results.

43. This recommendation has been designed to take full advantage of operational work that is proceeding anyway, but the effort would not be costless. EXTIE will contribute three-quarters of a senior person to lead the learning group, plus \$30,000 a year to bring in outside expertise to contribute to the overall learning process.

44. Reviewers of this paper in earlier drafts have debated what the costs within Operations would be and how these should be covered. Some reviewers have argued that the 20 projects should be given no special treatment, because "hot house" projects will not be replicable. They have argued that provision should be made for consultation with beneficiaries in the projects' budgets, but not in the Bank's administrative budget. Other reviewers have argued that the Bank's own tight budgetary constraints make it very difficult for the Bank's operational staff to pay much attention to this issue. In the end, our recommendation is that task managers be given a bit more than average time to work on these projects and to take part in the Bank-wide learning process. In addition, the Bank might plan to spend an extra \$15,000 a year for each of the 20

projects (a total of \$300,000 a year) on consultants to help improve and facilitate work on participation -- enough to do a better-than-average job and perhaps to demonstrate that the Bank will need a bit more budgetary flexibility if it is to devote more attention to participation in a wider range of projects. Some reviewers have urged that the Bank cover these costs within its normal budget, but we are recommending that the Bank seek trust-fund assistance.

45. This effort would be a modest, but significant response to an important, often neglected, and increasingly recognized weakness in official development efforts. It would supplement the Bank's environmental assessment policy by including community-focused projects (social forestry, for example, or family planning) which do not raise environmental issues but offer exceptional opportunities for popular participation (paras. 12-13). A special effort to foster participation in 20 Bank-financed projects would significantly increase the developing world's experience with large-scale participatory programs. It would also establish a basis of experience for broader efforts by the Bank and other agencies in the future.

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November 16, 1990

Strengthening the Bank's Work on Popular Participation:

A Proposed Learning Process

1. Reviews of Bank-financed projects by OED and others have shown that more beneficiary participation in decisions would contribute to the success and sustainability of many Bank-financed projects. The current resurgence of international interest in popular participation opens new opportunities to make practical progress on this long-discussed issue.

2. At an OVP meeting on October 5, Mr. Qureshi decided to move forward in this area along four lines: (a) implementation of the community involvement provision in the Bank's environmental assessment policy; (b) continued engagement of beneficiary groups and other NGOs in Bank-financed activities, especially in planning and decision-making; (c) review of selected projects to ensure compliance with existing operational guidelines and attention to this issue as new Operational Directives are prepared; and (d) a Bank-wide learning process. These were proposed in "Strengthening the Bank's Work on Popular Participation" (EXTIE, September 5, 1990). This note more fully discusses the fourth recommendation, a Bank-wide process of learning more about how to promote popular

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participation. It incorporates comments received from the Bank's regional offices subsequent to the OVP review.

Summary description and objectives

3. The Bank will constitute a "learning group" composed of:

(a) project staff working on 20 projects with an exceptional focus on popular participation in various countries, sectors, and stages of preparation and implementation, and (b) specialists on participation from several PRE departments and from advisory positions or technical departments within Operations. A core team of about 10 staff (including at least one person from each Region, COD, and EXTIE) will meet regularly, while the rest of the group will contribute occasionally and be kept informed. The core team will study experience with participation in the 20 projects, and trust-fund resources will finance special efforts to learn about the participatory aspects of these projects. The core team will also review analytical work being done by the PRE and technical-department members of the learning group or by others within and outside the Bank. Results and findings will be disseminated within the Bank on an ongoing basis through the learning group members, Bank seminars, and staff working papers. EXTIE will also involve NGOs, other international agencies, and interested government officials in this learning process, notably through a Bank-organized seminar in September 1991. This learning process is expected to continue for three years, with reports to management at the end of

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18 months and three years that might suggest follow-up by the Bank on a wider scale.

4. This exercise has three objectives. First, since there are relatively few examples of large-scale participatory programs, developing some 20 participatory projects is a worthwhile objective in itself. If the Bank and the member governments involved are successful on this aspect of most of these projects, they will have contributed substantially to the developing world's experience with participation in large-scale programs. Second, this learning process should encourage and promote interaction among scattered Bank initiatives on an important issue which is receiving increasing attention in many quarters. The Bank has not been a leader in this area, but various operational and analytical initiatives are now cropping up, and the learning group should accelerate institution-wide learning. Finally, the exercise will gather evidence and weigh the case for steps the Bank might take to promote popular participation in appropriate types of operations more widely. The hypothesis that underlies this exercise is that it would be worthwhile for the Bank to provide better assistance to its borrowers in promoting effective popular participation in some Bank-supported activities, but that doing so may call for modifications in the Bank's typical operational practices.

EXTIE's role

5. EXTIE played a lead role in developing this proposal and, in close consultation with COD, will also lead this learning process. EXTIE's mandate is to foster effective relations, especially on policy issues, between the Bank and other development institutions (Development Committee, international organizations, and NGOs), and popular participation is an issue on which other institutions have much to teach the Bank.

6. Recommendations for Bank-wide action on this issue emerged from consultations with the NGO and Bank members of the NGO-Bank Committee, and operational efforts to foster popular participation will often involve beneficiary groups or other NGOs. Yet beneficiary participation clearly depends much more on governments than on NGOs. In some of the 20 projects in this process, NGOs will not play any role.

Selecting the projects

Project staff and line managers will be asked to volunteer projects to be part of this exercise. This should insure that the project staff involved and their managers are committed to fostering popular participation in these projects and to taking part in the Bank-wide learning process. It should also mean that the governments concerned share this interest; that appropriate provisions have been made in the design of these projects and in the Bank's own budget for them; and that operational managers are

willing to allow some flexibility if necessary (in terms of project preparation time, for example).

8. To minimize the staff-time cost of selecting the 20 projects, it will be done as the Bank updates its "List of World Bank-financed Projects with Potential for NGO Involvement." The Regions and EXTIE have been updating this list about twice a year, and it needs to be updated now. As in the past, operational departments will be asked to update their sections of the list, and on this occasion they will also be asked to call attention to ongoing or planned projects in which exceptional efforts are being made (whether or not NGOs are involved) to promote popular participation in project decisions. Regional managers will, in consultation with task managers, make their own selection among these projects when they review the updated list of projects with potential for NGO involvement. In the case of the Africa Regional Office, Mr. Jaycox has asked his technical department to help by making a quick review of their own of participation in Bank-financed projects in the region. The Regions might together identify roughly 40 ongoing or planned projects in which exceptional efforts are being made to promote popular participation.

9. The core team of the learning group will go over the nominations from all the Regions and recommend to the OVPs which 20 projects should be included in the learning process. This will include some examples from each region. The core team will also aim

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for a sample that includes examples of various types of projects in which the Bank has tried to promote participation (irrigation, livestock, forestry, urban development, water supply, population, social investment funds, environment and environmental assessment, adjustment operations, and decentralization projects). The sample should include projects in various stages of planning and implementation, so that we learn from both cutting-edge experiments and lessons of experience. It should also include a mix of approaches to participation (at the national and community levels; through line ministries, local governments, commercial firms, or NGOs; relying on normal politics, project-specific consultation mechanisms, or social science methods of finding out what people want). Finally, the core team will pay attention to the level of interest, expertise on participation, breadth of sectoral experience, and scope for influence which the project staff involved would bring to the learning process.

10. The following, hypothetical list of 20 projects suggests the sort of mix that might result:

Philippines irrigation. The National Irrigation Administration is a successful example of a public bureaucracy which reformed its methods of operation to empower water users' associations.

Another Asian irrigation project (maybe Indonesia or Pakistan). Other Bank-financed irrigation projects are less advanced, but moving in the same direction.

Zaire livestock. This is one of several recent livestock projects which have given herders' organizations increased responsibilities, with good results.

An African cooperative support project (maybe Cameroon). AFTAG is helping to develop several innovative projects which will reduce government intervention and encourage member-controlled cooperatives.

India rural poverty. The Bank and government are looking to a group of NGOs to take the lead in conceptualizing this new project. Beneficiary participation is almost sure to be a fundamental feature of project design.

Guinea health. Village representatives have been involved in project decisions since identification through specially created committees, and the government is now setting up similar committees to help with several other projects. This project is about a year into implementation.

Indonesia kampung improvement. The Bank is supporting a new approach to urban upgrading, in which NGOs help semi-official community organizations become stronger and more democratic.

A local government project (maybe Nigeria). The Bank is supporting efforts to devolve resources and authority to local levels. This should give more scope for local participation in development decisions.

Philippines Visayas regional development. This project was an early effort to support the government's decentralization policy. The project focuses on environmentally precarious areas, includes both social forestry and fishery components, and has relied heavily on-site staff and beneficiary groups. Impact evaluation is now underway.

A rural water supply project. The Bank's sectoral policy is to support community control of water supply systems, but the Bank has so far tried this mainly in Bank-executed UNDP-financed projects. We should include a Bank-financed project which is taking this approach.

Mali Mopti rural development project. This is one of several projects in the Sahel which relies heavily local associations for environmental management.

A national environment program (maybe Brazil or Madagascar). The national environment programs which the Bank is now supporting have all involved an unusual degree of public participation in planning.

Bolivia or Guatemala social investment fund. These funds respond to proposals that communities initiate. The Bolivia fund is mature. NGOs, parliamentarians, and community groups have been involved in planning the Guatemala fund.

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This may result in mechanisms to reduce the risks of corruption and partisanship in its administration, but the participatory planning process has delayed the fund's establishment.

An African social investment fund. The Bank is helping to set up similar funds in a number of African countries, but only the Togo Grassroots Initiative Project has much implementation experience yet.

India resettlement. The Narmada projects illustrate the complexity of paying attention to the competing interests involved in a large development project. The Upper Krishna project was one of the first to follow the Bank's new guidelines on resettlement. The task manager of either of these projects would be familiar with Government of India's changing policy on resettlement and emerging experience.

Mexico resettlement. The latest hydropower project in Mexico is following the Bank's current guidelines regarding consultation with communities that will have to resettle.

An Asian environmental assessment. We should include one of the early "A" projects.

An EMENA environmental assessment.

An African adjustment program (maybe Cameroon). The Bank's reviews of adjustment lending have noted the utility of public discussion of adjustment programs. In Cameroon, Government and the Bank have taken steps to encourage public discussion.

A Latin American adjustment operation. Public discussion of adjustment policies tends to be much more extensive in Latin America than in Africa, but the Bank's potential role in public discussion much smaller.

The learning group and core team

11. The process will be led by a learning group of 25-30 staff from Operations and PRE and, more actively, by a core team of about 10 staff. The learning group will be comprised of project staff from each of the 20 projects, plus 5 to 10 staff from PRE and CPB or from advisory positions and technical departments within Operations. The 5 to 10 advisory staff should include people involved in the

other three lines of action noted in paragraph 2: environmental assessments, NGO involvement in Bank-supported operations, and work related to the Bank's operational directives. Other advisory staff in the group should all be actively engaged in analytical work related to popular participation. Someone from CPB would bring important balance and perspective to the group's consideration of the Bank's budget, project cycle, and staffing practices in relation to popular participation.

12. The responsibilities of most of the project staff in the learning group will be limited -- careful attention to the participatory aspects of their projects, planning and supervision of trust-fund financed consultancies to deepen our knowledge of participation in these projects, and the presentation of their project experience to the learning group's core team. Similarly, most of the advisory staff in the group will contribute occasionally, mainly by sharing relevant findings from their own ongoing analytical work. The entire learning group will be kept informed, invited to all core team meetings, and asked to comment on the two planned reports to senior management. Members of the learning group might also be invited to represent the Bank at selected international meetings on the participation issue in their own regions or areas of specialization.

13. Members of the core team will need to devote significant efforts to the learning process, although in most cases the Bank-wide learning process will also help them with work they would have otherwise been doing separately. Most members of the core team should be ready to do some related travel, mainly operational support to the 20 projects of special interest. The core team should include at least one person from COD and from each Region. ASTEN, ASTAG, AFTSD, AFTAG, and LA1AG have already expressed particular interest. The core team and the larger learning group will be led by David Beckmann (EXTIE), assisted by a researcher.

Trust-fund resources

14. The Bank will seek \$1 million in trust fund resources to support this learning process over three years. \$100,000 will be used to bring outside expertise into the Bank and disseminate the group's findings. \$900,000 (an average of \$15,000 per project per year) will be used to learn about popular participation in the 20 projects. The project staff in the learning group will take the lead in planning how best to use trust-fund resources in relation to their own projects, with EXTIE, in consultation with the core team, checking that the various project-specific learning efforts will complement each other and together answer the Bank-wide questions which the learning process is expected to address.

15. These trust-fund resources are primarily to help the Bank learn from projects in which exceptional efforts are in any case

being made to promote participation. Additional attention should reinforce the participatory aspects of these projects, but the \$15,000 per project per year is not intended to cover the costs (even to the Bank itself, let alone to project agencies) of fostering popular participation. In several cases, \$15,000 would pay for a consultant to supervise the participatory aspect of an ongoing project in some detail and document the experience for the learning group. In other cases, we would want to compare one of the 20 projects with a less participatory, but otherwise similar project (to address the counterfactual question). In some of the projects which are still being designed, \$15,000 might be used to help project agencies set up relevant in-country systems of monitoring and evaluation.

The learning process

16. The core team should meet about once a week for the first month or two, and about once a month thereafter. They will start by reviewing EXTIE's overview paper, this note, and a tentative calendar for the group's work. They will begin to debate how to strengthen the Bank's support for popular participation (the questions cited in paragraph 22 of this note), focusing on how the group's subsequent work will help to answer these questions. Once the core team is organized, the whole learning group should meet for an initial briefing and discussion. As the learning process gets underway, a high priority will be learning from the 20 projects -- listening to the project staff, planning the trust-fund financed

consultancies and monitoring/evaluation components within the projects themselves, offering advice and operational support, and distilling lessons from project experience. The core team and learning group will also keep abreast of developments on the other three initiatives noted in paragraph 2, review relevant analytical work of the group's advisory members, and invite papers by selected outside experts (government officials, staff from other international agencies, NGOs, and academics).

17. The most pressing concern of the project staff in this learning process will be the exercise's first objective (paragraph 4) -- to foster effective popular participation in the 20 projects. Project staff will draw insights and practical suggestions from the learning group, core-team members will give them advice and some operational support, and the trust-fund consultancies should also contribute to project appraisal and/or supervision. For projects that are being implemented, the emphasis will be on extracting lessons from experience. For projects that are still being prepared, the emphasis will be on planning and initiating participatory processes.

18. The second objective of the learning process is to encourage and promote interaction in an area of growing interest within the Bank and internationally. Various aspects of the process will help to meet this end. First, most of the advisory members of the learning group will be doing relevant analytical work, and the group

will encourage them to work together. The group should also help draw attention to emerging initiatives (such as AFT's new thematic team on governance and participation, AST's focus on decentralization, and the task force on governance which Sarwar Lateef, EXTIE's chief, has been asked to chair). The core team's meetings will be open to all interested staff and, in most cases, to interested outsiders too, and EXTIE will circulate relevant papers to people who show interest. Papers presented to the team could become staff working papers, and some of them will be collected into a book on participation. EXTIE will organize an international seminar on popular participation in September 1991; it will bring together academics, other international agencies, NGOs, and government officials with relevant experience. The issue of participation is likely to feature in many international discussions of development over the next few years, and members of the group will take part in selected meetings outside the Bank.

19. The primary focus for the core team will be the group's third objective -- recommendations for follow-up action by the Bank. The following paragraphs outline questions to be addressed, about participation generally and about the Bank's role.

Questions to be addressed

20. The learning group is designed to promote an open-ended, exploratory process of institutional learning, so questions to be addressed and methodologies to be employed should not be as tightly

predefined as they would be in an academic research project or consultant study.

21. The learning group will necessarily revisit questions which have already been discussed in the literature on popular participation. Such questions include:

- > What are the advantages and disadvantages of popular participation? For what types of projects are the benefits high enough or the costs low enough to make it worth the effort?
- > What distinguishes those commercial firms, NGOs, and government agencies which are unusually responsive to the expressed needs of their clients? What are various ways that project agencies encourage beneficiary participation in project decisions (programs of public information, surveys, beneficiary assessments, public hearings, delegation of powers to beneficiary groups, etc.)? Through what processes have some relatively unresponsive agencies become more responsive?
- > When project planning encourages popular participation in decisions, what are effective ways to deal with conflicts among competing interest groups? How do some agencies strengthen the influence of low-income people?

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- > How should efforts to promote participation be adapted to take advantage of more widespread literacy and improved communication technologies?

- > To what extent is popular participation at the project level related to policies at the national level (to "good governance" generally, to the "poverty effort" of a government, or to democratic institutions such as a free press)?

22. The Bank's learning process should give higher priority, however, to questions about how to strengthen the Bank's support for popular participation. EXTIE's recent paper suggests tentative answers to the following questions. But a study of 20 projects which represent the Bank's best practice on this issue, results from related Bank initiatives and analytical work, and papers from outside experts should allow the learning group to come to more confident conclusions:

- > In what types of Bank-supported operations would it be worthwhile for the Bank to strengthen its emphasis on popular participation? What would be the costs to the Bank and its borrowers, and what would the benefits be?

- > Do the Bank's constrained operational budgets contribute to poor quality on this aspect of projects? If so, what

specific changes might be considered in the Bank's budgeting practices? Alternatively, do some of the 20 projects suggest ways to get the job done within the Bank's current budget constraints (putting funds to promote participation into project agencies' budgets, for example)?

- > Do these exemplary projects suggest that popular participation often requires a longer preparation period or more flexibility during implementation than the Bank usually allows? Alternatively, do some of the 20 projects suggest innovative ways to allow for project flexibility without changing the Bank's normal project cycle (building on pilot projects developed by other agencies, for example, or legal agreements that allow for certain types of design changes in response to what beneficiaries decide)?

- > Does the Bank need to employ different types of expertise than it usually brings to bear? What specific changes along these lines might be considered, and what costs and trade-offs would be involved?

- > How does the Bank's close relationship with governments inhibit and/or enhance what it can do in support of popular participation in development decisions? To what extent can or should the Bank strengthen popular participation in the formulation of development policies at the national level

(national environmental plans, for example, or changes in economic policy)? To what extent can or should the Bank address questions of "governance" or "poverty effort" at the national level, and what are the connections to participation at the project level?

Reporting and Follow-up

23. After 18 months and again at the end of the three years, EXTIE will, in consultation with the whole learning group, prepare for the Bank's management a summary of work done, findings, and recommendations for follow-up action.

International Economic Relations Division

External Affairs Department

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APPENDIX C

The Manila Declaration on People's Participation and Sustainable Development

APPENDIX C

The Manila Declaration on People's Participation and Sustainable Development¹

"If you have come to help me you can go home again. But if you see my struggle as part of your own survival then perhaps we can work together."

- Australian Aborigine Woman

We, the participants of the Inter-Regional Consultation on People's Participation in Environmentally Sustainable Development, held in Manila, Philippines from 6-10 June 1989 share a concern that the results of current development practice are not just, sustainable, or inclusive. Current development practice is based on a model that demeans the human spirit, divests people of their sense of community and control over their own lives, exacerbates social and economic inequity, and contributes to destruction of the ecosystem on which all life depends. Our work with grassroots communities brings us into daily contact with the results of this development.

Furthermore, we are concerned that foreign assistance, particularly debt financing, too often has contributed more to the problem than to its solution. It places the initiative and responsibility in the hands of foreigners rather than in the hands of the people. It weakens the accountability of governments to their own citizens. It promotes and sustains an inappropriate development model driven by the export market. It primarily finances resource-based projects that destroy the natural environment and deprive the poor of access to the productive assets upon which they depend for their livelihoods. National economies remain burdened with debt. And finally it results in the imposition of policies intended to facilitate debt repayment, orienting the national economy and its resources to the needs of foreign consumers, at the expense of the poor and the environment.

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¹ *A statement of the participants in the Inter-Regional Consultation on People's Participation in Environmentally Sustainable Development, Hotel Nikko Manila Garden, Philippines, sponsored by the Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC) (Manila, Philippines), and the Environmental Liaison Center International (ELCI) (Nairobi, Kenya). Thirty-one NGO leaders from Africa, Southeast Asia, South Asia, the South Pacific, Latin America, the Caribbean, North America and Europe participated. The proceedings are available from the ANGOC Secretariat, 47 Matrinco Building, 2178 Pasong Tamo, Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines. Telex: 23136 VMI-PH.*

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Our Vision: A People-Centered Development

There is current need for a fundamentally different development model based on an alternative development. Authentic development enhances the sustainability of the community. It must be understood as a process of economic, political, and social change that need not necessarily involve growth. Sustainable human communities can be achieved only through a people-centered development.

A people-centered development seeks to return control over resources to the people and their communities to be used in meeting their own needs. This creates incentives for the responsible stewardship of resources that is essential to sustainability.

A people-centered development seeks to broaden political participation, building from a base of strong people's organizations and participatory local government. It seeks the opportunity for people to obtain a secure livelihood based on the intensive, yet sustainable use of renewable resources. It builds from the values and culture of the people. Political and economic democracy are its cornerstone.

It seeks to build within people a sense of their own humanity and their links to the earth, its resources, and the natural processes through which it sustains all life. The relationship of the people to the land is of particular importance. Alienation from the land creates a symbolic alienation from community and from nature.

A people-centered development model calls for active mutual self-help among people, working together in their common struggle to deal with their common problems. Recognizing the importance of the self-respect of the individual and the self-reliance of the community, it does not look to international charity as the answer to poverty. It seeks the productive use of local resources to meet local needs. There is only a limited role for international debt financing or for the institutions that provide that finance.

Three principles are basic to a people-centered development.

1. Sovereignty resides with the people, the real social actors of positive change. Freedom and democracy are universal human aspirations. The sovereignty of the people is the foundation of democracy. The legitimate role of government is to enable the people to set and pursue their own agenda.
2. To exercise their sovereignty and assume responsibility for the development of themselves and their communities, the people must control their own resources, have access to relevant information, and have the means to hold the officials of government accountable. Freedom of association and expression, and open access to information are fundamental to the

responsible exercise of this sovereignty. Governments must protect these rights. People from all countries must work together in solidarity to insure that governments accept and act on this responsibility.

3. Those who would assist the people with their development must recognize that it is they who are participating in support of the people's agenda, not the reverse. The value of the outsider's contribution will be measured in terms of the enhanced capacity of the people to determine their own future.

Transforming National and International Systems: An Agenda for Transition

The international system of state dominated development institutions built on international financial transfers has been a major contributor to the current situation, in part because it has not been acknowledged the above principles. Transformation of this system represents an important priority. Thus, we will work with allies in governments and donors to transform the existing system into a system of people-to people international development cooperation in solving the problems that all people share in common. Though the need is urgent, we recognize that there must be a transitional period. This transition period must feature a dual strategy. Simultaneous steps must be taken to: 1) stop the damage; and 2) create alternatives. The balance of attention will depend on local circumstances.

Redefining Participation

There must be a basic redefinition of participation as applied by most official development assistance agencies, and many voluntary development organizations. Conventional practice often has called for the participation of the community in donor or voluntary development organization defined agendas and projects. Donors seek the assistance of voluntary development organizations in the implementation of donor agendas.

Since sovereignty resides with the people, not with the state, development assistance must be responsive to the people. In authentic development an assisting agency is a participant in a development process that is community driven, community led and community owned -- basic conditions for sustainability. When voluntary development organizations are involved, their commitment must be to serve the people, not the donor.

Opening Access to Information

Not only is full consultation with the community essential at all stage of project identification, including pre-project identification, there must also be full disclosure of information on the part of donors, lenders, and governments to the people concerned. Donors and lenders commonly withhold information on the grounds that it is privileged information that they can release only to government.

Governments, public donors including voluntary development organizations, and the multilateral banks are public agencies dealing with other public agencies. As public agencies they are agencies of the people engaged in the expenditure of people's money on activities that have considerable impact on people's lives. The sovereign people have the right to be fully informed, and donors must learn to respect this right. Where this right is not respected, development too often becomes a conspiracy between the donor or the lender and government against the people. It is a charade to talk of people's participation under such circumstances.

Building Inclusive Alliances

Alliances must be built across classes and sectors. It is important to recognize and work with natural allies within existing institutions, including government and the international donors and financial institutions, who share the vision or can be enlisted to its cause. Those who are working for internal reform can benefit from the pressures of citizen action. Care must be taken, however, to avoid co-optation, recognizing that the objective requires the transformation, not simply the fine tuning, of inappropriate institutions.

Reducing Debt Dependence

Another concern is to raise awareness that while international loan assistance may contribute to short-term prosperity, in the long-term the burden of the resulting debt falls on the poor and the environment. Long-term international debt financing is basically inconsistent with a sustainable development. Voluntary development organizations should encourage governments to reduce their international borrowing that does not specifically enhance sustainability. The incentive for successful policy changes, toward a sustainable development, including action to reduce population growth rates, should be provided through debt relief rather than through new loans that ultimately add to debt burdens.

Reducing Resource Exports

Sustainability depends on the conservation of natural resources and their judicious use by the people to preserve and enhance their quality of life. Too often the exploitation of natural resources for export deprives local people of their land and livelihoods -- in order to repay loans that benefitted only the rich by catering to the overconsumption of wealthy foreign consumers. Resources must be conserved for the use of the people, particularly those who have had at least opportunity to share in development benefits.

Strengthening People's Capacity for Participation

Peoples' capacity for participation in the creation of sustainable communities must be strengthened through efforts to rapidly expand people's organization and awareness. Voluntary development organizations will need to reappraise their roles and methods in this process. It is important to recognize and build from existing organizations and make resources available. There must be use of mass media. Communities must be encouraged to strengthen self-organizing processes and to support one another's initiatives. Governments must be encouraged and assisted in creating a policy environment for citizen action.

Creating Demonstrations of Self-Reliant Community

Simply organizing the people is not sufficient. The goal is the recreation of society from the bottom up on a foundation of productive, sustainable communities. There is a need for large-scale experimentation to demonstrate the creation of communities that exemplify sustainability, justice, and inclusiveness. These must also demonstrate the potentials of small-scale community action on a replicable scale.

Creation of National and International Monitoring Systems

Voluntary development organizations and people's organizations must act directly to increase access to information and enhance people's ability to make rational choices toward a sustainable future. Voluntary development organizations working at international levels should collaborate in developing a system to monitor the plans and actions of development donors, financial institutions, and multi-national corporations. National voluntary development organizations must create similar systems to monitor and make known the plans and actions of national governments and corporations. The

purpose is to insure that the people have access to the relevant information to assess social and environmental impacts and to take necessary actions to protect their interests.

There should also be a broadly based historical assessment at national and regional levels of the social and environmental impact of foreign assistance, and trade and corporate investment policies. These studies will create greater understanding of the dynamics of the international system and of the issues at stake.

Many of the changes called for by a people-centered development present a fundamental challenge to well established interests. A call for such changes would be unrealistic, were it not for the depth of the crisis of deepening poverty and environmental destruction that now confronts human society. The future of all people depends on a basic transformation in thought and action, leading people to rediscover their essential humanity and to recreate their relationships with one another and among themselves and their environment. It is pragmatism more than idealism that makes change possible.

Source: Korten, David. C. Getting to the 21st Century. (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, Inc., 1990): 217-221.

APPENDIX D

**African Charter for
Popular Participation in
Development and Transformation**

APPENDIX D

African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation

(Arusha 1990)

PREAMBLE

1. The International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa was held, in Arusha, the United Republic of Tanzania from 12 to 16 February 1990, as a rare collaborative effort between African people's organizations, the African Governments, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations agencies, in the search for a collective understanding of the role of popular participation in the development and transformation of the region. It was also an occasion to articulate and give renewed focus to the self-reliance and to formulate policy recommendations for national Governments, popular organizations and the international community in order to strengthen participatory processes and patterns of development. It was the third in a series of major international conferences organized by the Economic Commission for Africa in collaboration with the rest of the United Nations system to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Programme of African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD). It came as a sequel to the Abuja International Conference on Africa: The Challenge of Economic Recovery and Accelerated Development held in 1987, and the 1988 Khartoum International Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa's Economic Recovery and Development. It is important to note that the initiative for this Conference came from the submission of the NGO's to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the mid-term review and assessment of the implementation of UN-PAAERD in September 1988.

2. The Conference was organized under the auspices of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Follow-up on the Implementation of the UN-PAAERD at the Regional Level (UN-IATF) and with the full support and warm hospitality of the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania. The ECA Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic Development and Planning adopted resolution 664 (XXIV) at its twenty-fourth session in which it supported this Conference and urged member States of the Commission, the international community, NGO's and the United Nations system to support and actively participate in it. The Conference was attended by over 500 participants from a wide range of African people's organizations - including, in particular, non-governmental, grass-roots, peasant, women and youth organizations and associations, trade unions and others - as well as representatives of African Governments, agencies of the United Nations system, non-African non-governmental organizations,

regional, subregional and intergovernmental organizations, bilateral donors, multilateral organizations as well as specialists, both from within and outside Africa. The conference was opened by H.E. Aki Hassan Mwinyi, President of the United Republic of Tanzania. Opening statements were also made by the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the representative of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Trade Union Unity and representatives of the Non-Governmental Organizations, African Women's Organizations and the Pan African Youth Movement. The Conference would like to put on record its appreciation for the full support and warm hospitality of the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania.

3. The Conference was organized out of concern for the serious deterioration in the human and economic conditions in Africa in the decade of the 1980's, the recognition of the lack of progress in achieving popular participation and the lack of full appreciation of the role popular participation plays in the process of recovery and development.

4. The objectives of the Conference were to:

- (a) Recognize the role of people's participation in Africa's recovery and development efforts;
- (b) Sensitize national Governments and the international community to the dimensions, dynamics, processes and potential of a development approach rooted in popular initiatives and self-reliant efforts;
- (c) Identify obstacles to people's participation in development and define appropriate approaches to the promotion of popular participation in policy formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development initiatives;
- (d) Recommend actions to be taken by Governments, the United Nations system as well as the public and private donor agencies in building an enabling environment for authentic popular participation in the development process and encourage people and their organization to undertake self-reliant development initiatives;
- (e) Facilitate the exchange of information, experience and knowledge for mutual support among people and their organizations; and,
- (f) Propose indicators for the monitoring of progress in facilitating people's participation in Africa's development.

5. We, the people, engaged in debate and dialogue on the issues involved over the span of five plenary sessions and 15 workshops during the five-day-long International Conference. In the light of our deliberations, we have decided to place on record our collective analysis, conclusions, policy recommendations and action proposals for the consideration of the people, the African Governments and the international community.

I. ASSERTING THE ROLE OF POPULAR PARTICIPATION

6. We are united in our conviction that the crisis currently engulfing Africa is not only an economic crisis but also a human, legal, political, and social crisis. It is a crisis of unprecedented and unacceptable proportions manifested not only in abysmal declines in economic indicators and trends, but more tragically and glaringly in the suffering, hardship and impoverishment of the vast majority of African people. At the same time, the political context of socio-economic development has been characterized, in many instances, by an over-centralization of power and impediments to the effective participation of the overwhelming majority of the people in social, political and economic development. As a result, the motivation of the majority of African people and their organizations to contribute their best to the development process, and to the betterment of their own well-being as well as their say in national development has been severely constrained and curtailed and their collective and individual creativity has been undervalued and underutilized.

7. We affirm that nations cannot be built without the popular support and full participation of the people, nor can the economic crisis be resolved and the human and economic conditions improved without the full and effective contribution, creativity and popular enthusiasm of the vast majority of the people. After all, it is to the people that the very benefits of development should and must accrue. We are convinced that neither can Africa's perpetual economic crisis be overcome, nor can a bright future for Africa and its people see the light of day unless the structures, pattern and political context of the process of socio-economic development are approximately altered.

8. We, therefore, have no doubt that at the heart of Africa's development objectives must lie the ultimate overriding goal of human-centered development that ensures the overall well-being of the people through sustained improvement in their living standards and the full and effective participation of the people in charting their development policies, programmes, and processes and contributing to their realization. We furthermore observe that given the current world political and economic situation, Africa is becoming further marginalized in world affairs, both geo-politically and economically. African countries must realize that, more than ever before, their greatest resource is their people and that it is through their active and full participation that Africa can surmount the difficulties that lie ahead.

9. We are convinced that to achieve the above objective will require a redirection of resources to satisfy, in the first place, the critical needs of the people, to achieve economic and social justice and to emphasize self-reliance, to empower the people to determine the direction and content of development, and to effectively contribute to the enhancement of production and productivity that is required. Bearing this in mind and having carefully analyzed the structure of the African economies, the root causes of the repeated economic crisis and the strategies and programmes that have hitherto been applied to deal with them, we are convinced that Africa has no alternative but to urgently and immediately embark upon the task of transforming the structure of its economies to achieve long-term self-sustained growth and development that is both human centered and participatory in nature. Furthermore, Africa's grave environmental and ecological crisis cannot be solved in the absence of a process of sustainable development which commands the full support and participation of the people. We believe in this context that the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP) - which was endorsed by the twenty-fifth Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) held in July 1989, and by the Conference of Heads of State or Government on Non-Aligned countries held in Belgrade in September 1989 and by the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations which invited the international community, including multilateral, financial and development institutions, to consider the framework as a basis for constructive dialogue and fruitful consultation - offers the best framework for such an approach. We also wish in this regard to put on record our disapproval of all economic programmes, such as orthodox Structural Adjustment Programmes, which undermine the human condition and disregard the potential and role of popular participation in self-sustaining development.

10. In our sincere view, popular participation is both a means and an end. As an instrument of development, popular participation is both a means and an end. As an instrument of development, popular participation provides the driving force for collective commitment for the determination of people-based development processes and willingness by the people to undertake sacrifices and expend their social energies for its execution. As an end in itself, popular participation is the fundamental right of the people to fully and effectively participate in the determination of the decisions which affect their lives at all levels and at all times.

II. PROMOTING POPULAR PARTICIPATION

11. We believe strongly that popular participation is, in essence, the empowerment of the people to effectively involve themselves in creating the structures and in designing policies and programmes that serve the interests of all as well as to effectively contribute to the development process and share equitably in its benefits. Therefore, there must be an opening up of political process to accommodate freedom of opinions, tolerate

differences, accept consensus on issues as well as ensure the effective participation of the people and their organizations and associations. This requires action on the part of all, first and foremost of the people themselves. But equally important are the actions of the State and the international community, to create the necessary conditions for such an empowerment and facilitate effective popular participation in societal and economic life. This requires that the political system evolve to allow for democracy and full participation by all sections of our societies.

12. In view of the critical contribution made by women to African societies and economies and the extreme subordination and discrimination suffered by women in Africa, it is the consensus of the participants that the attainment of equal rights by women in social, economic and political spheres must become a central feature of a democratic and participatory pattern of development. Further, it is the consensus of this conference that the attainment of women's full participation must be given highest priority by society as a whole and African Governments in particular. This right should be fought for and defended by society, African Non-Governmental Organizations and Voluntary Development Organizations as well as by non-African Non-Governmental Organizations and Voluntary Development Organizations, Governments and the United Nations system in due recognition of the primary role being played by women now and on the course to recovery and transformation of Africa for better quality of life.

People's role

13. We want to emphasize the basic fact that the role of the people and their popular organizations is central to the realization of popular participation. They have to be fully involved, committed, and indeed, seize the initiative. In this regard, it is essential that they establish independent people's organizations at various levels that are genuinely grass-root, voluntary, democratically administered and self-reliant, and that are rooted in the tradition and culture of the society so as to ensure community empowerment and self-development. Consultative machinery at various levels should be established with governments on various aspects of democratic participation. It is crucial that the people and their popular organizations should develop links across national borders to promote co-operation and interrelationships on subregional, regional, South-South and South-North bases. This is necessary for sharing lessons of experience, developing people's solidarity and raising political consciousness on democratic participation.

14. In view of the vital and central role played by women in family well-being and maintenance, their special commitment to the survival, protection and development of children, as well as survival of society and their important role in the process of African recovery and reconstruction, special emphasis should be put by all the people in terms of eliminating biases particularly with respect to the reduction of the burden on women and taking positive action to ensure their full equality and effective participation in the development process.

15. Having said this, we must underscore that popular participation begins and must be earnestly practiced at the family level, because home is the base for development. It must also be practiced at the work place, and in all organizations, and in all walks of life.

Role of African Governments

16. We strongly believe that popular participation is dependent on the nature of the State itself and ability of Government to respond to popular demand. Since African Governments have a critical role to play in the promotion of popular participation, they have to yield space to the people, without which popular participation will be difficult to achieve. Too often, the social base of power and decision-making are too narrow. Hence the urgent need to broaden these; to galvanize and tap the people's energy and commitment; and to promote political accountability by the State to the people. This makes it imperative that a new partnership between African Governments and the people in the common interest of societal and accelerated socio-economic development should be established without delay. This new partnership must not only recognize the importance of gender issues but must take action to ensure women's involvement at all levels of decision-making. In particular Governments should set themselves specific targets for the appointment of women in senior policy and management posts in all sectors of government.

17. We believe that for people to participate meaningfully if their self-development, their freedom to express themselves and their freedom from fear must be guaranteed. This can only be assured through the extension and protection of people's basic human rights and we urge all Governments to vigorously implement the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ILO Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

18. We also believe that one of the key conditions for ensuring people's participation throughout the continent is the bringing to an end of all wars and armed conflicts. The millions of African refugees and displaced persons are those with least opportunity to participate in the determination of their future. We urge Governments and all parties to Africa's conflicts, domestic and external, to seek peaceful means of resolving their differences and of establishing peace throughout Africa. In situations of armed conflicts, we uphold the right of civilians to food and other basic necessities and emphasize that the international community must exercise its moral authority to ensure that this right is protected.

19. We cannot overemphasize the benefits that can be reaped if, with the elimination of internal strife or inter-country conflicts, the resources spent on defence were to be redirected to productive activities and social services to the people. As rightly noted in the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation, "it is not difficult to imagine what it would mean to social welfare in Africa, with all its positive multiplier effects, if a saving can be achieved in defence spending and non-productive expenditures." We believe that our Governments can make such savings and we call upon them to do so urgently.

20. We are, however, aware of certain situations, particularly, for the front-line States which continue to face the destabilization acts of apartheid South Africa. This destabilization results in a debilitating diversion of resources that would otherwise have been used to meet critical basic needs of the people in these countries.

Role of the international community

21. We call on the international community to examine its own record on popular participation, and hereafter to support indigenous efforts which promote the emergence of a democratic environment and facilitate the people's effective participation and empowerment in the political life of their countries.

22. We also call on the United Nations system to intensify its effort to promote the application of justice in international economic relations, the defence of human rights, the maintenance of peace and the achievement of disarmament and to assist African countries and people's organizations with the development of human and economic resources. We also call on the United Nations system to implement its own decision to have at least 30 per cent of senior positions held by women. Special efforts are needed to ensure that African women are adequately represented at senior levels in United Nations agencies, particularly those operating in Africa.

III. POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

23. On the basis of the foregoing, we lay down the following basic strategies, modalities and actions for effective participation in development.

A. At the level of Governments

1. African Governments must adopt development strategies, approaches and programmes, the content and parameters of which are in line with the interest and aspirations of the people and which incorporate, rather than

alienate, African values and economic, social, cultural, political and environmental realities.

2. We strongly urge African Governments to promote the formulation and implementation of national development programmes within the framework of the aforesaid aspirations, interests and realities, which develop as a result of a popular participatory process, and which aim at the transformation of the African economies to achieve self-reliant and self-sustaining people-centered development based on popular participation and democratic consensus.
3. In implementing these endogenous and people-centered development strategies, an enabling environment must be created to facilitate broad-based participation, on a decentralized basis, in the development process. Such an enabling environment is an essential prerequisite for the stimulation of initiatives and creativity and for enhancing output and productivity by actions such as:
 - (i) extending more economic power to the people through the equitable distribution of income, support for their productive capacity through enhanced access to productive inputs, such as land, credit, technology, etc., and in such a manner as to reflect the central role played by women in the economy;
 - (ii) promoting mass literacy and skills training in particular and development of human resources in general;
 - (iii) greater participation and consensus-building in the formulation and implementation of economic and social policies at all levels, including the identification and elimination of laws and bureaucratic procedures that pose obstacles to people's participation;
 - (iv) increasing employment opportunities for the rural and urban poor, expanding opportunities for them to contribute to the generation of output and enhanced productivity levels and creating better marketing conditions for the benefit of the producers; and,
 - (v) strengthening communication capacities for rural development, mass literacy, etc.

4. **Small-scale indigenous entrepreneurship and producers co-operatives, as forms of productive participatory development, should be promoted and actions should be taken to increase their productivity.**
5. **Intensifying the efforts to achieve subregional and regional economic co-operation and integration and increased intra-African trade.**

B. At the level of the people and their organizations

To foster participation and democratic development, the people and their organizations should:

1. **Establish autonomous grass-roots organizations to promote participatory self-reliant development and increase the output and productivity of the masses.**
2. **Develop their capacity to participate effectively in debates on economic policy and development issues. This requires building people's capacity to formulate and analyze development programmes and approaches.**
3. **Promote education, literacy skill training and human resource development as a means of enhancing popular participation.**
4. **Shake off lethargy and traditional beliefs that are impediments to development, especially the customs and cultural practices that undermine the status of women in society, while recognizing and valuing those beliefs and practices that contribute to development. Rural and urban people's organizations, such as workers, peasants, women, youth, students etc., should be encouraged to initiate and implement strategies to strengthen their productive power and meet their basic needs.**
5. **Concerted efforts should be made to change prevailing attitudes towards the disabled so as to integrate them and bring them into the mainstream of development.**
6. **Create and enhance networks and collaborative relationships among peoples' organizations. This will have the effect of social involvement capable of inducing social change.**

7. **People's organizations should support strongly and participate in the efforts to promote effective subregional and regional economic co-operation and integration and intra-African trade.**

C. At the level of the international community

We also call on the international community to support popular participation in Africa by:

1. **Supporting African countries in their drive to internalize the development and transformation process. The IMF, World Bank and other bilateral and multilateral donors are urged to accept and support African initiatives to conceptualize, formulate and implement endogenously designed development and transformation programmes.**
2. **Directing technical assistance programmes, first and foremost, to the strengthening of national capabilities for policy analysis and the design and implementation of economic reform and development programmes.**
3. **Fostering the democratization of development in African countries by supporting the decentralization of development processes, the active participation of the people and their organizations in the formulation of development strategies and economic reform programmes and open debate and consensus-building processes on development and reform issues.**
4. **Allowing for the release of resources for development on a participatory basis which will require the reversal of the net outflow of financial resources from Africa to the multilateral financial institutions and donor countries and their use for development purposes and for the benefit of the people.**
5. **Reducing drastically the stock of Africa's debt and debt-servicing obligations and providing a long-term period of moratorium on remaining debt-servicing obligations in order to release resources for financing development and transformation on a participatory basis.**
6. **Ensuring that the human dimension is central to adjustment programmes which must be compatible with the objectives and aspirations of the African people and with African realities and must**

be conceived and designed internally by African countries as part and parcel of the long-term objectives and framework of development and transformation.

7. Supporting African NGO's, grass-roots organizations, women's and youth organizations and trade unions in activities such as training, networking and other programme activities, as well as the documentation, and wide dissemination of their experiences.

D. At the level of NGO's and voluntary development organizations

The African and non-African NGO's and voluntary development organizations have an important role in supporting recovery and development efforts and popular participation initiatives and organizations in Africa. They are urged to take the following actions:

1. African NGO's and voluntary development organizations and their partners should be fully participatory, democratic, and accountable.
2. African NGO's, voluntary development organizations and grass-roots organizations should develop and/or strengthen institutional structures at the regional, subregional and national levels, such as FAVDO, to bring them together.
3. African NGO's and voluntary development organizations should broaden the dissemination of successful African popular participation and grass-root experiences throughout the continent and the exchange of experience thereon to create a multiplier effect and sensitize policy-makers.
4. The International Conference on Popular Participation is clear in its recognition of the value of the contribution of grass-roots organizations and NGO's to Africa's development and demonstrates that effective dialogue between Governments, NGO's and grass-roots organizations is essential and valuable. This Conference recommends that national fora be established to enable honest and open dialogue between African Governments, grass-roots organizations and NGO's in order that the experience of grass-roots participatory development informs national policy-making.
5. Non-African NGO's and voluntary development organizations should give increased support and target their operations within the framework of national economic strategies and reform programmes aimed at transforming the structures of the African economies with a view to

internalizing the development process and ensuring its sustainability with a particular focus on the human dimension and people's participation.

6. Non-African NGO's and voluntary development organizations should give due recognition to African NGO's and participatory, self-reliant development initiatives launched by African grass-roots organizations.
7. Non-African NGO's and voluntary development organizations should utilize African expertise to the maximum extent possible with regard to their development work in Africa and advocacy and campaigning work at the international level.
8. Non-African NGO's should strengthen their advocacy work internationally and in their home countries and with regard to bilateral donors and the multilateral system, closely monitoring their response to the African crisis and holding donor governments and agencies accountable for their policies and actions. In particular, non-African and African NGO's should formulate a programme of action geared towards their fullest participation in the end-term review of UN-PAAERD.
9. Co-operation and dialogue between African and Non-African NGO's and voluntary development organizations should be strengthened to increase the effectiveness of their interventions at the community level and the building of greater understanding on the part of international public opinion of the real causes of the African socio-economic crisis and the actions that are needed to deal with its root causes.
10. Non-African NGO's acknowledge that their influence as donors is often detrimental to ensuring genuine partnership with African NGO's, voluntary development organizations and grass-roots organizations and affects the enabling environment for popular participation. In that context co-operation in all its forms must be transparent and reflect African priorities.
11. African and non-African NGO's and voluntary development organizations should, in addition to their traditional humanitarian activities, increasingly provide support for the productive capacities of the African poor and for promoting environmentally sound patterns of local development.

E. At level of the media and communication

1. The national and regional media should make every effort to fight for and defend their freedom at all cost, and make special effort to champion the cause of popular participation and publicize activities and programmes

thereof and generally provide access for the dissemination of information and education programmes on popular participation.

2. Combining their indigenous communication systems with appropriate use of modern low-cost communications technology, African communities and NGO's, voluntary development organizations and trade unions and other mass organizations must strengthen their communication capacities for development. Regional and national NGO's should participate in the assessment of Africa's Development Support Communication Needs to be carried out under the auspices of the United Nations Steering Committee and the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on UN-PAAERD.

F. At the level of women's organizations

In ensuring that the participation of women in the development process is advanced and strengthened, popular women's organizations should:

1. Continue to strengthen their capacity as builders of confidence among women.
2. Strive for the attainment of policies and programmes that reflect and recognize women's roles as producers, mothers, active community mobilizers, and custodians of culture.
3. Work to ensure the full understanding of men, in particular, and the society, in general, of women's role in the recovery and transformation of Africa so that men and women together might articulate and pursue appropriate courses of action.
4. Implement measures to reduce the burden carried by women through:
(a) advocating to the society at large, including central and local government levels, the importance of task sharing in the home and community, especially in the areas of water and wood fetching, child rearing etc.; (b) promoting the establishment and proper functioning of community-based day care centres in all communities; and (c) striving to attain economic equality by advocating the rights of women to land and greater access to credit.
5. Women's organizations should be democratic, autonomous and accountable organizations.

G. At the level of organized labour

Trade Unions should:

- 1. Be democratic, voluntary, autonomous, and accountable organizations.**
- 2. Initiate, animate, and promote mass literacy and training programmes.**
- 3. Organize and mobilize rural workers in accordance with ILO Convention 141, which African Governments are strongly urged to ratify.**
- 4. Defend trade union rights, in particular the right to strike.**
- 5. Assist in the formation of workers' co-operatives.**
- 6. Assist in organizing the unemployed for productive activities, such as the establishment of small- and medium-scale enterprises.**
- 7. Give special attention to effective and democratic participation of women members at all levels of trade unions.**
- 8. Promote work place democracy through the call for the protection of workers' rights to freedom of association, collective bargaining and participatory management.**

H. At the level of youth and students and their organizations

Considering the centrality of the youth and students in Africa's population and the recovery and development process, the following actions should be taken:

- 1. Preparation and adoption of an African Charter on Youth and Student Rights to include the right to organize, education, employment and free public expression.**
- 2. The full democratic participation of youth and students in African society requires immediate steps by Government, popular organizations, parents and the youth themselves to eliminate the major impediments to youth participation, such as frequent bans on youth and student organizations, police brutality against unarmed protesting students, detention and harassment on campuses, dismissal from studies and the frequent and arbitrary closure of educational institutions.**

3. Youth, students, Governments and the international community must join forces urgently to combat growing drug trafficking and drug abuse. We also urge Governments to sign and ratify the International Convention on the Illicit Trafficking of Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.
4. The advancement of youth participation in development also requires the protection of Africa's minors against forced military service, whether in national or insurgent/rebel groups.
5. African youth and students should organize national autonomous associations to participate in and contribute to development activities and programmes such as literacy, reforestation, agriculture and environmental protection.
6. Student and youth organizations must also strive to be democratic, accountable, voluntary, and autonomous and should co-ordinate their activities with workers', women's and peasant organizations.
7. National youth and student organizations should take urgent steps to strengthen and further democratize existing pan-African youth and student organizations to make them play their roles more effectively in Africa's development process.

IV. MONITORING POPULAR PARTICIPATION

24. We proclaim the urgent necessity to involve the people in monitoring popular participation in Africa on the basis of agreed indicators and we propose the use of the following indicators, which are not necessarily exhaustive, for measuring the progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Charter.
 1. The literacy rate, which is an index of the capacity for mass participation in public debate, decision-making and general development processes.
 2. Freedom of association, especially political association, and presence of democratic institutions, such as political parties, trade unions, people's grass-roots organizations and professional associations, and the guarantee of constitutional rights.
 3. Representation of the people and their organizations in national bodies.
 4. The rule of law and social and economic justice, including equitable distribution of income and the creation of full employment opportunities.

5. **Protection of the ecological, human and legal environment.**
 6. **Press and media freedom to facilitate public debate on major issues.**
 7. **Number and scope of grass-roots organizations with effective participation in development activities, producers and consumers co-operatives and community projects.**
 8. **Extent of implementation of the Abuja Declaration on Women (1989) in each country.**
 9. **Political accountability of leadership at all levels measured by the use of checks and balances.**
 10. **Decentralization of decision-making processes and institutions.**
25. **We are convinced of the imperative necessity to follow-up and monitor the implementation of this Charter and to report periodically thereon on progress achieved as well as problems encountered. We accordingly recommend that at the national level a follow-up mechanism on which representatives at high level of Government, trade unions, women's organizations, NGO's, voluntarily development organizations, grass-roots and youth and student organizations will be members.**
26. **At the regional level, we propose a joint OAU/ECA Regional Monitoring Machinery on which also, in addition to representatives of these two organizations will be representatives of the network of organizations named above. This regional monitoring group will submit biennial progress reports on the implementation of the Charter to the ECA Conference of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU.**

CONCLUSION

27. **This Conference has taken place during a period when the world continues to witness tumultuous changes in Eastern Europe. Even more dramatically, this Conference has taken place during the very week when Nelson Mandela's release has exhilarated all of Africa, and galvanized the international community.**

28. **There is an inescapable thread of continuity between those events and our Conference; it is the power of people to effect momentous change. At no other time in the post-war period has popular participation had so astonishing and profound an impact.**
29. **History and experience both teach that this world never works in compartments. The forces of freedom and democracy are contagious. Inevitably, and irresistibly, popular participation will have a vital role to play on the continent of Africa, and play that role we will.**
30. **It is manifestly unacceptable that development and transformation in Africa can proceed without the full participation of its people. It is manifestly unacceptable that the people and their organizations be excluded from the decision-making process. It is manifestly unacceptable that popular participation be seen as anything less than the centerpiece in the struggle to achieve economic and social justice for all.**
31. **In promoting popular participation, it is necessary to recognize that a new partnership and compact must be forged among all the ACTORS in the process of social, political and economic change. Without this collective commitment, popular participation is neither possible nor capable of producing results. we, therefore, pledge to work together in this new partnership to promote full and effective participation by the masses together with Governments in the recovery and development process in Africa.**
32. **We, the people here assembled, have no illusion that the Charter will be embraced overnight by all of those to whom it is directed. But we are confident that this document is an indispensable step on the road to everything we would wish for the people of Africa.**

**Done at Arusha, the United
Republic of Tanzania
16 February 1990**

APPENDIX E

**AID Administrator's Memorandum of
December 9, 1980 on
"Increasing Local Participation in
AID-Assisted Project Activities"
with Two Attachments:**

- Discussion Paper on Participation and Development
- Memorandum by Norman Uphoff, summarizing what his Cornell University team had learned in the first two years of the AID-funded Rural Development Participation Project

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY
AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D C 20523

9 DEC 1980

THE ADMINISTRATOR

MEMORANDUM FOR THE EXECUTIVE STAFF AND MISSION DIRECTORS*

SUBJECT: Increasing Local Participation in AID-Assisted
Project Activities

I would like to make sure that we are doing everything we can to encourage local people's participation in development projects supported by AID. Quite aside from the virtues of participation as a good in and of itself -- and in enhancing the prospects for human rights, equitable development, civic involvement, pluralism, private sector activation, etc., -- there are at least two purely pragmatic reasons for encouraging participation.

First, projects which incorporate substantial elements of local participation have been shown, through our impact evaluations and other evidence, to work better and to enjoy enhanced prospects of becoming self-sustaining. For example, people who participate in local infrastructure projects tend to ensure their future use and maintenance. Similarly, technology transfer occurs more readily and effectively when those who are to use it participate in determining its suitability.

Second, participation acts as a force that generates additional resources for development overall; that is, people who are actively involved tend to contribute more to the process and thus magnify the impact of external resources.

While considerable progress has been made in broadening participation in the sharing of benefits from AID-assisted projects, I find on the basis of my visits to AID missions and our projects, and in my conversations with Washington staff, that participation in decision-making, including the planning, design, and implementation of AID-supported activities, has been relatively limited. There are various reasons for this. Part of the problem lies in our varying definitions of participation, definitions that confuse it with government decentralization on the one hand, or local mobilization by

* Telegram to AID Missions

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external forces on the other. While these may constitute efforts in the right direction, I believe the best working definition of participation is contained in AID's 1975 Report to the Congress on "Implementation of 'New Directions' in Development Assistance":

- "-- Economic benefits are widely and significantly shared by the poor with the objective of narrowing the relative income gap between rich and poor, for example, the co-op which benefits small farmers.
- Decisions concerning the activities to be carried out are made, preferably, by those benefited (for example, the poor), or if not, at least with effective consultation and substantial acceptance by those benefited.
- The activity in which they participate is, ideally, a learning experience for benefited persons, which increases their technical skills and/or their capacity to organize for common purposes and for greater access to the benefits of development.
- The poor make a significant contribution in effort and resources to the activities from which they benefit, for example, through personal savings, or serving as members of local planning or project implementation committees, or through actual project implementation.
- The participation and contribution of women should be explicitly taken into account under the above mentioned considerations, for example, any of the above or other examples when the participants are women."

I suggest we use this definition as an important criterion for developing, reviewing, and assigning priority to projects.

Some further doubt the degree to which AID, with its responsibility to work with and through host governments, with its existing institutional structure and procedures, and with a relatively limited field staff, can achieve genuine community participation in the same way as can Peace Corps volunteers and PVOs at their best. I am concerned that within AID there is sometimes more talk about what cannot be done than on what can be done and how. Yet AID has a record of some accomplishment (probably more than any other bilateral or multilateral assistance agency) and a growing body of

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knowledge on participation on which to draw.

Attached are two short papers which examine some of our experience to date and offer candid and, I think, valuable explorations of the issues, of some of the problems faced in AID, and of some suggested solutions to them. Certain of these institutional changes, or others, may be desirable and feasible. I am asking PPC, in consultation with DSB, to further analyze the propositions advanced here and to prepare concrete recommendations on what steps need to be taken to enhance participation in AID-assisted activities. At the same time, however, I believe that many of our constraints can be overcome if all of us, in the Missions and in Washington, simply use our imagination in thinking up more creative ways of conducting our activities. The need for enhancing participation will be around as long as AID exists. The project design and approval process, as well as our evaluations, are, and should be, increasingly taking participation concerns into account. The Foreign Assistance Act requires us to do so, and Congress is interested in our progress in this area. The next Administration will be faced with the same challenge. Therefore, I am asking all of you to share these papers with your staffs, to convey to PPC any suggestions you may have, and meanwhile to see what you can do to enhance the participation elements in all projects on which you are working.

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.



Attachments:

- 1) "Participation and Development"
- 2) Cornell Note

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DISCUSSION PAPER

PARTICIPATION AND DEVELOPMENT

AID's attempts to implement a participatory development strategy have, to some extent, been hampered by a lack of specificity in designing such a strategy. Yet, in the last twenty years, AID has gained considerable experience with participatory approaches to development, which has generated certain lessons. By reviewing these lessons, and expanding our application of what they teach, we will be able to maintain our present leadership position among donors in this area.

The key assumption of this paper is that AID will be able to operationalize a series of steps which, regarded and implemented in a systematic fashion, will yield a self-sustaining, participatory development process. Perhaps the most difficult premise to assimilate in organizational and institutional terms, taking the AID point of view, is as follows: it is those who will live out the development project impact, and thus the development process, who should own, operate, and define it. It is customary in AID to denote these persons and groups, including whole societies, as anticipated or intended beneficiaries. They might more usefully be termed and perceived as participants for other than rhetorical purposes.

To achieve participatory development goals, AID must be willing to cede responsibility to participants--individual small producers and producer households, communities, regional administrations, host country government entities, parastatals, voluntary associations and others--to engender and help to sustain participant ownership and self-management. This does not mean relinquishing accountability, but it may mean relinquishing the sense of being in charge. Where there are real economies of scale, AID should continue to use intermediaries of various sorts, especially if these are host national participants, but AID need not attempt to put itself out of business on the assumption that it cannot achieve such goals because it is a relatively large, external donor agency. Rather, it should define its comparative advantage as against that of a variety of types of intermediaries.

More ready and real accountability for such a participatory development strategy and its successful outcomes will come from a shift in emphasis from design, redesign and intensive review of projects before start-up, to a set of clear criteria for starting a participatory process--including institutional reorganization--with additional clear criteria for sub-project activities. Intensive, upfront design tends to leave little room for participatory design and implementation including needed changes in both, which such participation may engender, and equally shifts attention from shared responsibility for implementation and evaluation. Intensive pre-approval review which is based on vague and poorly-understood criteria does little but delay the start-up of projects (see Figures 1 and 2). It is expensive in personnel time, and serves as a disincentive for innovation, and for risk-taking in the field missions. Here, AID is part of the problem, but can eliminate itself as a constraint by:

- establishing clear criteria for review, perhaps on a point system similar to that used for contract proposal evaluation;

- making those criteria clearly understood in AID/W and in the field, and then sticking to them long enough to see what impact they have on project results;
- requiring, at the PID stage, a realistic and persuasive participation plan to be implemented during PP and implementation stages, and assessed during ex-post evaluation;
- informing the field that projects which have such plans will receive first right of review, and first priority in funding, and sticking to it;
- initiating the above steps in the context of a learning process, which will be extended to intermediaries, such that the message is that this is something more than a fad, and such that tools are provided to carry it out.

Achieving the key elements of participation requires special emphasis on institutional arrangements of at least two kinds:

- institutions through which there will be representative participant involvement at every organizational level, and through the entire project/program cycle, yielding genuine and effective participation in the identification of needs, ways to meet those needs, necessary and appropriate activities, and ways to correct the results of any incorrect assumptions made as these are determined by the participants;
- institutions through which implementation tasks and responsibilities can be allocated equitably and in a timely fashion, as much as possible by those who will have to carry them out.

Experience indicates that in many environments, the most effective organizational mode for such institutions is a decentralized one, with authority for decisions, implementation, and resources for allocation resting as far down the system as possible, and thus the closest to the level at which the activities take place. However, not every task in support of a development initiative is best done at the bottom of the administrative structure, and in any event, most governments and parastatal institutions seek to preserve central authority. The level and type of organizational/institutional modification or strengthening that should take place will depend on the problems to be solved and the nature of the resulting development activities. But again, as a general proposition, the more the end-users are involved in decision-making and implementation, the more likely it is that the activities and their impacts will become self-sustaining.

Participation does not usually happen of itself when new, "risky" behaviors are called for, especially where there is a history of top-down and top-heavy development interventions. Traditional values which support reactionary or traditional power relations often must be modified before participation can take place. This means that some regimes and political structures are basically antithetical to a participatory development strategy, and AID must accept this reality. This also means that at regional and local levels, for participation to take place, elites will have to be coopted, circumvented, or curbed long enough for new social, economic and political mechanisms to be put in place so that participation can occur. These kinds of realities cannot usefully be put in the critical assumptions column of a log frame and thus be

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assumed away. Development is a dynamic social process, and a highly political one, and we must accept the premise that changes in economic behavior entail changes in social and political behavior at various levels of any society.

Three common objections to participatory development strategies often arise in AID. Yet, our experience indicates that without participation, we usually do not achieve self-sustaining development. The objections are: 1) participation takes too long, and is outside the time horizon of AID LOPs; 2) participation = small = low funding levels, thus to transfer large amounts of donor funds, participation must be de-emphasized; 3) to engender and support a participatory development process requires too much donor personnel time. Responses to these objections are as follows:

- 1) AID is accustomed to doing phased and follow-on projects--that is in part how we stay in business. We know that development does not usually take place in four-six years whether or not our projects are limited to that time span. This is recognized when we are not raising participatory strategies as an issue, but often is forgotten when we are.
- 2) Following through on the key elements of participation in a systemic and systematic fashion means operating at all levels. "Pure" participation in the community development mode may be only the beginning, or only the end of this dynamic process. Further, local-or base-level activities need not be small, e.g., Egypt's ORDEV village development initiative, and Indonesia's irrigation experiments with water-user associations. These can be massive programs, and articulated into national-level systems. The systemic nature of a participatory strategy suggests potential for greatly increased funding requirements once the system is understood and accepted, including by AID. Figure 3 gives an illustrative list of projects of this type from AID's current program which range from \$6-40 million for LOPs of six years maximum.
- 3) AID personnel and their time is presently in short supply. However, a shift away from upfront design and review toward generating a participatory process and appropriate criteria for its perpetuation, can possibly, over time, reduce the personnel time requirement over what it now is, or in the worst case, lead to breaking even. Increased use of appropriate intermediary institutions, including those within the host country, throughout the project cycle--and beginning with the preparation of the CDSS--is likely to yield more participation and to cut AID personnel time requirements overall. Reductions in upfront and long-term personnel involvement--including that of U.S.-based intermediaries-- could be introduced as an indicator of success for AID projects. This would, in participatory terms, mean doing more with fewer.

The recommendations that follow are premised on the fact that AID is mandated to carry out participatory development, that AID's host countries essentially know and accept this mandate, that AID has a certain comparative advantage and track record in doing this, and that AID will continue to operate both as a provider of development funds and of technical assistance in a project mode.

Recommendations:

1. Emphasize new guidelines on participation in PID and PP sections of Handbook 3, and amplify them with further guidance to the field in a special message on participatory strategies and tools to carry them out. This means instituting a participatory learning process with the field missions.
2. Cite successful examples of risk-taking, innovative field projects now in implementation or final stages of approval which are most likely to achieve participatory goals, thus helping missions with models that have already worked and been approved, and giving recognition to those missions that have already done this on their own.
3. Give all possible consideration to using viability of participatory development strategies as a criterion in determining country funding levels. Some regimes will clearly never permit participatory development at any significant level unless it is made clearly in their interest to do so. Negative human rights assessments are a fairly good indicator of viability in this sense.
4. On an experimental basis--perhaps one country per region--initiate a cooperative, participatory CDSS preparation process that involves host country officials, scholars, PVOs, NGOs, and citizens from the outset (here a model is the last Philippines CDSS), and stress institutional factors and macro-level social analysis. Together with this, institute the preparation of country socio-economic and political profiles which can then be updated in the CDSS process. This would save personnel time, improve understanding of dynamic processes in the country, eliminate endlessly reiterated social and other analyses in the project preparation process, and involve host country individuals and groups whose capacity can then be evaluated and tapped for participation in project preparation, implementation, and evaluation.
5. Clarify the policy on use of intermediaries, spelling out options and appropriate matches of intermediary strengths and styles with development problems to be solved. AID should define its own comparative advantage here positively, rather than by default. Host governments and other host nationals should be consulted here, especially because they do not make the fine distinctions we do between AID and its various contracted "arms." Here, matters of scale, problem definition, size and style are crucial. AID has a good track record, and need not give over responsibility for participatory strategies to others out of a sense of failure.
6. Do not set up a new category or stream of "participatory" projects, but rather, explain what key elements of participation are critical for which kinds of environments and problems in development. Here, the matter of societal and administrative/managerial levels is crucial.
7. Reward creative, risk-taking behavior on the part of AID personnel and AID contractors through an incentive system. If projects realistically emphasizing participation are first reviewed and first funded, on a consistent basis for long enough to get going, a real incentive should thus be provided. However, individuals in the system and its dependent organizations need also to be rewarded. The present personnel system, including the rotation of personnel after short tours, means that there is little accountability, and little reward for good service except at the highest levels of mission staffing patterns. PER criteria should be evolved that will take into account inno-

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vation on the part of individual officers in project conception and implementation. The present system is hard put to know how to reward creativity. This can be changed even if the main reality remains transfer of funds, and rates of obligations.

8. Encourage accountability without arrogance and proprietariness on the part of individuals and groups in AID. This applies equally to AID/W and to field staffs and--coincidentally --to contractors. Further, it must be emphasized that participation is not a substitute for accountability, but rather a means of shifting at least part of the accountability to those who will live out the results of our development interventions. Our logo is a handshake, not a handout. If necessary, educate the Congress to understand that AID can be publically accountable in the U.S. context without having to be "in charge" in the host country context. This may mean modifying the Congressional Notification requirements in addition to new changes in the CP process. How much does the Congress really want to know, and when?

9. Revise the Project Documentation guidance to allow for more timely modifications based on implementation experience; social change is quintessential to development, and participation will inevitably entail changes in project content and operation. Thus, modifications should be seen as the rule, and not as the exception.

10. Adjust as much as possible procurement regulations that inputs, including required project staff and commodities arrive on time, not two years after project start up as is often now the case. This means making our contracting procedures work more effectively, and possibly revising the RFP mechanism, starting it earlier in the cycle, even if there is a loss in specificity. This, added to shortening upfront design time should increase opportunities for participation, and also speed up the whole process. This will require an intensive effort to educate AID contracting staff in development objectives.

11. Disseminate Agency-wide, new guidance on conformity with Section 611 (a) (1), the "adequate planning requirement," so that each project review committee does not have to reinvent it each time it reviews a project, and so that each mission does not have to guess how reviewers will interpret it each time they design a project. Figure 2 indicates how often this has been an obstacle to speedy approval and project start-up. Figures 1 and 3 include projects which are still subject to delays because of lack of clarification on this issue.

12. Endorse the new social analysis guidance that is currently being prepared by AID social scientists. Social analysis at the CDSS level and at the project level is a useful venue for identifying appropriate participating institutions and organization, and new modalities for them to operate under to enhance beneficiary participation. Presently, social analysis occurs too late in the project cycle, is not used as a criterion for review or evaluation, is not pursued during implementation, and is regarded essentially as an add-on rather than as an intrinsic and useful part of project development or implementation. If this changes, social analysis of the right kind can also facilitate the development and use of monitoring systems that will help project operators and project beneficiaries assess project performance and improve it. To achieve this, the present strength of social scientists direct-hire and on contract must be maintained. Each mission probably cannot have the requisite personnel strength in this area. Wherever possible host national social scientists should be involved in carrying out social analysis, either alone,

or in tandem with AID social scientists on TDY or present in missions.

13. Develop improved project formats which both provide for participatory project design and implementation and reduce the discouraging time lags which now occur between identification of projects and actual implementation. These could involve a refinement of present approaches involving (a) phased project development, i.e. AID/W approval on the basis of a general design which includes a process by which funds will be incrementally obligated in the field following more specific design of the activities by the local population to occur during the early implementation phases and continue in an iterative fashion through the life of the project; (b) allocation of funds to an intermediary institution in the recipient country, which would then engage the population to be benefitted in a participatory process of identifying designing and implementing sub-project activities. Figure 3 is a listing of projects which have been designed along these lines and which can offer useful insights to guide future efforts.

These recommendations can be followed either as they are, or in modified form, within the current AID context, including its present funding, and personnel constraints. To implement them effectively will require a learning process, for AID/W as well as for the field. This will, in a sense, be a continuation and reinforcement of the learning process necessitated by the delegation of authority to the field. Each of these recommendations will probably entail further changes, so flexibility is very important. To carry them out will mean initiating and/or strengthening a participatory communication process within AID. If this is done carefully and is perceived as genuine, it should improve morale considerably, which in itself will help to get the job done better.

Drafted by: DS/RAD:ALMorton:11/25/80

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November 24, 1980

To: Jerry French, DS/RAD
Through: John Erbeson, DS/RAD
From: Norman Uphoff, Cornell RDPP
Re: Increasing Participation in AID Projects

Under the cooperative agreement which our Cornell Rural Development Committee has with your office for applied research, consulting and knowledge generation on "rural development participation," we have been involved with a number of missions, assisting in socio-economic analysis and implementation to strengthen the participatory aspects of projects. The observations in this memo are "interim" for two reasons: (1) our work in the field ranges between one and two years so far, and (2) not all learning is yet accumulated centrally (we operate in a relatively decentralized manner, practicing what we preach). We will be preparing a more extensive and detailed analysis of what AID can do to promote participation in its projects, drawing more fully on the knowledge we have gained in many settings.

The missions and projects we have worked with most extensively are:

- (a) Jamaica: Integrated Rural Development Project;
- (b) Yemen: Local Development Association Project;
- (c) Botswana: Rural Development Sector Grant; and
- (d) Sri Lanka: Gal Oya Water Management Project.

We have worked with other missions less intensively or less directly on participation issues, but our interaction with them also contributes to our understanding of the problems of increasing participation in and through AID projects.¹

The missions we have been working with have indicated a particular interest in working on problems of participation and we have valued and learned from the collaborative relationships. Under the cooperative agreement, our task is to be of assistance to missions and to be developing knowledge of broader use to AID and the

¹ Cameroon (Community Development), Costa Rica (Land Titling and Community Development), Dominica (Local Government), Dominican Republic (Agricultural Sector Assessment), Egypt (Decentralization), Indonesia (Land Settlement Evaluation), Liberia (Training for Decentralization), Nepal (Participatory Rural Development), Philippines (CDSS and Project Formulation Participation), Tunisia (Monitoring Decentralization). In addition we have done case studies on participation in agricultural research in Guatemala, Honduras and Cameroon, in decentralization in Tanzania and Philippines, and in paraprofessional programs in Bolivia, Guatemala, Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Upper Volta.

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development community. The latter efforts sometimes makes us look like "Monday morning quarterbacks," second-guessing persons who had to be calling the plays as they came along. It should be said that we have great respect for those with whom we have worked and we cannot say that we would always have done differently or better at that stage under the circumstances. We hope our comments will be received in the spirit they are given, not as fault-finding but as helping to build knowledge on a very important subject on which there is very little systematic knowledge to draw on. We focus here on what AID might do institutionally to promote and sustain participation, especially by the poor majority.

Approach

1. There is need to be clearer and more concrete about participation in project documentation. Although participation is a complex subject, it can be analyzed and dealt with more tangibly than is done in most project planning and assessment.² Exactly what participation is expected, and from whom, should be thought through and stated, and responsibility for supporting this participation should be assigned. Even though the projects we have been working with are probably better than most when it comes to provision and support of participation (the Sri Lanka mission, for example, introduced water user organizations into the project design after the consultants and host government had ignored them), there is still considerable ambiguity on "participation" in a number of projects. This contributes to glossing over participation efforts once projects are underway. Neither mission leadership nor AID/W should accept generalities about "participation" when greater specificity is both possible and desirable.

2. All assumptions about participation need to be checked out with proposed participants/beneficiaries. Though it is unrealistic, as well as inconsistent with a participatory approach to development, it sometimes happens that projects call for farmer participation in bench terracing or in field channel cleaning, for example, without having consulted with the farmers to determine whether they are willing and able to do this and on what terms. Without wishing to further burden the documentation process, it seems there should be genuine consultation with proposed participants/beneficiaries concerning their participation, and some documentation on the outcome of this consultation.

²Means for applying "participation" analysis are presented in John Cohen and Norman Uphoff, Rural Development Participation: Concepts and Measures for Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation, Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1977; also in Cohen and Uphoff, "Participation's Place in Rural Development: Seeking Clarity through Specificity," World Development, March 1980.

3. There is need to learn how to introduce and support participation in specific settings. Mechanistic approaches to participation and to setting up local organizations do not work. Everything we have seen supports the argument of David Korten that trying to develop a "model" or a "blueprint" and then to replicate it through staff who have not gone through the "learning process" from the outset is failure-prone.³ It is best to start out with considerable humility and open-endedness, and to be prepared to experiment and adapt. This approach is needed to build up a cadre who thoroughly understand the problems, have confidence in their ability to cope, and are committed to seeing the effort through. Effective communication and problem-solving capacity cannot be decreed, but must be nurtured.

4. Realistic participation objectives should be set, with some flexibility in terms of schedule. The observations in paragraphs 1 and 3 above are not contradictory, though they may seem so on superficial examination. The objectives of participation need to be clear, formulated in accord with to paragraph 2; the means then need to be devised as suits the circumstances. One project we know specified a "target" of organizing 19,000 farmers within four years, when there was not yet even a framework or cadres for this in place. It might be possible to satisfy this "target" formalistically, but not in a way that would yield sustained and effective participation. As AID and others get more experience with participatory approaches it will become easier to set more realistic objectives and schedules for projects.

5. Care should be taken that "concrete" activities do not displace the experimentation and support needed for participation. Because more "progress" is shown by construction, which involves getting equipment in place and meeting tangible targets, there is tremendous temptation, even pressure, to short-cut the needed nurturing of participatory institutions and practices, including the reorientation of technical and administrative staff working with rural people, as discussed below. Especially as difficulties are encountered, and when "the people are not cooperating" to help meet project schedules, we see impatience and a wavering in the enthusiasm for participation. It is tempting to substitute physical accomplishments for real development of productive capacity in the country. But fencing ranches or dredging channels produces little benefit unless people are prepared and organized to utilize them. Supervisors of project managers need to be supportive of the "software" side of

³Korten's analysis is one of the most valuable we have seen: "Community Organization and Rural Development: A Learning Process Approach," Public Administration Review, September-October 1980. He has been working with our project in Sri Lanka.

projects, because certain kinds of insistence on "results" will drive out efforts at institutional development.⁴

6. While there can be no direct "transfer" of models for participation, there can be useful interchange of experience. While the "learning process" approach described above requires in-country evolution of an appropriate framework and reliable cadre, learning from others' experience, particularly similar LDCs, can be very useful. Our consultants and researchers have been able to make useful suggestions and help persons in-country focus on key issues by drawing on experience elsewhere. We would also stress the value of direct exchange of experience, by bringing in officials or researchers from LDCs and sending key project personnel to visit places with some success in fostering participation. Under our cooperative agreement, for example, we have brought the Bangladesh Secretary of Agriculture, a knowledgeable proponent of participatory approaches, to Nepal, and Philippine officials experienced in organizing irrigation associations to Sri Lanka.

7. Work needs to proceed according to the local tempo, with due appreciation of local ways of doing things. This does not mean that project managers should not be "pushing" things along — they should and must. But the "touch" should be appropriately firm or delicate, depending on the people involved, the source of resistance, the cultural norms, etc. This has been particularly evident with the Yemen project. There are inevitable temptations, and pressures, to override local practices in order to meet project deadlines. Sometimes this is justifiable and may indeed open up new participation possibilities. But our caution, based on observation, is that forcing issues usually results in hollow victories; the schedule may be met, but the supportive behavior is not achieved. AID/W and mission leadership should treat schedules as indicative,

⁴ A project in Botswana before we started working there exemplifies this, the first Range and Livestock Management Project, designed, financed and staffed by AID. The aim of this project was to develop socially acceptable and economically viable groups of small stockholders which would utilize improved range and livestock management systems. Although the project was designed as a research program to foster and examine appropriate systems, its purpose became, instead, establishing over a dozen group ranches within communal areas along classic three-paddock lines — "Terns ranches for groups," as the Odells describe them. Unfortunately, AID involved no staff with any training or skills for dealing with the complex human relations tasks of organizing groups. "After largely futile and misunderstood initial attempts to develop group ranches, the goal was reduced to establishing only three such units. In 1977, the project was phased out having managed to get only one ranch, with 15 members, off to a very shaky and problematic start." Marcia and Malcolm Odell, "Pastoralism and Planning in a Semi-Arid Environment," paper prepared for Workshop on Pastoralism and African Livestock Projects, Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, September 1979, p. 25. An investment of staff and time in figuring out how to get such groups established, the original project purpose, would have produced more and better results.

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emphasizing that results for the longer run are more important than checking off "accomplishments."

8. Care must be taken not to create exaggerated expectations. This is one of the most difficult admonitions because to some extent it contradicts paragraph 2 above. The mere presence of outsiders creates expectations, and the temptation of outsiders, in order to elicit cooperation or simply to reciprocate hospitality, is to make implied or explicit promises. This can end up slowing implementation unless everyone is clear about how things are expected to proceed, what will be the respective responsibilities of AID, government and local institutions, and how the project will have to evolve with local inputs. If expectations are aroused that an AID cornucopia is about to open, this seems to stall participation rather than fuel it. More, and more culturally sensitive, up-front discussions, even negotiations, with local representatives seem necessary to ensure that implementation will proceed with good will and cooperation.

Data Base

1. While a "process" approach involves much learning while doing, some more adequate pre-project applied research is usually needed. We would withhold such a recommendation as self-serving if we did not have experience in all the cases that misconceptions about rural people's needs, constraints, strategies and potentialities inhibited good project design. The Botswana government's focus on improving management of small dams by government-instigated groups makes less sense once one understands herders' strategies for utilizing many different water sources constituting a complex system. The soil conservation measures proposed in Jamaica took insufficient account of paradoxical but real labor shortages in the project area (though the economy is labor-surplus). Both the Yemen and Sri Lanka projects provided for extensive socio-economic data gathering with the start-up of the project, but some design features did not "fit" the situation as it became better understood. We appreciate the need to get activities started and to show some results, and the plea for "more research" should not be a substitute for activity. But there is by now enough evidence of unfruitful action predicated on insufficient understanding of the environment that missions should take seriously the motto of "walking on both legs," action and research. If one starts walking without full knowledge, one must be prepared to change course as more becomes known. This is the essence of a learning process approach, since some things can never be known except in the context of practice.

2. More participatory approaches to data gathering are appropriate. Even when efforts are made to get pre-project data or to monitor project implementation, too

often they are exceedingly "top-down," not involving the intended participants/beneficiaries in any substantive way. We find this to be a mistake, as outsiders (even nationals who do not live in the area) bring preconceptions and are likely to miss many things if they do not have long, open-ended, receptive interactions with local people. Our Botswana team stresses that findings should be brought back to the communities for discussion with the people concerned, to check out the inferences drawn from data, no matter how scientifically gathered and analyzed. This takes a little more time and some more resources, but the payoff is much more than proportional. This is not to argue for long, drawn-out data gathering, since "quick and dirty" methods are often justifiable. But the latter methods to be useful require even more involvement with local people than do conventional research methods, and not just with a few leaders.

3. The data to be gathered in consultation with local people include not only socio-economic matters but technical questions as well. It is recognized that local practices, organization, needs, etc. can be better understood by talking with local people. But we would stress their having technical knowledge worth soliciting and heeding, to guard against unrealistic plans and designs. Even in technical judgments as "concrete" as the design of a dam, we have examples where farmers told the designing engineers that the planned structure would not withstand the flow of water at floodtide. There were some very embarrassed engineers when the dams did indeed wash out a few months after completion.⁵ In all the projects we are working with, there could usefully have been more interaction with local people on technical as well as organizational and socio-economic matters. There are many things which it does not require a college degree to understand, and which may not be understood by those with degrees.⁶

4. What data gathering is done is usually produces aggregate or average statistics, implementing a participatory strategy requires spatial information. In our experience, not enough attention has been paid to getting adequate maps. Aggregate numbers do not tell us about concentration or dispersions of population, about travel

⁵The washout of the NIA dam at Laur in the Philippines is reported in Korten, "Community Organization and Rural Development," op. cit. A similar instance in Nepal with a project is described in a very instructive case study, by Bihari Shrestha, in The Practice of Local-Level Planning, U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, 1980.

⁶If farmers had been consulted on terrace construction techniques in Jamaica, it seems unlikely they would have approved of the plan to bring in caterpillar tractors for the job, since they could have pointed out that the sites for construction were often inaccessible to heavy machinery, and getting there would require knocking down the coffee, banana and other trees that provided a family livelihood and protection for the soil.

times, or jurisdictions. In Jamaica, where project areas were delineated according to hydrological boundaries, existing communities were divided. Participation was more difficult to get when some communities were half in the project area and half out; and some were even divided among three or four project sub-areas, each to work through a different committee. In Sri Lanka, engineers needed more spatial information on the irrigation system to be rehabilitated, but also our efforts to plan an organizational strategy were impeded by lack of information on field channels and distributaries, not knowing how much area and how many farmers there were throughout the system, and not knowing how they were distributed. In Botswana our team took out a graduate student to do maps from aerial photographs so it could carry out its study of water points; those maps quickly became "hot items" for all government departments and donor agencies. Our experience has brought shown how important it is to "think spatially!" when undertaking planning and promoting participation -- and to have the data (maps) to do this.

5. Data to be gathered in project planning include "historical" information on what has been done or tried before. AID like the governments it works with has little "institutional memory." More effort should be made to learn from past experience. In Jamaica, it turned out that 20 years earlier there was an almost identical project in the same area, but no connection had been made with this in project planning. It was farmers who told us about this earlier experience, and about the problems that project encountered, very similar to what was happening now. The consultants who designed the Sri Lanka project took no note of an extensive government evaluation of the Gal Oya scheme done just 8 years before. It reported farmers' grievances that affected our efforts to get their participation in system rehabilitation, but the project design did not reflect these. For lack of historical perspective, we keep re-inventing faulty wheels. More participatory approaches require sensitivity to past experience and should also elicit such experience from proposed participants/beneficiaries for consideration.

Local Organization

1. There is a need to assess existing organizational arrangements and potentialities in the project area when designing a participatory strategy. This is the kind of work we have been involved in with the RDPP and we think the experience shows how useful this is. There is a tendency in project design either to try to lay a lot of responsibilities on existing organizations for which they are not suited or at least not prepared to undertake, or to bypass them entirely and to start up new organizations. Our general conclusion so far is that efforts should be made to try to work out

arrangements with existing organizations, though sometimes new organizations are necessary.⁷ The time and effort involved in setting up the latter is likely to be underestimated in project planning.

2. Care should be taken about "overloading" participatory organizations and expecting too much from them at the start. Whether working with new or existing organizations, this caution applies. The imposition of formal "Western" practices in organizations seems often to bring out their weaknesses without capitalizing on their strengths. In Sri Lanka our strategy is to defer establishing formal water user groups until the members have been involved in planning and helping rehabilitate the system through ad hoc mechanisms. Farmers are cynical about "another" organization initiated by government (they have seen many over the years), so it is important to establish the utility of specific group action, and to bring forth task-oriented rather than status- and power-oriented leadership. Our review of experience with many other local organizations supports the generalization above, as we find most successful organizations starting with a limited set of responsibilities, sometimes only a single function, and then evolving broader responsibilities as members' confidence and leaders' competence increases.⁹

3. There is a danger of AID efforts being "coopted" in ways that counter its aim of helping the poor majority. This should not immobilize efforts, but project managers and supervisors should be conscious of it. This cooptation can be at two levels. The

⁷The Jamaica mission asked us to do such an assessment of existing organizations in the project area, and our team concluded that the Jamaican Agricultural Society branches, though not always operating effectively, offered a reasonable channel for participation. (Their membership paralleled the size distribution of landholdings in the area, and women were active in them, frequently serving as officers.) For whatever reasons, the project management (not AID) decided to set up entirely new organizations, comparing (we think) the imagined ideal operation of these with the actual unimproved performance of JAS. We were asked to continue working with the project and to monitor the establishment of Development Committees, which have become de facto JAS branches. The Botswana project referred to in footnote 4 above was another example of trying to introduce new organizations without appreciating the experience and possibilities of existing organizations.

⁸The small dam management groups we have been working with in Botswana were told to collect user fees (per head of cattle taking water from the pond) without having calculated how much money was needed for what kind of maintenance. Much less was needed than government rules provided for, so the whole mechanism fell into disuse. This was a source of friction between farmers and government staff, who basically did not understand farmers' use of resources in that eco-system anyway.

⁹We are doing a systematic analysis of many dozens of local organizations, supplementing what we are learning from our field work, to prepare a state-of-the-art paper. This should give more detailed guidance on these matters in project design and implementation.

government may try to use the organizations being established or assisted to further its objectives even at the expense of what rural people see as their interests, or local elites may dominate the organizations and exploit resources for their own advantage. We have seen these possibilities particularly in the Yemen and Sri Lanka projects, and AID staffers are aware of this. This danger must be handled deftly and diplomatically, seeking to broaden participation while maintaining the necessary support of government and local leadership.

A.I.D. Organization

1. AID procedures and practices often impede participatory approaches to development. AID personnel are often more acutely aware of this than we are, and they are in a better position to suggest changes. The pressures to work according to set schedules and with quantified targets of performance have already been referred to. Used carefully, schedules and targets are helpful management tools, but they tend to become ends in themselves and can displace the activities and thought which need to go into making participation a reality. One thing we would emphasize is for AID staff and contractors to spend time, even sustained periods, in the project area. Otherwise they are not part of the "learning process" and even become impediments themselves because they do not know and appreciate field conditions. Priority is too often given to desk responsibilities, keeping staff in the office, and there are frequently transport problems which thwart good intentions. AID/W and mission leadership should be able to reshape their policies and practices so as to support more participatory approaches, particularly by getting staff more often into the field.¹⁰

2. The larger the project, the less likely it is to be participatory. This is not an iron law; with conscientiousness and imagination, participatory provisions can be built into large projects. But the general correlation between size and less participation is clear.¹¹ Project design and approval processes have gotten so cumbersome that it is

¹⁰ Many of these issues are discussed in Coralie Bryant, "Organizational Impediments to Making Participation a Reality: 'Swimming Upstream' in AID," Rural Development Participation Review, Spring 1980.

¹¹ A study just completed by the Agricultural Projects Service Centre in Nepal, dealing with a random selection of small-scale irrigation projects found: (a) projects designed to irrigate larger areas proved to be less suited for popular participation than ones designed for smaller areas, and (b) heavily funded projects failed; successful participation in projects was inversely correlated with outside financial and administrative assistance. The APROSC study also found that (c) local participation in the decision-making process helped to identify more technically viable projects (recall paragraph 3 above under Data Base), and (d) there was a positive correlation between popular participation and agricultural improvement.

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"inefficient" in terms of administrative costs to deal with smaller projects, but if the larger projects are themselves inefficient in use of economic resources, as they usually are, the case for smaller projects is still strong. The distorting effects of pressures within AID (as within the World Bank and other development agencies) to "move money" are widely recognized by practitioners within the agencies. As suggested, these pressures are built up by the organization's own procedures and reward structure and can only be changed by the organization itself.

3. The legislative requirement that projects be "planned" thoroughly in advance, especially as presently interpreted, inhibits participation. Some of the most serious efforts within AID to prepare participatory (and broadly effective) development projects, such as the Rapti IRDP in Nepal and the Arusha Region Planning and Village Development Project in Tanzania, have been hamstrung by the way section 611a of the Foreign Assistance Act has been applied. We have not been associated directly with these projects but know about their difficulties from persons who were actively involved. Perhaps Congress, which says it wants more participation, has to re-think this provision. This issue deserves attention at the highest levels of AID. It is clear, for instance, that the Small Farmer Development Project in Nepal, which an IFAD mission called "one of the best models of participatory rural development in Asia" could not have gotten funded by AID, though now that it is successfully started by FAO, other donors including AID are trying to incorporate its elements into their projects.¹²

¹² On the SFDP, see the case study by Shrestha cited in footnote 5. Groups of 10-15 small farmers, assisted by a Group Organizer from the Agricultural Development Bank, get group loans for productive enterprises, and as members become willing, branch out into activities like adult literacy, family planning, public sanitation. Some remarkable improvements in income and well-being have already been documented by APROSC and other agencies.

A former Finance Secretary of His Majesty's Government, B.B. Pradhan, suggests that external financing agencies pose a potential danger to the SFDP. "In spite of some relaxation in the appraisal of 'new-style' projects, they look for a project with concrete components without which the economic rate of return, an essential indicator (for them), cannot be determined. Such a project formulation goes against the very concept of SFDP. It is up to the beneficiaries to decide about the sub-projects; the outside agencies must keep their hands off."

He voices the further caution: "Another possibility is that the subject-matter specialists assigned to appraise the projects have no feel for the project and naturally seek the (same) sophistication as in a conventional project...the investment scale of the sub-projects in the SFDP under preparation range from a mere \$8 to a maximum of \$8,895, the average being \$173...an expert costing \$200 a day to assess investment projects worth \$173 on the average beggars imagination." "Strategy of the Development of Small Farmers through Group Approach: The Case of Nepal," paper for workshop on Small Farmers Development and Credit Policy, organized by Ohio State University under cooperative agreement with DS/RAD, Kathmandu, April 1980, pp. 45-46. The SFDP has been getting results which larger, more expensive undertakings, like the World Bank's IRDP in the same area, could not achieve.

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4. Project design should not be treated as a "pre-project" activity only. Our experience gives a lot of credence to Albert Hirschman's thesis about "the hiding hand" (Development Projects Observed, Brookings, 1966). A project design effort seeks to identify problems and find technical and organizational solutions. However, the most fundamental and critical problems often become apparent only after project implementation begins. In the Sri Lanka case, now that the Water Management Project is underway, we along with the mission are becoming ever more aware of a problem treated only lightly in the design: the orientation of the Irrigation Department's engineers toward working with farmers. The cooperative agreement gives us some flexibility to bring some resources to bear on this fundamental problem, but we are working against the pressures described in paragraph 5 under Approach—the tendency, in this case literally, to pay more attention to "concrete" activities than to training and organizational efforts. One of our faculty members has concluded that most projects should be planned to be re-designed after two years, when implementation has made clear what the "real" problems are. Of course, if the project is designed so as to be effectively participatory, such mid-course corrections can be introduced routinely. (This assumes the problem raised in the previous paragraph has been resolved.)

Special Problems

1. Women's participation continues to be a difficult problem to deal with. The projects we are working with are probably at least average in the attention devoted pre-project to women's participation, and those implementing the projects are sensitive to these issues. But whether the problem is marketing systems in Jamaica, domestic water supply in Sri Lanka, access to productive resources in Botswana, or village decision-making in Yemen, pressures for implementing what is seen as the "core" of the project tend to lower the priority given to solving problems that particularly affect women. We have been working on some of these problems with missions and know how difficult it is to resolve many of them.¹³ At any rate, we conclude that relevant women's participation needs to be designed into the "core" and not be formulated as one of many project components.

¹³ See for example, Louise Fortmann, "Women's Involvement in High-Risk Agriculture: The Botswana Case," paper prepared for Ford Foundation Workshop on Women in Agricultural Production in Eastern and Southern Africa, Nairobi, April 1980. One of our anthropologists doing village studies of LDA decision-making is a woman with previous research experience in rural Yemen. It may be that while women have no public role in decision-making, they may have a substantial and now even decisive role through private consultations.

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2. Obstacles to greater participation from the poor majority often lie with the government bureaucracy rather than with the people themselves. There is a tendency when trying to promote involvement to focus on small farmers, women, artisans or others and to see them as the source of the problems restricting their wider project participation. We are finding that people's participation or non-participation is often a "rational" response to their environment, which is shaped by the technicians and administrators of the government. This has been most evident in the case of water management, but the principle applies more generally. Our greatest concern in trying to promote participatory irrigation organizations in Sri Lanka is that unless and until technical staff change their attitudes and behavior, one cannot reasonably expect farmers to change theirs. We are concluding that a major element of any effort to increase participation has to be a deliberate program, supported from the highest levels of government, to reorient administrators and technical staff toward working more cooperatively and respectfully with the poor majority. Interestingly, the first request we got from an LDC government after our cooperative agreement started was for assistance in setting up just such a program.¹⁴ It will be part of our activity for the missions in both Sri Lanka and Costa Rica, where they and at least some top government officials see the bureaucracy's orientation as a barrier to participation. Experience gained in the National Irrigation Administration of the Philippines, with technical assistance from Ford Foundation advisors, points up the possibilities for such a program paying off. As stated above (paragraph 3 under Data Bases), there are sound technical reasons for fostering closer communication and cooperation between officials and intended participants/beneficiaries. However, prevailing attitudes that pervade the educated class inhibit such exchange. It is not certain how, or how much, reorientation can be accomplished. But we see it as a necessary effort in many if not all projects seeking participation.

These observations and suggestions grow out of a wide range of experience, though we would be the first to say that our understanding of the issues and solutions is still developing. We look forward to what we can learn from our continuing interaction with missions and will be prepared to state recommendations with more confidence and refinement in the future.

¹⁴The head of the planning office in the Ministry of Agriculture in Peru when he heard about our project on Rural Development Participation, wanted to develop a program for his Ministry's ingenieros agronomos, whose relations with campesinos were often conflictual and usually unproductive. Unfortunately from our viewpoint, the mission director at the time was not interested in having us work with the Ministry. The need for such a program is graphically portrayed in Sean Conlin's article on Peru, "Participation versus Expertise," International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 1974.

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