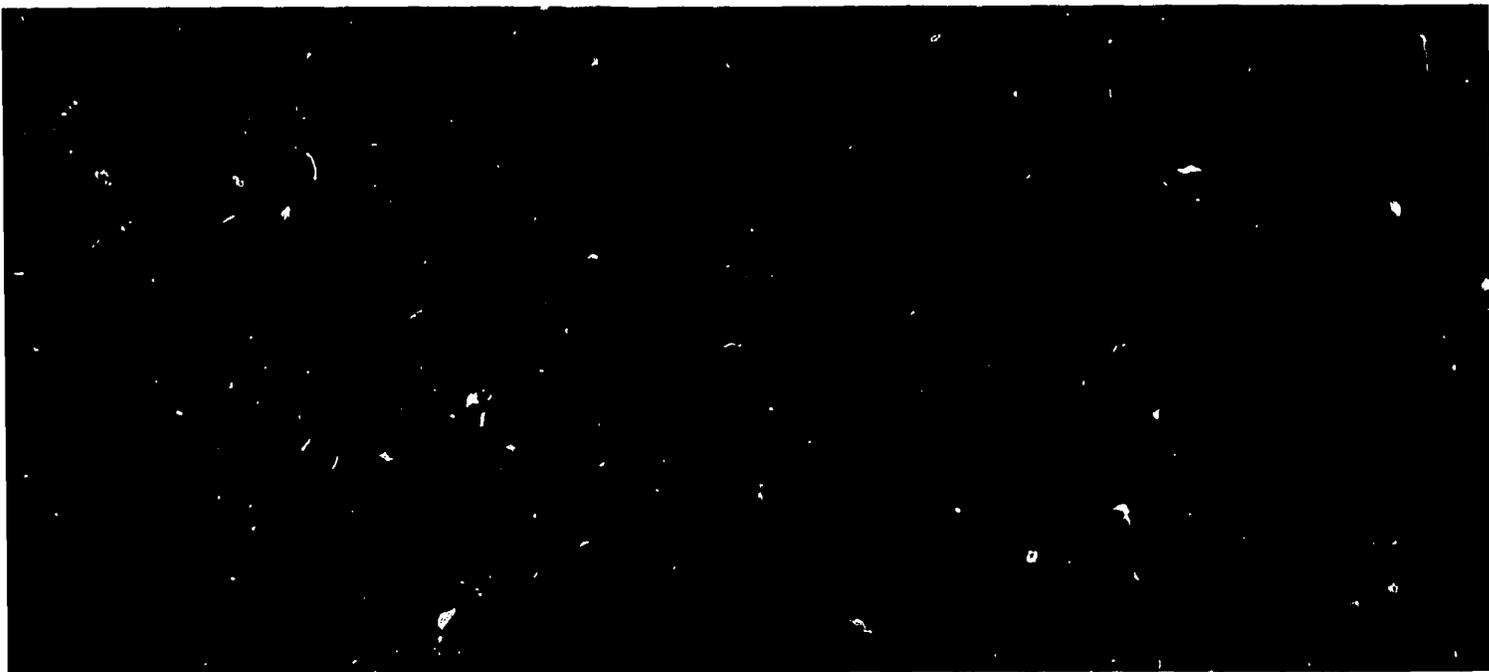


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**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
IN SELECTIVE U.S. PVOS**



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Social Sector Policy Analysis Project
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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

IN SELECTIVE U.S. PVOS

By

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INTRODUCTION

This is the third publication related to community participation done under the Social Sector Policy Analysis Project which the Academy for Educational Development has carried out for AID. The first paper, "Policy and Practice of Community Participation in the U.S. Agency for International Development," traced the ups and downs of participation in the past 25 years of AID's history. The second publication was a transcript of a seminar based on the paper and involving both AID staff and outside participants. This paper examines the policy and practice of community participation in five U.S. private voluntary agencies (PVOs): Save the Children Federation; World Vision; Christian Children's Fund; Catholic Relief Services; and CARE. Of the five all but the Christian Children's Fund receive some financial support from AID.

At World Vision and Save the Children, the author conducted extensive interviews with staff and examined evaluations and various other written documents. The visits to Catholic Relief Services and Christian Children's Fund in contrast were very brief. CARE itself in the person of Helen Seidler took on the task of writing its own report. As Ms. Seidler explains it in the introduction to her section, because CARE is a programmatically decentralized organization, the experience, documentation, and analysis of the use of community participation in CARE projects are found in field-originated files and papers. Her paper is a summary and analysis of what she received from 12 of CARE's 40 country offices. She also drew from documentation of CARE's Community Management Enhancement Project.

World Vision was particularly generous in providing not only staff time for interviews but also in sharing a wide array of documents and evaluations. The chapter on World Vision draws primarily from their experience and provides "lessons learned" that will be of interest and value to the practitioners of any organization or agency wanting to pursue a participatory development approach. The first section on the relationship between fundraising and community participation shows how fundraising can have a negative influence on achieving community participation. In the second section, "Large vs. Small," World Vision candidly shares its experiences when as an organization proficient in small scale development it takes on a large scale development program. In a positive example, the Maasai People's Program in Kenya, World Vision showed that with great effort, it was possible to make a large project participative. In the Ghana Rural Water Project, the "lessons learned" in examining the deficiencies in the first phase of the project are applied in the project's second phase. Finally, in Child Survival projects funded by AID, World Vision has emerged as one of two PVOs (Save the Children is the other) that have come to serve as models on participation for other PVOs in the program.

Because World Vision has not been heavily dependent on AID for funds, its staff members report that it was not adversely affected by AID's shift in the 1980s from funding broad based integrated rural development programs to sectoral projects that elsewhere had an effect of deemphasizing participation. As in the Child Survival programs, World Vision tries to incorporate such sectoral initiatives with its ongoing broad based community development programs. For example, it would seldom take on a Child Survival project in a locality where it is not already working. Staff maintain that its relatively large budget from child sponsorship and other non-government

sources enables it to maintain its own standards regarding development, including community participation.

Save the Children (SCF) has the longest track record on community participation of any U.S. PVO. The organization's commitment to participation was embodied in what it called CBIRD (community-based integrated rural development) and influenced a 1974 paper, "Operation Pride: A Proposed Program for Local-Level Planning and Execution of Integrated Rural Development," written by Peter O. Sellar, a Program Development Officer in AID's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation.

No PVO took the Sellar paper more seriously than did Save the Children. The paper provided important additional intellectual justification for what the organization has been long trying to do. It also helped to provide substantive content for what became an extensive training program for its field staff-training that had the blessing and financial support from AID. From the 1974 publication of the Sellar's paper through 1981, SCF's CBIRD approach was validated and reinforced by the strong participatory language in various amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act and particularly those of the mid-1970s that became known as New Directions. The serious efforts made by AID's leadership in the latter part of that decade to implement those policies provided a congenial and supportive setting for AID's PVO grantees like Save the Children that were committed to a participatory development approach.

When integrated rural development came into disfavor in AID by 1983, most of the momentum for the practice of community participation in AID evaporated. Since SCF was by then receiving half its operational funds from AID, such a shift in AID priorities was bound to have an effect on Save the Children. Veteran staff interviewed as SCF are not of one mind on the effects of that shift, but all would agree that SCF has never abandoned its commitment to participation and to CBIRD. According to some staff, however, even the familiar CBIRD is not referred to as often as in the past.

From a sample of 24 evaluations done between 1979 and 1983, SCF selected eight for a content analysis. Readers interested in the subject of community participation and aware that SCF has been a PVO closely identified with that approach will find of interest this candid assessment as seen through the windows of this content analysis. This analysis, although nearly a decade old, would provide substantive material for many hours of discussion at a workshop on participation. Many PVOs give lip service to participation, but few will reveal openly their failures as well as their successes in this most difficult of all development activities.

Although the Christian Children's Fund (CCF) is similar to organizations such as Save the Children and World Vision that use child sponsorship as a source of funds, CCF in the way it operates its program has some marked differences. It implements its program through "affiliated projects." These are independent associations or agencies or components of them which provide services to children, families and communities. The National offices and the individual projects have a considerable amount of autonomy and flexibility. CCF policy is clear on the question of community participation. Referring to the child sponsorship funds for a project funnelled through

CCF, the policy states: "The beneficiaries (the children and their families) of these funds have the right and responsibility to plan for the use of these funds in the project and to evaluate the effectiveness of their utilization." In part because of the decentralized administration of its program, there is not available at CCF headquarters much in way of analysis and evaluations on how successful projects are in carrying through on the participatory model set out for them. Because most projects are affiliated--that is, CCF working through an already existing entity--the degree of participation of the CCF-funded portion is affected by how participatory the local parent organization has been.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) policy with regard to participatory development is reflected in its 1990-1992 Development Strategy for its Africa Region. The paper sets out the criteria against which development projects would be funded and measured. No U.S. PVO has stated its commitment to popular participation more clearly and uncompromisingly. Addressing the question, "Whose project is it?", the CRS African strategy says:

If there is any lesson that all donor agencies and all development agencies learn over and over again, it is that if the project was not initiated by or brought into being by the beneficiaries from the beginning, the project is doomed to fail.

An example of CARE policy pertaining to community participation can be found in the mission statement of CARE Sudan: "We work with the poor and marginalized to promote their empowerment and self-reliance and to ensure that their basic needs are met in times of crisis. We adopt quality participatory development approaches based on community needs and initiatives that ensure long term sustainability." CARE Ethiopia echoes the emphasis on decision making by defining community participation as "a means to empower community members to participate in a decision-making process related to their own development activities." CARE Honduras views participation as a way to achieve sustained change.

CARE's East Africa Region carried out a Community Management Enhancement Project between 1988 and 1990. One of the findings of the project was that relatively more community participation went into involving the community in needs identification, prioritizing needs, project design, and implementation planning--all pre-project activities--than went into generally post-planning activities, such as sharing responsibilities in implementation, evaluation, distribution of project benefits, structure of project management, and project redesign.

Helen Seidler, the CARE staff person who wrote this section on participation, identified and summarized seven important dimensions of community participation that emerged from their field experience:

1. Interaction and communication with the world beyond the village;
2. Extensionists living in the community (and speaking the local languages);

3. **The shift in the relationship between extensionist and villager to a more respectful co-equal status;**
4. **The importance of group formation;**
5. **The importance of women;**
6. **Building on indigenous community development strategies; and**
7. **Working with and through local NGOs.**

SAVE THE CHILDREN FEDERATION

Save the Children Federation (SCF), which began in Appalachia 61 years ago in the early days of the Depression, now operates in 38 developing countries and the U.S. with an annual budget of more than \$90 million.

A recently produced Strategic Plan to guide SCF's international programs is marked by an uncommon degree of candor and objectivity. An abbreviated version of a mission statement reads:

The mission of Save the Children is to address the needs of children, their families, and communities through participatory programs which assist communities to identify needs and achieve measurable and enduring improvements in the quality of their own lives, both in the United States and abroad.

The Strategic Plan notes that the principles which later came to be known as CBIRD (community-based integrated rural development) could be found as far back as SCF's pioneering work in Harlan County, Kentucky in 1932 and 1933. According to the document, the Community Development Foundation, an arm of SCF established in 1959, "embodied the CBIRD approach throughout its life (until about 1975) and was the inspiration for the oft-cited paper in which the CBIRD concept was first presented as a coherent conceptual operational framework. The paper, titled, "Operation Pride: A Proposed Program for Improved Local-Level Planning and Execution of Integrated Rural Development," and dated November, 1974, was written by Peter O. Sellar, a Program Development Officer in AID's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation.

Sellar compared the community development and integrated rural development approaches and proposed an amalgamation of the two. Sellar intended to remedy what he regarded as limitations of the integrated rural development approach by introducing, at the core, a community-based planning and implementation element. He characterized that as follows:

Community development in rural areas focusses on the felt needs of a village or cluster of villages and surrounding farms. In community development, a village-level worker or field coordinator is introduced into the community as a 'change agent:' he comes representing either the government or a PVO and bearing technical knowledge and the promise of assistance from the sponsoring organization. This incentive is used to organize the community to organize itself for self-help development efforts and thereby to tap government and other donor assistance. The village-level worker assists the community to organize itself democratically, to set goals and priorities, and then to plan and execute projects....The village-level worker acts as a link between the community and the outside world in bringing in the financial and technical assistance needed to supplement the villagers' efforts. He also trains community leaders to take over this role, and makes it clear from the start that the community must expect to assume his functions within a given time period; he will not remain forever, nor will the financial assistance of his organization continue indefinitely.

No PVO took the Sellar paper more seriously than did Save the Children. It provided important additional intellectual justification for what it had long been trying to do. It helped provide substantive content for what became an extensive training program for its field staff--training that had the blessing and financial support from AID.

From the 1974 publication of Sellar's paper through 1981, SCF's CBIRD approach was reinforced and validated by the strong participatory language in various amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act and particularly those of the mid-seventies that came to be known as New Directions. The serious efforts made by AID's leadership in the latter part of that decade to implement those policies provided a very congenial and supportive setting for AID's PVO grantees like Save the Children that were committed to participatory development approaches. A message to Mission Directors and Executive Staff from the AID Administrator late in 1980 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."

As important to SCF and its CBIRD approach as the policy reinforcement within AID was the emphasis AID placed in those same years on rural development and integrated rural development. Eighty rural development projects were underway in AID in 1980. It was in this sector that there was the most concentrated attention to community participation, and it was in the context of agriculture and rural development that the case was most strongly made for community participation. Cornell University's Rural Development Participation Project (1977-1983) constituted a massive academic effort to back up the work of AID's Office of Rural Development and Development Administration.

By 1983, integrated rural development had come into disfavor within AID. What resulted was the phase out, not only of integrated rural development, but of most rural development projects. What also evaporated was most of the momentum for the practice of community participation in AID.

Such a shift in AID priorities was bound to have an effect on Save the Children which was receiving more than half its operational funds from AID. (While more than \$22 million in revenues in FY 1990 came from child sponsorships, more than \$37 million came from AID grants and contracts.)

Veteran staff interviewed at SCF are not of one mind on the effects of AID's shift on participation. All would agree that SCF has never abandoned its commitment to participation and CBIRD, but some of them point out that even the familiar CBIRD is not referred to as often as in the past. Although AID did not particularly stress participation after the early 1980s, SCF did include it as a theme of its matching grants and partnership grant from AID. AID did stress the need for participatory approaches in the child survival programs it funded through its Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation. As regards SCF, this will be commented on later in this report. As with most PVOs in recent years, most of AID's funding has been for specific sectors. One consequence of this is much of the central office monitoring of a field project is done by technical specialists whose travel can be legitimately charged to a specific contract. In AID's

early enthusiasm for the Peter Sellar's approach, AID was generous in funding SCF training programs that emphasized CBIRD. No comparable funds now come from AID for this purpose.

One senior operations staff person pointed out that the lessening of SCF emphasis on participatory approaches is not entirely the fault of AID. It is in part, he said, a by-product of SCF's rapid growth. In the 1980s its budget and programs expanded by 20% a year, from about \$22 million at the beginning of the decade to more than \$90 million at the present. He cited the Planning, Evaluation, and Monitoring System adopted in 1988, with seven standardized sections of activity. Growth required such information systems because regional directors could no longer personally visit each project. Consequently, the skills expected of field directors have tended to emphasize financial management to insure that AID's requirements are met. Participatory approaches, including SCF's CBIRD, are labor intensive. Field staff are most likely to allocate their time and energies to those aspects for which they are being held most accountable.

The organization's current view of CBIRD is contained in its strategic plan for international programs:

As practiced by SCF today, CBIRD remains valid in its fundamental principles, but it fails to take fully into account some profound changes in the international development environment, particularly the emergence of an active, influential, and increasingly effective non-governmental sector in many of the countries in which we operate, necessitating a reassessment of the role of SCF and other "northern" NGOs.

Moreover, although CBIRD is a central program strategy of Save the Children, it is not our exclusive approach. Many excellent SCF projects apply other criteria which are appropriate to specific situations. We implement urban programs for unstable and marginalized populations in search of employment, basic services, and better opportunities for their children; relief and rehabilitation programs in emergency and disaster situations, including orientation, language training, and life skills for refugees; food programs and the provision of basic commodities in some country programs; and family day care in urban centers. Even in these programs, however, we attempt to apply such core CBIRD values as participation and local initiative, a multidisciplinary approach, and a self-help orientation.

SCF and Child Survival

One of the senior managers of Save the Children said the organization has been successful in child survival because of its participatory community development approach. An examination of the USAID child survival projects funded through PVOs (detailed in "The Policy and Practice of Community Participation in USAID") revealed that indeed, Save the Children, along with World Vision, emerged as having the most to teach the other grantees about how to carry out child survival in a participatory way. The centrally funded AID programs, as distinct from the PVO projects funded through AID's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation, have used

mass communication and social marketing approaches to mobilize people quickly for child survival, short-cutting the lengthier community development approach. In a "Lessons Learned Conference" on Child Survival Projects, 1985-1988, in Africa and Haiti, Save the Children, in its report, said its child survival program was "fully integrated in the SCF development program." It said its project in Zimbabwe involved 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.

Content Analysis of Eight SCF Evaluations

From a sample of 24 evaluations written between 1974 and 1983, SCF selected eight for a content analysis done by Elaine L. Edgcomb and Lindley Volkwein. Of 18 categories that emerged from the analysis, seven, including participation, were in a group titled Community Development Process. The authors note that there are few if any "lessons learned" from the evaluations. They contend that "something is not a 'lesson learned' until it is accepted and applied; the necessary behavioral response has not yet had a chance to occur." Be that as it may, readers interested in the subject of community participation and aware that Save the Children has been a PVO closely identified with this approach, will find of interest this candid assessment as seen through the windows of this content analysis of SCF evaluations. Of the eight evaluations analyzed, three were AID papers.

The authors note that not as much data is available on the community development process as one might expect. What does exist, they say, tends to echo the conclusions of Judith Tandler in her paper, "Turning Private Voluntary Agencies Into Development Agencies," namely:

- Effective projects do not necessarily involve the broadest-based participation
- An enlightened top-down approach can be a very appropriate working style, when handled skillfully, and
- The poorest of the poor are not being reached (due to the inherent difficulties of reaching this group, and in some cases due to the types of organizations and projects SCF promotes.)

On the last point Edgcomb and Volkwein point out that the situation may not be as stark as Tandler makes it appear. "At least one of the evaluations indicates that SCF is reaching the poor majority, although not the poorest, in two of the countries in which it operates." They go on to comment: "It is here that we enter into a question of numbers: how large is the group labeled 'the poorest' in a given area, and where do the 'poor' being reached by SCF fall, within the income distribution of that area and country?" They then make a point that could be legitimately applied to every PVO and development agency: "Until SCF begins to carefully document who the participants and beneficiaries are in each of its programs, and where they are on the income

spectrum, no definitive conclusions will be able to be drawn about who is being reached, nor will the organization be able to move to the next step of judging the extent its methodology results in the exclusion of certain groups, and how it can be appropriately modified."

The authors said the cases they discuss "are only partially helpful" for those interested in getting a better handle on CBIRD, how it works and doesn't and how it has evolved through adaptation. "It is often hard to tell," they write, "whether the problems are a result of the methodology or of the staff who have applied it. Clearly, the successful cases have always had a sensitive and skillful staff utilizing the approach. But in the less successful ones, even when the evaluators find fault with the method, staff and organizational difficulties are strongly contributory factors, and nullify the situation as an accurate test of the model."

Under the category, "Participation," the authors pose two questions: Who are the individuals active in Save the Children projects and processes? What have been their roles in decision-making, planning, implementing, and evaluation?

Although the eight evaluations do not provide a full picture of who the participants are in SCF programs, the available information, they said, "points to a strong involvement of local elites in the planning process," and three of the evaluations point particularly to the lack of direct involvement of the poorest in the decision-making process.

Under a category termed "Planning Process," the authors pose the question of how SCF's planning process deals with the "top-down bottom-up dichotomy and with what results." They said several facts emerged from the evaluations:

The first is that project ideas do not only, or necessarily, emerge as felt needs from the participants. One evaluation lists four possible sources and indicates that the ideas of the field coordinators predominate in the first couple of years. Three others also identify SCF as strongly influencing the project selection process. Another indicates that SCF responded to government interests first and only subsequently to the felt needs of participants. This can be for good or ill. In some cases, Save the Children's strong role led to effective projects and a participatory process. In two cases SCF's influence led to less effective development programs. One evaluation strongly suggests that responding to the community's felt needs may be neither practical nor essential to the success of development projects promoting participation. More than where the idea initiates, it is the use of planning and evaluation systems to provide rational feedback that makes the difference in eliciting community commitment and in developing understanding and eventually control over the process involved. Information on goals, timing, and resources enable participants to attribute events to their actions and to perceive themselves as actors rather than passive recipients of development assistance. The key to making this work was attributed to the vision and skill of the staff.

Another section of the analysis deals with the formation and roles of the SCF field office and how it supports a community development process. Two evaluations indicated major misunderstandings on the part of SCF field staff as to its role as promoter of the community

development process. Three evaluations mentioned leadership styles as important. Others cited the qualities that make a good field coordinator: "He must develop methods of subtle and indirect leadership in order to foster a sense of independence on the part of the groups with which he works." In the case where problems arose, it was felt that the field coordinators limited full community participation in decision-making because their leadership style reinforced traditional patterns of domination. Dealing with the question of field office organization, the authors cite "the most radical of the critiques" as questioning the usual pattern of organization, dividing staff by sectors, as being counterproductive. "In effect, this structure is developed in function of the services offered (which translates into a limited notion of community development) rather than in function of the broader objectives of self-determination and community organization. A more appropriate organizational structure would reflect three programmatic lines of action: community organization, technical assistance, and training."

Were Save the Children, as a major U.S. PVO and one with the longest track record on participatory development approaches, ever to host a workshop for other PVOs on community participation, the Edgcomb/Volkwein paper, although a decade old, would nonetheless provide substantive material for many sessions of discussion. Many PVOs give lip service to participation, but few will reveal openly their failures as well as their successes in this most difficult of all development activities. With regard to community participation, an analysis of what has not worked is at least as valuable as an examination of what does work.

Two Cases

Two recent examples demonstrate that Save the Children continues to be committed to a participatory development approach to its programs.

Start Up of a Development Project in Viet Nam

The following summary from a February, 1991 report from Hanoi, Viet Nam Save the Children Country Representative Jerry Sternin illustrates SCF's continued commitment to participatory development and teaches how to go about a participatory process in the startup period.

When Save the Children started its project it was the only international NGO in the country to be given permission to implement a comprehensive development project at the community level. Other international agencies worked at district and provincial levels. In collaboration with the People's Committee of Thang Hoa Province, Save chose four of the poorest villages in Quang Xuong, one of the least developed districts within the Province.

Program activity during the first six weeks was devoted to the "translation" (conceptually as well as linguistically,) of the NGOs organizational mission into concrete terms. The objective was to enable the communities to understand what they could expect from collaboration with Save the Children and the responsibilities of such a partnership.

Because of a long history of central planning, subsidies for medical and social services, and a focus on increased agricultural productivity, as the end toward which most productive human activity is directed, the people, in setting goals, did not easily assimilate concepts common to Save the Children's approach: community participation, a child-centered focus, and emphasis on self-reliance and sustainability.

An understanding and appreciation of the NGOs approach and a time phased action plan emerged through weekly meetings with members of the People's Committee, Women and Youth Unions, Farmers' Associations and village health teams. More than 100 community leaders attended four weekly half-day orientation sessions during the initial six-week period.

Community Participation: Lessons from Nepal

An SCF publication provided this account of how, in rural Nepal, Save the Children is preparing the community to be both the owner and manager of new water supply systems:

Safe drinking water tops the "wish lists" of many communities in rural Nepal. Construction of piped water systems has been a major activity of many aid organizations working in the rugged countryside. But many of these systems function only for a short time. Save the Children Foundation (SCF) workers returning to check water taps only two years after installation in Nepal's Gorkha District found that 80 percent had run dry due to sediment in tanks or broken pipelines.

Often installed without local involvement, the new water systems were perceived as a gift by Nepalese villagers, who frequently neglected to maintain them. When a system failed, they sought the help of outsiders or, more often, simply returned to their old sources of contaminated water.

During the Water Decade, Save the Children has helped to install over 50 water systems in nine *panchayats*, or local government areas. It has always made a practice of training villagers in plumbing repairs whenever a new system was installed. But in many cases these local plumbers were not motivated to repair or replace broken parts unless the tap nearest their home wasn't working properly. Villagers didn't understand their maintenance responsibilities, and soon they became dependent upon SCF staff to provide money and labor to solve even the simplest problems.

New projects stress village-level maintenance and strive to instill a genuine sense of ownership at the village level. SCF experience in the Gorkha region shows that successful system maintenance begins even before construction through creation of village maintenance committees. In fact, maintenance committees must be established before SCF approves a drinking water system for funding.

The responsibilities of the committees and the funding organization are clearly defined. The names of the committee members are listed on a formal, signed agreement which spells out the roles and responsibilities. Successful maintenance stems not only from accountability but also from direct village participation in building new water systems. Villagers are required to donate their time and energy in carrying stones and sand, digging foundations and burying pipes. While it was first thought that such participation would result in a sense of ownership, involvement in the construction process alone is not sufficient.

At first SCF planners assumed that committees would know how to organize themselves for the real work at hand. But many committees were not sure of their purpose and continued to turn to SCF staff for leadership. To address the need, training sessions with the committees have been carried out to reinforce the concept of village ownership.

During construction of the water system, plumbers are selected by the communities for technical training. They receive a certificate when their course work is completed and they are paid in cash or in kind by the committee for repairs they make. When the system is fully operational, an official hand-over ceremony is held, emphasizing that the community is now accountable for continuing operations.

By involving villagers in construction, setting up maintenance committees, writing maintenance policies, training plumbers to become professionals and formally handing over the system to the people, Save the Children has helped villagers to assume the major responsibility for maintenance. As a result, both the quality and quantity of construction and maintenance work has improved.

WORLD VISION

One of the largest of U.S. PVOs, World Vision comprises three entities: (a) World Vision International (WVI), a non-denominational Christian development agency which carries out more than 6,000 projects in 90 countries with a staff of more than 5,000. Its FY 1991 budget was over \$204 million. (b) World Vision Relief and Development (WVRD), a separate nonsectarian agency which started as primarily a relief organization, but whose present programs run the gamut from emergency aid to large-scale development. WVRD is the channel for funds from AID, and from nongovernment, nonsectarian groups, including corporations. (c) World Vision U.S., a support and fundraising arm. A chief source of funds from World Vision's start has been child sponsorship in which individual donors contribute money each month. It is currently assisting more than one million children. Thirty-eight percent of its funds come from U.S. contributors, but it also seeks child sponsorship funds from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the UK, and 13 other countries.

Since its beginning in 1953, World Vision International's approach to development has evolved from a relief or welfare orientation, focusing on individual children, to a broader community development approach. According to Samuel Voorhies, of the organization's Evaluation Department, the community development approach initiated in 1978 emphasizes the critical aspect of facilitating local participation in the process of project planning, implementation and evaluation. "Increasingly, the concept of local community participation has become a central part of WVI's development policy."

World Vision's Development Policy, approved by its board in 1987, says members of the community will participate in all research, planning, implementation, and evaluation activities to the maximum extent possible. It also stipulates that a regular ongoing process of participatory evaluation will be carried out by World Vision and the community.

Some field staff use a participatory evaluation process (PEP) developed by Judy Hutchinson, a former director of evaluation for World Vision. Her methodology was derived from work done by SARAR in India under Syra Srivasan. PEP involves the community fully from the beginning. It has four steps: description, investigation, analysis, and decision. As the first steps in the process are taken, they are modified and refined by the local people, the local environment, and local resources.

During the description stage, the people define their basic problems and decide which problems are priorities. The development worker helps the community take a picture of itself. One of the most productive techniques is to ask the community to draw a picture or map of itself using large sheets of paper, markers, etc.

The second stage is gathering information about the problems facing the community and the resources available. Instead of outsiders surveying the community, the people themselves decide what information they need to know about their situation and how to go about gathering that information.

Next is analysis when the community organizes the information and discusses root causes and consequences of the problems. They ask themselves: What are the causes of the problem? What are its consequences? What resources can they use to solve it?

The final stage is decision making. The community sets goals and develops a plan of action.

PEP may take weeks or even months to complete. Sometimes the four stages are only a starting point and the process takes an entirely different path after the description stages.

World Vision was generous in affording not only staff time for interviews but also in sharing various documents and evaluations. What follows draws primarily on them and provides "lessons learned" that will be of interest and value to the practitioners of any organization or agency wanting to pursue a participatory development approach. The first section on the relationship between fundraising and community participation shows how fundraising can have a negative influence on achieving community participation. In the second section, "Large Versus Small" World Vision candidly shares its experiences when as an organization proficient in small scale development it takes on a large scale development program. In an example that follows, the Maasai Peoples' Program in Kenya shows that with great effort--and using the PEP approach to community participation described above--it is possible to make a large project participative. In the Ghana Rural Water Project, the "lessons learned" in examining the deficiencies in the first phase of the project are applied in the project's second phase. Finally, in Child Survival projects funded by AID, World Vision has emerged as one of two PVOs (Save the Children is the other) that have come to serve as models on participation for other PVOs in the program.

Because World Vision has not, in proportion to its total budget, been heavily dependent on AID for funds, staff reports that it was not adversely affected by AID's shift during the 1980s from funding broad-based integrated rural development programs to sectoral projects that elsewhere had an effect of deemphasizing participation. As in the Child Survival programs, World Vision tries to incorporate such sectoral initiatives with its ongoing broad-based community development programs. For example, it would seldom take on a Child Survival project in a locality where it is not already working. Staff maintain that its relatively large budget from child sponsorship and other non-government sources enables it to maintain its own standards regarding development, including community participation.

Relationship Between Fund-Raising and Community Participation

Samuel J. Voorhies, now an evaluation specialist for World Vision International has made a singular contribution in his doctoral dissertation for Florida State University. Titled "From Fundraising to Implementation: A Case Study of Rural Development Participation in Africa by a Major American Non-Governmental Organization." The NGO is, of course, his own World Vision International. Voorhies had worked in a number of African countries for World Vision International, including seven years in Kenya. Voorhies focused on the Louga Project in Senegal, a large-scale international project. He found that World Vision U.S. as fundraisers, and

World Vision International as project implementers had "almost mutually exclusive implicit goals."

He described six ways in which the approach to raising funds negatively influenced the facilitation of community participation:

- 1) **Reporting requirements.** The donors funding the large-scale projects required a high degree of technical reporting on project activities. According to program staff, this reporting system affected community participation in two ways: (a) Because they had to produce numerous reports to different donors with different reporting requirements, the time required to complete the reports limited the time they had to work in the field with the communities. (b) The reports' formats did not provide opportunity for program staff to tell what they felt were often the most important achievements of the project, which often involved what people were doing for themselves and not just what the project had done for them.
- 2) **Inadequate balance in funding.** A second aspect of fundraising negatively influencing community participation was the inadequate amount of funding for facilitating participation. There was difficulty in maintaining a balance between activities that donors wanted to support and other activities required for sound development. It was easier to sell a specific part of a program, rather than the entire integrated approach. Voorhies cites a campaign in which individuals were asked to contribute funds to drill a borehole in a specific village in Louga. A plaque with the donor's name was prepared to be placed on the well. So many boreholes were funded in this campaign that shifts had to be added to the drilling operation to produce enough wells to keep up with the contributions. The fundraising support office received a marketing award for excellence. But from a development perspective, the fundraising campaign created some difficulties. One difficulty was in the image of ownership. The program emphasized village ownership of the well--essential if the well and pump were to be maintained properly and if villagers were to take initiative and assume responsibility for other development activities based on having more potable water. The donor's plaque was inherently in conflict with the image of village ownership. Another difficulty from a funding perspective was that because it was easier to raise funds for the highly visible boreholes, they were often produced at a rate that exceeded the program's capability to facilitate the other development applications of health and agriculture, and in the long term the potential benefits of the boreholes might not be sustainable.
- 3) **Inconsistent funding.** Because of the inconsistency and short-term nature of funding, it was difficult to plan orderly annual operations. Funds available for the year were either reduced or increased. Because funding sources were a combination of short-term grants (three years or less) and individual donor contributions to only specific components of the program, such as boreholes, funding from year to year was not assured. This made it difficult to retain qualified staff and initiate and continue programs with confidence.

- 4) Autonomous offices. The agency is organized into autonomous offices for fundraising and program implementation. These separate offices had no direct authority over each other. Each organizational entity has a tendency to do "what is right in its own eyes" as dictated by its context and what its constituency requires for success.
- 5) Funding. While field persons operating from their own perspective did not always understand and appreciate the difficulties of fundraising, neither did they generally have opportunity to gain that understanding or influence it. On the contrary, fundraisers, by not understanding the field realities of what was involved in the plan, design, implementation, and sustainability of an integrated development project in the field could, without realizing it, exercise a great deal of influence on what happened in the field.
- 6) Limited knowledge of field realities. The result of the fact that fundraisers tended to work with inadequate knowledge of field realities was that they became donor biased rather than project biased. They tended to package a field project in such a way as most appealed to the donor. This did not always make for good development. For example, fundraising appeals tended to emphasize what the donor must do for the project to succeed, in contrast to what the community could do to help itself. Donors were more attracted to the tangible, concrete aspects of development that demonstrated short-term significant visible impact. "Hardware" aspects of development such as boreholes were easier to "sell" to prospective donors than, say, what was involved in community participation.

In a postscript Voorheis notes that since the initial data of this research were collected, "significant changes" had taken place in the World Vision U.S. management and fundraising approach that address many of the issues he raised. "Fundraisers are acting more from a field perspective in negotiating with major donors."

Large Versus Small

World Vision's large scale development (LSD) program had its beginning in the Africa drought of the early 1980s. It started its Africa Drought Project in early 1984. By June, 1985, 11 projects were underway or considered in Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, and Senegal. The Louga Project discussed above was one of them.

Voorhies in his dissertation drew a number of conclusions regarding differences between small and large-scale project experiences. They could well constitute something of a brake on other PVOs tempted to "go big." They are illustrative of what makes it so difficult for large aid agencies such as AID to carry out people-centered development. Writing in the context of World Vision, a child sponsorship organization, he concluded:

- 1) Large-scale projects had large donors (foundations or government agencies) who gave grants as large as \$100,000 or more. Small projects had small donors who gave \$22 a month...
- 2) While the small-scale donors often desired very little information...the large donors usually did not receive enough.
- 3) Both program design and donor proposals required a great deal more technical input in the large-scale program.
- 4) Small-scale projects tended to be community based and integrated, focusing on a variety of needs of the whole community. Large-scale projects were often regionally based and focused on a single sector, such as water or health. The contrast was also revealed in more of a capital focus of the large-scale work, such as drilling equipment, in contrast to what is viewed as a people-centered approach in the small-scale work.
- 5) Large-scale programs were implemented directly by World Vision International, while small-scale projects were implemented through local partnerships with church and indigenous organizations. Large-scale projects, because of their size and technical complexities, required on-the-ground WVI expatriate staff to manage and oversee project activities. In the small-scale projects, local groups became partners to implement and manage the project.
- 6) Small-scale projects tended to have a low profile, in contrast to large-scale programs which had to be coordinated with government plans and other NGO efforts. The higher profile in large-scale development work provided an opportunity for greater recognition of results as well as failures.

A February, 1991, World Vision Staff Working Paper, titled "Large Scale Development" reviewed its large scale programs. Voorhies coordinated its preparation by the Evaluation Department. Not surprisingly, it echoes some of the conclusions Voorhies reached in his

dissertation focusing on the Louga Project. The report underscored his earlier finding that "overemphasis in fundraising on technological improvements meant inadequate funding for intangibles like community participation, community training, and the like, which impeded development progress."

The report also said that senior management of World Vision "greatly underestimated the magnitude of organizational change and the length of time required for an organization proficient in small scale development funded by small individual donations to institute a large scale development program funded by large grants." In the five year, 1985-1990 period, the program involved more than 27 projects in seven countries with a total budget of \$22 million.

The report noted that initial project designs gave some attention to community participation, but inadequate time and resources were allocated for facilitating it effectively. It goes on: "As the programs evolved and outside technical assistance was provided, community participation was increasingly viewed as a central program emphasis which needed more attention, yet it received less and less funding."

The Review noted that the one exception to this was the Maasai Peoples' Program in Kenya. It is worth special attention here.

Maasai People's Program in Kenya

A World Vision Staff Working Paper, "Participation in Development: Learning from the Maasai People's Program in Kenya" details the lessons learned in achieving a participatory approach in a large scale project. In the period FY 85 - FY 90, a total of eight projects had a budget of \$1,216,577. Through FY 89, it was estimated that there were 14,000 beneficiaries.

Staff included six Community Motivators (CMs), themselves young Maasai with a command of the language and knowledge of the culture. The paper on the program says its underlying philosophy was to involve the Maasai people actively at every stage of the program's development. "Community participation is seen as the key to bring about developmental changes...This requires that program workers live in the communities to facilitate the free flow of ideas."

The six community motivators were divided into three teams that spent at least half a year in a village building relationships, collecting baseline data and identifying locally felt needs. The teams decided that at least four days a week they would sleep in any Maasai homestead that offered lodging. They would carry their own food. The report describes their experiences:

Although many of the CMs had slept in Maasai houses as children, and still continue to do so when they visit their parents' homes, the rigors of Maasai traditional life soon began to affect them. Maasai homes are a frame of woven sticks plastered with a thick layer of cow dung baked dry by the hot sun. During the rainy season, water seeps through, carrying particles of dung in a yellowish mixture. If the dung leaks on clothing, it is almost impossible to remove. After walking for miles, a CM would sit in a leaking house not having eaten anything since morning tea, struggling to keep warm because the fire had died from rainwater dripping on it.

CMs were burdened by the feeling that they were straining the hospitality and generosity of their host families. When food is scarce it is usually reserved for the children and the head of the household. When the CM visited, the mother would feel pressure to override the family's needs to feed the guest. The CM usually had some food of his own, but often just enough to feed himself. He would feel impolite bringing his food out and eating without sharing it, and yet it was also embarrassing to share something that was so small...

The team decided that the best option was to buy large tents that could be set up in safe but central locations within each team area...This proved an excellent solution...they could store food supplies in the tents, cook, and host program visitors, ...and the tents took the burden of caring for the CMs from the local people. Relationships were enhanced as the Maasai saw how willing the staff were to be easily accessible.

World Vision's Participatory Evaluation Process took several months in some of the areas. The report said that to balance the tension between donor organizations who want to fund large-scale programs and community members who need to own and sustain smaller, manageable programs, World Vision made it a priority to "make it look big to outsiders, but small-scale to the Maasai."

According to the program report, the Maasai People's Program has taught World Vision several lessons about participation. Because many are lessons applicable to efforts of any development agency, they are included here:

- 1) **Locate community motivators within the living environment of the local people so they are not seen as outsiders.**
- 2) **Program managers should adopt an enabling style of leadership that sets the tone for participation by involving staff as much as possible in the decision-making process. This requires a high level of maturity among managers and staff. Regular team-building exercises to maintain motivation and trust are vital.**
- 3) **Program staff should have a thorough knowledge and respect for the culture and traditions of the local people. This cultural knowledge is fundamental to building participation within that culture. Although this may seem obvious, 'generic' methods of participation-building often are applied regardless of cultural differences from one context to another.**
- 4) **Achieving the goal of active, responsive local participation is taxing for development staff at the local level. Field staff are pressured by the government, powerful elites, and donors to produce tangible results--quickly. It is tempting to circumvent the slow, patient process of encouraging the people to think critically. But time is needed to change the local people's view that development is something that comes from 'outside' and is done for them. Field staff must resist the pressure to give material things to the people to do things for them in order to please people outside the community. Donors as well as staff throughout the NGO must be educated to understand how crucial participation, time, and a process of empowerment are in sustainable development.**

Lessons Learned from Ghana Rural Water Project

This "lessons learned" section summarizes a paper, "Stakeholder Participation In the Ghana Rural Water Project," by Julian Pitchford, Director, International Development Programs Department, World Vision Relief and Development. The Ghana Rural Water Project was one of the large scale development projects started by World Vision in the mid-eighties. By the time Pitchford wrote his paper, World Vision had provided more than 500 borehole wells to rural communities. With the help of colleagues from AID's WASH Project, World Vision evaluated the project in 1989. Among "major deficiencies" it identified were these:

- There was less funding than originally envisaged and so the project had focused on the more easily funded "hardware" activity of well drilling at the expense of the other sanitation and "software" activities.
- Because of the size of the project, a parallel organization was set up separate from World Vision's field office. One consequence of this was that the community development skills already developed with the rest of the field office went unused.
- In drilling wells in nine of the ten regions of the country, the interventions had been spread very thinly. The effect of the work had also been diluted, making it harder to support, less sustainable, and the stress on our equipment and staff was increased.

Pitchford noted that "the most serious deficiency was that we were not very effective in incorporating the concepts of participative development implied in the quote: 'Development programs that do not involve the stakeholders in the initial formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation right from the onset have always ended on a sad note without meeting the expected result.'"

The record vastly improved in Phase Two of the Project. In September, 1990 the Conrad Hilton Foundation made a five-year \$5 million commitment and was actively involved in a Start-Up Workshop four months later. Pitchford said that new funding commitments (World Vision committed an additional \$3 million in private donor funds) gave World Vision the opportunity to implement the lessons learned from Phase One and to develop a program with much stronger health education, community participation, and sanitation components. He reported that in the second phase:

- The Ghana Rural Water Project has been integrated back into the field office with detailed participation of the existing community development, education, and health teams.
- The provision of sanitation, washing, and laundry facilities have been given equal emphasis with the provision of water supplies.
- The target area has been focussed to a single contiguous area.

- A very strong effort has been made to include ALL the potential stakeholders in the complete process of project design and implementation.

In the second phase the project used Start-Up Workshop techniques developed by the WASH Project. It started with a national level workshop and moved to district and community level workshops. At the national workshop participants included representatives of the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation, the Ministry of Health and regional and district governments. Conrad N. Hilton III represented his foundation and World Vision's U.S. and UK offices were also represented. A WASH consultant facilitated the workshop. As a result of the workshop, significant changes in the project design occurred, including deeper commitments to participation. The donors agreed to allow the well drilling to be slowed down during the first year to give time for sufficient community preparation to take place.

In subsequent week-long district level workshops the most needy communities were identified and prioritized. Finally in the selected communities there were technical workshops, motivation activities, and training sessions to help develop a commitment in the community to provide for community members' own participation.

Each village has to commit to have two volunteers per pump trained in all aspects of maintenance. Volunteers from neighboring villages are trained to be able to work together and to help each other out. At the end of the training, each group of volunteers is issued a set of pump maintenance tools and basic spare parts. They are honored by the chiefs of the villages at a graduation ceremony.

Pitchford comments that "those of us that have participated in these ceremonies have been impressed with the pride and 'ownership' that develops through the process. Through this procedure, the whole community is able to see that they are capable of being responsible for the repair and maintenance of their own well." Pitchford's final comment in his paper: "We believe that the heavily participative approach that has evolved has a much better chance of resulting in sustainable change. It takes a lot more time and effort than just drilling wells, but we see that it is worthwhile and has a much better chance of having a lasting effect on communities and is more likely to result in a lasting improvement in their living skills."

Community Participation in Child Survival Projects

World Vision reflected its commitment to participatory approaches in its report on its Zimbabwe Child Survival Project. The occasion was a "Lessons Learned Conference" on Child Survival Projects, 1985-1988, in Africa and Haiti, organized by the Johns Hopkins University PVO Child Survival Support Program. At the 1988 conference, World Vision wrote:

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...

An evaluation of a World Vision Relief and Development Child Survival Project in Bangladesh (Kamalapur Child Survival Project) dated September, 14, 1991, credited the project 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." The report noted that "community participation is occurring through the establishment and training of Neighborhood Health Committees (50), Community Volunteers (100) and Mothers' Focus Groups (45) which are emerging as a possible replacement for the community volunteers." It also noted that "while local leaders and beneficiaries have increasingly participated in the implementation of project activities, their participation in the program and their contribution of local resources need to increase if project activities are to continue once Child Survival funding ceases."

A final evaluation by AID of World Vision Relief and Development's La Gonave Child Survival Project, La Gonave Island, Haiti, faulted the project for devoting "limited time to developing close collaboration with other NGO health-based projects, and most importantly with community leaders and the members of the community at large." In a "Lessons Learned" section--"lessons useful in designing the next project and it is hoped of benefit to other WV projects"--the first three suggestions had to do with community involvement:

- 1) The continuation and long-term effect of any development project depends on the attitudes and acceptance of the project by the communities. It is very important for the staff to understand the communities' perceived needs and to involve the communities in the planning, evaluation, and implementation of the project.
- 2) Patience, understanding and respect for the people of the community is necessary.
- 3) More training in community development and social mobilization is needed.

Sources for World Vision section:

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"Large Scale Development: A Review of World Vision's Large Scale Development Programs: World Vision Staff Working Paper No. 11, Prepared by the Evaluation Department, Research and Development, February 1991, World Vision International "Participation in Development: Learning from the Maasai People's Program in Kenya", World Vision Staff Working Paper No. 12, Prepared by Daniel Ole Shani and Mitali Perkins, Research and Development, June, 1991.

"Louga (Senegal) Interim Evaluation," Evaluation Report by Technical Services, World Vision International, June, 1989 and "Final Evaluation: La Gonave Child Survival Project, La Gonave Island, Haiti," World Vision Relief and Development, Nov. 5, 1990.

"Ghana Rural Water Project," Evaluation Report, Compiled by Sam Voorhies, Technical Services, World Vision International, November, 1989.

Julian Pitchford, "Stakeholder Participation in the Ghana Rural Water Project," paper prepared for Symposium, "Undertaking Sustainable Water Projects in Developing Countries," in conjunction with the National Well Association Annual Convention and Exposition, October 22, 1991, Washington, D.C. (Pitchford is Director, International Development Programs Department, World Vision Relief and Development.)

CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND

The Christian Children's Fund (CCF), which began in 1938 as China's Children Fund, assisted 532,698 children in 1,458 projects in 29 countries, according to its 1991 Annual Report.

The support given by each sponsor on behalf of a child through a monthly subsidy is the primary support CCF gives to projects. Such sponsorship contributions came to more than \$75 million. Revenue from all funding sources totaled more than \$102 million. CCF does not seek funds from U.S. Government sources.

Although it is similar to organizations such as Save the Children and World Vision that use child sponsorship, CCF, in the way it operates its program, has some marked differences. CCF implements its program through "affiliated projects." These are independent associations or agencies or components of them which provide services to children, families and communities. Although National Offices and individual projects operate under general policy guidelines of CCF headquarters, they have a considerable amount of autonomy and flexibility. The direction and management of National Offices are carried out by people native to the country under the guidance of National Office Advisory Boards. The Advisory Boards are intended to reflect a cross section of national society, including legal, technical, economic, sociological, and other appropriate expertise, government leaders and the religious and ethnic diversity characteristic of the people of the nation. The International Office retains the right of appointment of the National Director and plays an "advise and consent" role on the selection of persons for the Advisory Board. CCF also retains the right and authority to approve or disapprove budgets for the operation of the National Office, which it funds.

Each project has a governing board, the majority of which are beneficiary parents. In the case of a child development center, the board must be composed of a minority of professionals and a majority of beneficiary parents or youths. A residential project (which cares for children separated from their families) has a board composed of professionals and community leaders. A Social Service Center's purpose is to provide a choice of services, developed by and for groups of parents who will benefit with their children, and who live in a specific area or have specific common needs or characteristics. While a social service center may have a governing board, it must have a beneficiary Parents' Committee which determines what services are needed and in what priority such services should be given. The Parents' Committee also formulates the budget and participates in the evaluation of the project's effectiveness. If the governing board is combined with beneficiary Parents' Committee, the majority membership of the combined board must be parents of enrolled children. National Offices provide advice and technical assistance but have no supervisory responsibility over projects. National Offices have the responsibility of providing technical assistance, training, information, and advice in administration of the project and to assist the project in a "facilitator role" to be able to meet its goals and objectives. National Offices monitor and evaluate the quality of project operations with the participation of the parents of the children, the projects' board and staff. Staff appointments to projects, including the position of director, are made by the local governing boards not by the National Office.

CCF policy is clear on the question of community participation. Referring to the child sponsorship funds for a project funnelled through CCF, the policy states: "The beneficiaries (the children and their families) of these funds have the right and responsibility to plan for use of the funds in the project and to evaluate the effectiveness of their utilization." The policy statement notes that the national office, through the projects, should help the beneficiaries develop sufficient skills to successfully plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate their activities.

In part because of the decentralized administration of its program, there is not available at CCF headquarters much in way of analysis and evaluations on how successful projects are in carrying through on the participatory model set out for them. Staff interviews indicated that because most projects are affiliated--that is, CCF is working through an already existing entity--the degree of participation of the CCF-funded portion is affected by how participatory the local parent organization has been.

A recent issue of "CCF Field Notes" featured an article on disaffiliation, when a project is turned over to youth and parent leaders who accept responsibility to continue what has been started by CCF. One of the problems identified as encountered by both the Philippine National Office and the parent associations was the following: "Conflict of goals as well as strategies and approaches between the project staff, governing board members and parent leaders: There were some project staff and governing board members who only paid 'lip service' to the ideals of people's participation and who did not provide the necessary leadership and management training to the parents. As a result, these parent associations have not developed to the extent that others have because they have not had more open and receptive project staff and governing board members." But the same article said:

One of the most frequently mentioned benefits by the parents of CCF children derived from their experiences was that of active involvement and participation in the management of the project affiliate. Not only were they trained in various skills areas but they were also given the opportunity to actually become members of the governing board and to function as parent committee members, community volunteers, and in many cases, parents were already able to perform the functions of paid, professional staff. This factor made it easier for the parent association to take over responsibilities from the Mother Organization at the time of disaffiliation.

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) was founded in 1943 and serves as the overseas humanitarian aid and development agency of the United States Catholic Conference. It is governed by a board elected from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/United States Catholic Conference.

Of \$220 million received in support in 1990, 59% was in food and ocean freight under Food for Peace, and another 13% in AID grants for emergency relief and the support of development projects. Private support from U.S. sources--most of it from U.S Catholics--came to \$51 million or 23%.

CRS policy with regard to participatory development is reflected in its 1990-1992 Development Strategy for its Africa Region. The paper sets out the criteria against which development projects would be funded and measured. No U.S. private voluntary organization has stated its commitment to popular participation more clearly and uncompromisingly. Addressing the question, "Whose project is it?", the CRS African strategy says:

If there is any lesson that all donor agencies and all development agencies learn over and over again, it is that if the project was not initiated by or brought into being by the beneficiaries from the beginning, the project is doomed to fail...The continent of Africa is littered with the carcasses or other debris of failed projects. Good ideas, many of them, but the target community never participated in the process, and never committed itself to the project, so once the financing ended, so did the activity.

CRS sets as its regional goal: "To foster African ownership of development efforts aimed at empowering individuals and communities to build on their own human and natural resources in order to increase social and economic opportunities and equity for the poor.

"The strategy says flatly: "Development is empowerment." And goes on:

It is people taking control of their lives: people determining their own problems, options and solutions; developing themselves with their own resources; demanding fair treatment by their governments and their fair share of the national resources. Any project that does not promote and support fundamental change in the way the beneficiaries see themselves and their world is not development but a welfare project that promotes dependency.

A participatory approach figures prominently in the criteria CRS lays out for selection of counterparts: The group should be African and its development agenda controlled by Africans. "The needs and development strategies of the local communities are the starting point for action."

Another criterion is that the African groups should be "credible at the grassroots level," have frequent connections with the communities in which they work and "promote participatory decision-making."

A third criterion is that African groups and CRS should "share the same goals and strategies: i.e., empowerment of individuals and communities and the promotion of sustainable and ecologically sound social and economic development."

A very brief visit to CRS did not provide the opportunity to examine evaluations and other analyses to determine how well current projects are meeting the very high standards for participatory development articulated by CRS. From interviews with top staff it was clear that AID enthusiasm for community participation or the lack of such enthusiasm has had little effect on the way CRS goes about its development role.

CARE*

I. INTRODUCTION

CARE, with a 1991 budget of \$330,717,000, is operated through forty country offices. It is a programmatically decentralized organization. As a result, the experience, documentation and analysis of the use of community participation methodology in CARE projects are found in field-originated files and papers. In May 1992, twelve of its country offices responded to a request to submit policy statements on CARE's understanding of and intentions regarding community participation, along with descriptive summaries of how this approach has been realized in actual projects. This paper is a summary and analysis of those submissions, supplemented by the documentation of CARE's Community Management Enhancement Project, which took place in East Africa from 1988-1990.

This material has been gathered as CARE's contribution to an AID paper on community participation in the work of selected PVOs. The sections that follow will review first the community participation policy statements at the country office level, then strategies and plans for community participation by program and project, and finally accounts of CARE's actual experiences. While the portrait emerging from these twelve countries is most likely representative of CARE, it should be noted that there is a great deal of community participation-focused activity that takes place in other CARE country programs as well.

II. POLICY STATEMENTS

A. Sudan

An example of policy pertaining to community participation can be found in the mission statement of CARE Sudan which was produced in a broad-based staff workshop that examined the values and philosophy of the country office and its programs.

We work with the poor and marginalized to promote their empowerment and self-reliance and to ensure that their basic needs are met in times of crisis. We adopt quality participatory development approaches based on community needs and initiatives that ensure long term sustainability.

* Prepared by Helen Seidler, Care

We work with the people, for the people, with ideas from the people in collaboration with the Government of Sudan.

More specific language was developed in a set of value statements, two of which reflect the commitment to participatory methods:

We in CARE Sudan believe in and are committed to developing effective partnerships with counterparts, communities and others involved in our work. We will ensure close cooperation with all parties toward a shared understanding of our goals, activities and approaches.

This value is evident in our decision to share information and ideas, support others' needs, and involve others in decisions that affect them.

We in CARE Sudan believe in and are committed to ensuring staff and communities have the opportunity and the ability to participate responsibly in decision-making affecting their well-being. The outcome will reflect a broad spectrum of skills and will increase ownership of decisions.

This value is evident in our decision to have a participatory mission and project management approach which incorporates the concerns of staff, communities and other partners through various forms.

The document then demonstrates these values with a set of strategic directions and specific actions for the next twelve month period. In addition, CARE Sudan's 1992-94 Strategic Plan (Multi-Year Plan II) asserts that:

The involvement of project participants in all stages of project planning, implementation and evaluation has been found by CARE to increase the chances of sustainability and facilitate the implementation of projects. A community management (CM) approach, maximizing participation by giving project participants responsibilities in all stages of project development, implementation and evaluation will, therefore, be used in all CARE development and relief projects.

B. Ethiopia

CARE Ethiopia echoes the emphasis on decision making by defining community participation as "a means to empower community members to participate in a decision making process related to their own development activities." This definition is offered although the country office finds that "In the development context, there is unanimity on the importance of community participation rather than on its definition, for there are as many definitions of community participation as there are writers in the field with varying perspectives."

C. India

CARE India adds a new dimension to the discussion by writing that:

At the heart of participation is the concept of group formation, which allows group participants to articulate their own needs and priorities, to actively formulate their own solutions, and to initiate activities aimed at addressing obstacles to their own development.

D. Honduras

CARE Honduras' Multi-Year Plan II for 1991-95 views participation as a way to achieve sustained change. Following is a description of the country office's programming approach:

The mission's first concern in selecting its programming approach is the principle of sustainability. Sustainability will be the first criterion applied to new programming and will be addressed in all ongoing programming. Sustainability refers to the ability of the groups, individuals, or counterparts with whom CARE works to maintain certain programming activities without continued assistance. To achieve this goal, program participants and government counterparts must truly participate in the elaboration and implementation of project activities and project goals. CARE Honduras is committed to this most important programming principle, which will be the sine qua non in formulating the mission strategy and approach.....The mission will work towards the development and empowerment of local community organizations and groups.

III. STRATEGIES AND PLANS AT THE PROGRAM AND PROJECT LEVEL

A. East Africa Community Management Enhanced Project

Between 1988 and 1990 CARE supported in its East Africa region a Community Management Enhancement Project which was staffed by an "Advisor." He worked as adjunct staff with selected projects to assess the nature and degree of community management, help build that aspect of the projects and derive "lessons learned" for CARE overall. Using a workshop methodology project staff established an understanding of the importance of community management and the extent to which it was being achieved in their projects. They then developed strategies and actions to enhance community management and share their learning and experience with the region.

A definition of community management emerged after the initial work with project staff:

Community management is the process through which the community members control the direction of their development process, and the utilization of resources according to their priority and in democratically-decided approaches. While it is important that local institutions are involved, their involvement is just a means to the realization of true involvement of the end-users. It is therefore part of community management enhancement efforts to promote use of local leadership that is truly representative of the targeted poor, underprivileged, unfortunate members of the community.

To assess community management in projects, the advisor and staff developed a series of guiding questions covering ten areas of inquiry. These questions serve not only as a backward assessment but also suggest a set of steps and actions that could be followed throughout the life of a project to gain relevant participation at the community level. After using this tool, they concluded that aspects of pre-project planning generally received more attention than management issues in a project that was underway.

As examples, relatively more community participation went into integrating the community into needs identification, prioritizing needs, project design, and implementation planning -- all pre-project activities -- than went into generally post-planning activities, such as sharing responsibilities in implementation, evaluation, distribution of project benefits, structure of project management, and project redesign. A notable exception is that little community participation was found in planning that involved identifying solutions to prioritized needs,

The analysis also summarized the strengths, weaknesses and constraints faced by the seven projects reviewed relative to community management. Overall conclusions discussed the need to build in the elements of sustainability from the beginning of the project, develop strategies for assuring that participation at the community level truly represents the target groups, establish long-term program and funding commitments, and train staff to work with communities to carry out the responsibilities of project control.

B. Sudan

Also from East Africa comes the "project steering committee" mechanism described in Sudan's MYP II. These committees extend the decision-making about the project beyond staff and community members:

Project steering committees, consisting of counterparts, interested organizations and community members will be set up for all projects where feasible. CARE has found these steering committees constructive in the following areas and will increase their use during the coming MYP period.

- * Planning and policy decisions regarding project implementation**
- * Monitoring and coordinating project activities**

- * **Advocating on behalf of the project with the GOS and donors**
- * **Assuring that the project is adaptable and replicable**
- * **Influencing GOS policies for the benefit of CARE's target group**

C. Ethiopia

CARE Ethiopia's "bottom-up" development strategy includes hiring and training extension agents who can live and work in the rural communities and supporting them through qualified field supervisors. For both of these groups along with CARE project coordinators, training in community development (facilitation, human relations, needs identification, problem identification and solving) has been a priority. The strategy also includes promoting the formation of community development committees which bridge projects to communities, coordinate community efforts and facilitate community involvement in project decision-making. After experience with two projects, the country office concludes that "because of these committees meaningful participation became self-evident, eventually empowering the community members working together to resolve their common problems.....Community development committees have been found to greatly enhance meaningful community participation which fully guarantees eventual ownership of project activities."

D. Nepal

A set of comprehensive guidelines developed through two workshops on community organization outline the approach taken by CARE Nepal. The guidelines are found in the May 1991 CARE Nepal Program Manual. The overall community organization process has four major components, each with a number of dimensions.

1. **Area familiarization** starts with basic multidisciplinary information gathering and leads to the selection of project communities.
2. **Community Needs Assessment/Problem Analysis** outlines various considerations in order to get sensitive, accurate and useful problem statements.
3. **Community Development Committees** are expected for all projects, and the guidelines describe the role of project staff in committee formation, the roles and responsibilities of the committees, and the terms used in both English and Nepali to differentiate among the types of committees.
4. **Group Training** lists the five main topics for community level training (leadership development, communication, awareness building, managerial, and technical skill enhancement).

E. COSTA RICA

CARE Costa Rica has articulated a three stage process in gaining community participation in its projects. First is the training of field workers in community organization and technical advice. Second is the training of community members in the same topics as well as resource mobilization, management and decision making. Finally there is the application of the training by both the field worker and communities, a stage which depends on ongoing feedback between the project and its participants.

The methodology used for training at any level by CARE Costa Rica is called interpersonal-non-formal. Its objective is to assist the learner to form a basis for developing analytical and critical points of view (as opposed to simply becoming informed as traditional education often allows). The methodology assumes that field workers must become part of the community processes and serve as a catalyst for achieving active community participation in the learning and development process. The teaching-learning process involves integrating existing knowledge and experience with new knowledge through reflection and identifying feelings, and taking action to apply new learnings.

F. HONDURAS

CARE Honduras' sectoral strategies as outlined in the 1991-95 MYP also include the language and principles of community participation. In health, the following commitments have been made:

1. **The principal counterpart and the focus of activities will be the community....The full participation of the communities' members in planning, execution and management remains central to any program's implementation.**
2. **One important aspect of this emphasis on local participation will be the social organization of the communities to conduct the tasks. CARE's objective in its approach is to encourage communities to develop or strengthen autonomous organizations to be fully capable of insuring completion of activities, now and in the future. This means that projects must adopt a philosophy of and adequate methodologies for long term community education and extension beyond the purely technical aspects of a project.**
3. **All CARE/Honduras health programs will have a cooperating institution. This counterpart may not necessarily be a government agency and can, in fact, be any appropriate local organization. The mission will actively seek the participation of any qualifying organization(s) in project activities....CARE's strategy will be to work with these institutions to help them gain wider recognition as capable, professional organizations with viable roles in local, regional or national development.**

From the agriculture and natural resource sector:

By facilitating active participation by small farmers through this reflection/action process, beneficiaries will be better capable of selecting and adopting sustainable land use practices and strengthening individual and collective technical and managerial skills. As part of a "training of trainers" approach, local promoters will be selected from each participant community thus further strengthening the groups' ability to obtain the necessary services and resources for their long-term development efforts.

Participant communities will always be a CARE-Honduras counterpart. ANR projects should be flexible enough to work within existing local organizational structures (cooperatives, farmer groups, individuals, etc.) in order to respond to identified local needs and to facilitate implementation.

IV. EXPERIENCE WITH COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AT THE PROJECT LEVEL

A. Togo

CARE Togo has found participatory research with farmers to be an effective way of gaining community ownership of the project. In the "Agroforestry Training and Demonstrations in Northern Togo Project" (ATDNT) farmers are involved in developing and evaluating agroforestry techniques adapted to local conditions. ATDNT's approach contrasts with the "Training and Visit" extension approach championed by the World Bank in which innovations are taught to farmers by closely supervised field agents who manage demonstration plots, visit villages and carry out a variety of training and demonstration activities for farmers.

The ATDNT strategy revolves around the use of "innovation plots," located on farmers' fields and placed under their control. Farmer-innovators work with a set of basic agriculture and agroforestry ideas and together with the project staff and government extension agents develop viable methods for improving production. The project experiments with these methods under controlled conditions similar to those which farmers actually experience. Some of the possibilities that arise from the innovation plots are explored in greater depth through this experimentation. Training is also conducted for government extension agents based on the results of the innovation plots and controlled experimentation.

The participatory research approach has not been without problems. Farmers sometimes lack ideas about ways to overcome the problems they face, yet this approach is largely dependent on farmers' ideas. To bring about some creativity in problem solving, farmers are felt to need more exposure to the world outside their immediate villages. Also, it is difficult to develop new types of relationships between farmers and extensionists after years of experience in the teacher/learner and donor/receiver mode. The project is currently exploring the use of locally made videos among farmers. Low cost videos can be created in local languages using local people, and can

be shown on market days for maximum exposure to a wide audience including women and children. The ATDNT project has completed its first video on the "pepiniere-douche", a new and flexible system for producing plants based on waste water from the family shower. The video is also a powerful tool in the hands of a skilled extension agent and may help to achieve some of the multiplier effect so eagerly sought in all development projects.

B. COMOROS

Similar issues are being identified and addressed in the CARE Comoros Anjouan Sustainable Agriculture Project. Some quotes from the December 1991 mid-term evaluation serve to illustrate the thinking of the project staff:

The critical issue, however, is how to change the system so that farmers view agricultural and rural development activities as "theirs", rather than something to accomplish for payment. This is where the Project (and all projects in the past) has been weakest. The task at hand requires a "retooling" of extensionists so that they view their role as one of agents of development, with technical and social skills which can offer farmers advice and assistance to improve their (the farmers') own lives. This will not be easy. Moreover, farmers must come to understand that they can organize themselves, they can take command of their own farm economies, and be able to meet their daily needs.

...(T)he project design should target wider objectives. Actually with very technical objectives which concern private parcels and ignore the usual village requirements, the project is focused on specific farming activities which are individual, and community involvement is difficult to wake up.

The January 1992 Training Needs Assessment Report includes statements such as:

The project needs to focus more heavily on self-reliance and convince the farmers of the value of learning and applying improved techniques on their own....Farmer training sessions require much more question-posing. The agents should draw more on the knowledge of farmers....The field agents should put more effort into organizing farmers at sites into groups....Women often do not participate equally in training sessions when men are present. Agents do not seem overly concerned about this problem, but it goes along with the undervaluing of the training sessions and a complacency about leaving participants feeling less than satisfied with what they have shared and learned in meetings and demonstrations.

Numerous suggestions are made in these documents for ways to reorient the project to make it more community-based and sensitive.

C. India

CARE India's Bee-keeping Project in southern Bihar is a pilot project working with women from tribal groups. Project staff helped the women select bee-keeping as their activity after analyzing several options. The women were then asked to form themselves into groups for training in bee management, after which hives were distributed. The groups also formed their own savings and loan associations (intended to fund new future activities) and received training on ways to use new income to improve their families' health and nutritional status. Observing a recent group discussion, the project manager commented, "All the mothers were participating with very little facilitation from anyone else. They were raising issues and concerns and discussing possible solutions." Considered instrumental by the project in motivating the women, the two field officers actually reside in two of the five participating villages and speak the local languages.

D. Philippines

The success of the Sogod Agroforestry Project in the Philippines can be attributed to the existence of a well-organized community organization with genuine people's participation. To address problems of low income and degraded soil the communities covered by the project were queried to see how they should be organized. The result was the formation of a single association with contributing clusters at the village level. Ten clusters of between 11 and 45 families each formed in late 1989 and began to meet monthly. With support-on-request of the CARE field staff, they developed group action plans, handled implementation and evaluated the results of their efforts. The project staff writes:

Throughout the SAP, clusters applied the "activity cycle" of planning, implementation and evaluation for all activities including water box construction, nursery operation and communal reforestation. Since the project ended, the cluster members have maintained their community participation approach to undertake other activities and solve problems. CARE still plays a small role in the Sogod community, but primarily as a technical advisor for agroforestry activities.

Women played key roles in the project association as well as the clusters, numbering 62% of all participants. Their representation as officers at both levels was proportionate to their general participation and they were involved in all types of decision making. The project is proud of this record, and staff writes, "The participation of women in the SAP was highly significant. It brings into focus the important contribution women bring to development activities including agriculture and natural resources programs."

The project also built on a community organizing strategy indigenous to Sogod, the alayon, in which residents form teams to share in various community work activities. The project encouraged the formation of alayons to carry out labor intensive soil conservation activities, and each cluster formed an alayon of five members. Project staff reports, "The alayons were the

binding force that kept the spirit of genuine community participation very much alive in all cluster programs."

E. Belize

CARE Belize's contribution comes from long experience with the Village Level Water and Sanitation project. The lesson learned is that community participation can lead to success and sustainability of benefits only if communities are developmentally "ready." Country office staff writes:

If there are any lessons to be learned from the VLWS projects and others that provide basic services, i.e., rural electrification, health, etc., it is that you cannot give rural communities basic services and expect them to maintain them unless there is a level of development in place that allows for the collection of fees and a disciplined monitoring system that ensures honesty and competence.

As an example, here in Belize we have built a number of gravity-fed water systems and trained village boards of management elected by the villagers to operate and maintain the systems and to collect fees, and keep records. The community actually owns the water system and is responsible for its maintenance. The Board of Management is directly responsible to the water users who pay a monthly fee. In every instance where we have installed a gravity-fed water system, the system continues to operate in an efficient manner with the added bonus of the accrual of sizeable bank balances from the collection of monthly fees from the water users. This allows for not only the maintenance of the system, but also the funding of other development activities in the community.

Community participation is extremely important but is only one of the factors that assures the sustainability of any given project. If a community is not ready in a developmental sense for the activity, even when a high degree of community participation is present, the chances of sustainability are lessened.

F. Honduras

CARE Honduras cites several examples of effective community participation in its projects. The current phase of the Community Agroforestry Project relies on small farmer groups which conduct their own local problem analysis and select interventions that best suit their situation and goals. In addition the project will soon be funding local NGOs who work in the same area to conduct general community development work. In the urban food-for-work program known as Municipal Infrastructure and Technical Assistance, beneficiaries participate in the design and construction of important community public works like roads, water supply and sewage systems. This program has also begun on a pilot basis to support a local NGO to carry out all community activities in one site. The staff writes, "Locally, MITA has become well known for its pioneering

community-level work and the involvement of beneficiaries in its programs." Pursuing the theme of working with local NGOs as a critical means to community participation and sustainability, CARE Honduras actively supports and participates in the Honduran Federation of Private Development Organizations (FOPRIDEH).

G. Mexico

CARE Mexico has seen a participatory methodology in its Health and Nutrition Program bring about significant changes at the community level. Community participation has helped to remove the stigma of paternalism that is often associated with distributing rations when there is little or no beneficiary collaboration. Rations are made available based on the individual's decision to bring her child periodically to a health post for examination and to attend herself a series of health-related talks. At the community level, families that receive rations must participate in community improvement projects that are decided upon by a committee of beneficiaries themselves. Staff writes, "Health authorities have advised us that these committees continue to function in the communities after ration distribution is terminated, indicating that a sense of community responsibility has been developed to influence their attitude and action for self improvement."

H. Ecuador

The three phase community development process described below represents for CARE Ecuador a concept of community participation in which "...the community does not participate in CARE projects, but the reverse. CARE becomes a participant in activities decided upon by the community. In other words, CARE reinforces the self-help efforts of the community, and supports the realization of community decisions to improve its own quality of life."

1. Initial Phase:

- **Prioritize areas needing attention based on a study of the health and environmental conditions of the general population;**
- **Request for CARE's participation from the community;**
- **Response to the community's invitation, based upon CARE's available resources;**
- **CARE contact with the community to discuss various topics, including: expectations of the community regarding alternative solutions to their needs; the community's structure and leadership; how the community expects to manage the project; assigning responsibilities among**

community, CARE and counterparts; determining strategies for organizing the community, and community participation in executing the project

2. Phase One:

- **Strengthening community organization, with the participation of CARE and counterparts;**
- **Training community leaders;**
- **Training ("conscientization") of the community in general, including different groups (children, youth, parents);**
- **Organizing a group that accepts responsibility for implementation of the project and subsequent follow-up.**

3. Phase Two:

- **Evaluation of the training provided to the various community groups;**
- **Training of the community committee in strategies for making household visits (door-to-door). This activity has as its purpose verifying use of the hygiene standards and the construction of household latrines, and to motivate the community to follow established procedures;**
- **Evaluation with the entire community of the activity undertaken.**

4. Phase Three:

- **Determine steps necessary to follow through with activities undertaken in the project;**
- **Designate responsibilities of the members of the committee and the community in general for follow-through;**
- **Discuss the possibility of implementing complementary sanitation/health activities over the short term.**

This process is fundamental in the Cholera Response and Water & Sanitation projects of CARE Ecuador, and evaluations to date indicate the capacity of communities involved to implement projects both in the construction and education phases and the satisfaction with the achievements at the community level.

I. Costa Rica

The Community-Managed Credit Funds (PACCO) project of CARE Costa Rica stresses community organization and training by offering community groups tools for project planning and execution for use both during and beyond the life of the project. The project also works with existing community entities, namely the Community Development Associations that are linked to the government. Training is offered to CDA members and interested others from the community on a wide range of community development issues such as problem identification and prioritization, generation of possible solutions, and resource identification. Following the training, the community elects a Credit Committee which is responsible for administering the community-managed credit fund. The purpose of the project-established fund is to finance productive activities undertaken by community members. Credit management training is then offered to the Committee and to all other interested community members. Participation has been high in both the community development training (representing 60% of all community families) and credit management training (representing 55% of all community families).

Staff writes, "...In January 1992, an evaluation of the project indicated that the Credit Committees established in all of the 39 project communities are well-organized and highly capable. They have the respect and confidence of the communities they represent."

V. CONCLUSIONS

The key points from each of the project level examples are in all cases situation-specific, and yet there are generalizations that can be made in seeking community participation. Perhaps the concept of "developmental readiness" can assist in governing the choice of intervention and community participation strategy that is feasible in any particular setting. Mindful that "readiness" is always a judgment call and that we always risk being either too timid or too bold, it is legitimate to say that what can work in Belize at present may not translate to Togo, and vice-versa.

Seven important dimensions of community participation stand out in the review of the field experience summarized in the previous section. While not all apply at the same time, each deserves careful consideration in project planning.

1. Interaction and communication with the world beyond the village.
2. Extensionists living in the communities (and speaking the local languages).
3. The shift in the relationship between extensionist and villager to a more respectful co-equal status.
4. The importance of group formation.

5. **The importance of women.**
6. **Building on indigenous community development strategies.**
7. **Working with and through local NGOs.**