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PROBLEM OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

by

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In this paper the author will deal with the major problem areas of rural development in Africa. As a point of departure, the general trends which are evident in Africa today, the objective realities which have stimulated these trends and their effect on African development as a whole will be enumerated. However, for purposes of convenience and economy of treatment, the subjects of migration, communications, energy and water supply, and administrative structure and practices will not be discussed separately. This does not mean that they will be omitted. On the contrary, it will become evident that these four topic areas will be dealt with throughout the paper, due to their inherent importance in all aspects of rural development.

Despite some new developments, it can be stated that Africa as a continent and its inhabitants still exist at a traditional subsistence level. The rural sector personifies exploitation in this respect as a prime source of supply for agricultural resources but receiving minimal benefits in return. The last decade is considered as the most important period of this century for Africa. Some 90 million people inhabiting an area of 9 million square miles have gained their independence. ^{1/}

In spite of the fact that Africa is an area of contrasts, concerning topography, resources, climate, population pressure, tradition, education and degree of social and economic development, there are some trends in rural life which apply to most of the African nations.

The growth of a cash economy

The effect of this trend is the transformation from a tribal society with its kin relationship and mutual rights and obligations to a peasant society in which a connexion between personal effort and individual rewards becomes significant. This phenomenon has led to conflict between the traditional conservative values, techniques, relationships and customs on the one hand and the new tendencies on the other. The result of such conflict has been conducive to a certain degree of social disintegration. For instance, the position of the traditional chief has been undermined and a new class of leaders has emerged in his stead.

The changing emphasis from the importance of the group to that of the individual is reflected in the following:

- (a) The form of marriage which emphasises bond between individuals rather than between tribal bonds;
- (b) Family organization tends to change from the joint system to the single family unit and this results in a certain insecurity to many individuals. The joint family system used to provide members of the family with security against such hazards as orphanhood, widowhood, disability, old age, etc. The uncertainty induced by the change causes great anxiety to persons. It should

^{1/} 1963 report on the World Social Situation, 1963 (United Nations Publication, p. 176).

be mentioned however, that in spite of the advantages of the extended family arrangements some disadvantages occurred such as individual disincentives for improvement.

Population pressure

Most African nations are characterized by a static high birth-rate averaging 46 per 1,000, against a declining death rate, with an average national income rate of 2.3 in 1960. This varies from 2.5 for the UAR, slightly higher for West Africa and as low as 1.5 for Cameroon, Gambia and Angola. It is estimated that the increase will be even greater in 1970. The population trend reflects a relatively high percentage of dependent age groups (40 per cent under 15, and 5 per cent over 60). This trend is affecting social and economic development in terms of requirement for investment in education, social welfare, health, agriculture and industry. It is evident that any efforts at national development which do not take into account methods for reduction of the fertility rate in such countries will likely be defeated by the rapid consumption of any economic gain particularly in view of projects with a high social cost, such as in public health and education.

Income inequalities between African nations

Most African countries are representative of ineffective economic units in terms of the distribution of resources. As a result, per capita income varies from one country to another. All high per capita income countries are coastal countries, while the lowest per capita income countries are the land-locked ones. This may be explained by climatic conditions and better marketing facilities. Coastal countries can produce the classical cash crops such as cocoa, coffee, palm products, rubber and tropical timber, while land-locked countries are confined to nomadic grazing with poor internal transportation. For example, Ghana maintains a very high per capita income due to the early emergence of cocoa, together with the development of its mineral and forest resources in the coast. On the other hand, the share of non-marketed production in total domestic consumption varies from less than 10 per cent in Senegal to over 80 per cent in Upper Volta. Such differences of per capita income between the African countries constitute a major problem for regional planning and growth.

Lack of administrative efficiency

In many African countries, the newly formed central government and local administration lack sufficient administrative experience necessary for co-ordinating development planning. Sometimes it includes elements from the old bureaucratic colonial administration. When the problems of the country are beyond the ability of the government to solve due to inadequate natural and human resources, inefficient administrative machinery with a mass of depressed population, there is little enthusiasm on the part of the government and the country's elite to deal with the problems of national development and rural mobilization.

A degree of maladjustment and anxiety

There is constant "pull" and "push" phenomenon between urban centres and rural settlements. The dominant motivation for this drift to the cities is an economic desire for improved living conditions. Urbanization is associated with the improvement and extension of means of communication. As a result, cultural conformity and traditional patterns of belief and behaviour tend to be broken, and the social structure becomes fluid and incomplete. The attitude of the people towards religion becomes more realistic and less dogmatic. Radicalism replaces conservatism as an attitude towards life and realism replaces fatalism. The urban population becomes more involved in a world of ever-expanding desires for more material goods and services, no matter what level has already been reached. New needs are created which are beyond the limited resources of the new emigrants. They may claim to have been happier prior to relocations. As a result of the rapidly changing situation, a certain degree of maladjustment and social disorganization occurs.

Africa in its efforts towards transforming its economy from subsistence to monetary and raising the people's social and economic standard is faced with tremendous problems.

Agriculture

Although some 80 per cent of the population of Africa depends on agriculture for its livelihood, a relatively small proportion of planned public expenditure is devoted to direct investment in agriculture. Only six out of sixteen African countries studied, spend about one-third of their budget on agricultural investment, while eight countries devote as little as one-fifth.

The main problems affecting agricultural development in Africa include the following:

- (a) Loss of soil fertility through over-cropping, resulting mainly from population pressure;
- (b) Limited amount of rainfall in many countries;
- (c) Human and animal disease;
- (d) Inadequate supplies of healthy drinking water;
- (e) Poor communication and bad roads;
- (f) Depressed state of commodity prices;
- (g) Unsatisfactory utilization of the agricultural land;
- (h) Lack of agricultural extension material relevant to the resources, needs and interests of the local people;
- (i) Lack of settled labourers with accompanying employment problems.

Attempts were made in African countries for agricultural development. Illustrative of vertical expansion are the attempts at transformation of former agricultural stations in Ghana into State farms and the establishment of pilot farms for agricultural demonstration. The Gezira agricultural scheme in the Sudan is considered as an example of scientific large-scale co-operative enterprise between the Government and the people.

Illustrative of horizontal expansion is the scheme of the UAR Government to utilize the water of the Nile Valley to add one and a half million acres of land. Since out of the 84 billion cubic metres passing through Aswan, 34 were lost in the Mediterranean annually, it was felt that measures should be taken to use a part of this lost water through the active storage behind a big dam, and as a result of this, the High Dam was built to store 22 billion cubic metres, one-third of which (7.5 billion) to be utilized for cultivating one and a half million additional acres in the UAR, and two-thirds of which is to be utilized for cultivating more land in the Sudan.

Land tenure system and agrarian reform

The inequitable distribution of land in many of the African countries has been a major factor in perpetuating a subsistence peasant economy. Landlords in most countries claim from the sharecropper three-fourths of the product. A similar problem of land tenure exists in the tribal community where, neither the member of the tribe as an individual, nor his family as a group is entitled to the continuous possession of the land. This system provides few incentives for land conservation and improvement, resulting in deterioration of the land. In parts of Libya and Tanganyika, for example, where cattle is raised on a tribal communal basis, personal efforts in preventing overgrazing is minimized. In Ghana and Nigeria where the sharecropper does not have any security to remain on the land for a long time, he does not maintain its fertility.

In many countries individual family farms are very small and cannot provide a decent standard of living to their owners. The small holders with limited education and ineffective guidance pursue the traditional system of land utilization characterized by primitive agricultural practices, overgrazing of pastures which further contributes to the deterioration of the soil.

Efforts have been made in the same countries to limit ownership of land and to help the small holders through co-operation to improve their internal services and operations, such as the supply of portable water, seeds and fertilizers. On the other hand, assistance of an external nature such as marketing and credit supervision aim at safeguarding the interests of the members of the co-operative.

Experience in the Medjerda Valley of Northern Tunisia provides an example for a successful land reform scheme. In June 1968, a land reform law setting a ceiling of 50 hectares per family in irrigated land was enacted. Land holders were required to develop their land according to a government scheme in order to obtain the maximum productivity.

The First Land Reform Act in the UAR was issued in 1952 setting a ceiling for land holding and arranging for the distribution of land in excess of these ceilings. In 1961, the ceiling for the family was lowered from 200 acres to 100 acres, and then lowered again in 1969 to 50 acres. The concept of agrarian reform in the UAR does not stop at the distribution of the land in excess of the ceilings but deals with other aspects of rural development such as:

- (a) Regulation of the relationship between landlords and tenants;
- (b) Ensuring minimum wages for agricultural workers;
- (c) Improving terms of agricultural credit;
- (d) Fixing land rent at seven times the tax levied on the land;
- (e) Prevention of land fragmentation through inheritance or sale, and
- (f) Organizing agricultural co-operative society to ensure maximum yields. The main function of the co-operative society is to organize association for processing and marketing agricultural produce and to provide the credit in money or kind necessary for agricultural production.

With the application of the agrarian reform laws, the new holders encounter major social and economic problems. The size of the distributed farm in some countries such as the UAR does not make for economic viability. Holdings are generally too small to offer an adequate employment opportunity for a growing family. The drains and canals which were previously owned by one landlord who had the resources to maintain them are now owned by a large number of shareholders after reform.

The transformation of farms from a feudal community in which a man's rights and duties depend on his "ascribed" status in local society to community with new ideals where the inter-relations are determined by the individual's capacity and personal quality poses a new problem. Such transformation from "ascribed status" in the community to "achieved status" creates a major problem if the farmer is not made familiar with his new rights and duties.

Health and welfare

The economic, social and cultural background of the people influence their attitude towards modernization in health. Improved standard of living has reflected on health standard. On the other hand, in a country where the inhabitants are undernourished or subject to such chronic diseases as malaria, hookworm or helminthic (a disease characterized by a worm in the body), there is apathy and lack of energy and the productivity of the individual is seriously affected.

Although the health standard in Africa is improving which is reflected in the declining death rate, major health problems still exist in the rural area. These include the following:

- (a) The spread of communicable diseases such as yellow fever, sleeping sickness and smallpox. While malaria is decreasing, venereal diseases are increasing. The predominance of diseases in Africa is due to the shortage of doctors or adequately trained medical staff (it is still one doctor per 9,000 inhabitants in some African countries). The majority of the doctors working in the villages, come from urban areas with an urban orientation and without intimate knowledge of the rural people. In addition to being unable to deal with rural problem in a human fashion they are totally unfamiliar with the traditions of the rural society, and therefore their approach is ineffective;
- (b) The African diet is by and large unbalanced and inadequate. This had led to undernourishment and diseases of malnutrition resulting from protein and vitamin deficiencies. Seasonal scarcity of foodstuffs influences the diet in Africa. Some of the dietary weaknesses are very often due to tradition and beliefs. In some areas eggs are forbidden to pregnant and nursing mothers and to young children. Many varieties of fish are taboo, at least for certain categories of individuals. In most cases, the breast-feeding mothers receive less attention than their husbands as far as food is concerned, which has its reflection on the growth of the child. Planting fruits and vegetables in large quantities, increased fish production, raising of chickens, guinea fowls, rabbits and guinea-pigs are associated with the introduction of better food preparation and may help to raise the nutritional standard of the African peasant;
- (c) Another health hazard is the lack of sanitation and inadequate healthy water supply. Through community efforts the disposal of faecal matter and domestic waste and refuse can be successfully accomplished. The eradication of the breeding foci of the vector diseases such as sleeping sickness, malaria, yellow fever, tsetse fly - the insect vector of sleeping sickness - can be accomplished in local communities with careful guidance.

Education and training

The greatest effort of educational development in Africa has been evidenced at the primary level, creating accompanying pressures for secondary and high education. Provisions have been made in most African countries to provide places for as many children as possible at the primary level. Enrolment at this level was 17 per cent of the 5 to 14 age group in 19 African countries in 1950. By 1959, it had risen to 78 per cent. Unfortunately, without enough trained teachers and suitable school facilities, the educational planning in Africa has been mainly quantitative.

The trend in Africa at present is toward an increase of facilities for education at the secondary level. This is in response to the increasing number of students completing the primary level and also for the urgent demand upon secondary education to join the developing administrative machineries of the African countries.

African education in the rural areas faces many major problems. The main ones are:

- (a) Shortage of qualified teachers. Accelerated training abroad and at home have helped, but the problems still exist with the increasing number of students enrolled at the primary and secondary levels;
- (b) Inadequate schooling facilities. Funds are scarce, particularly in view of the ever increasing capital costs for accommodation and other facilities. As a result physical deficiencies in terms of premises, feeding, school shelter and teaching material are conspicuous;
- (c) Education of girls still lags far behind that of boys with only a very small proportion of African girls receiving formal education. The rate is one girl to two boys, despite the fact that trained women are as essential for rapid social and economic development;
- (d) Low proportion of students who complete the primary and secondary levels. In the Ivory Coast, for example, two-thirds of students enrolled in primary schools failed to obtain certificates in 1960. Those who have not completed the primary level have no opportunity to benefit from what they learned and may fall into illiteracy again;
- (e) High degree of illiteracy. Literacy rate does not exceed 20 per cent in Africa as a whole. High illiteracy is responsible for the existence of traditional beliefs which create resistance against change. High illiteracy is also responsible for the existence of the gap in technical knowledge and political understanding between the small cadre of the qualified elite and the great mass of the illiterate people;

- (f) Educational curricula in most African countries are not related to the needs and the problems of those countries. By and large it is based on a theoretical approach adopted to conditions and circumstances foreign to Africa. The same programmes are applied in both rural and urban areas. It does not give the student a practical realistic approach to life. It does not equip him to play his role in the development of his society, nor is it relevant for Africa as a whole;
- (g) Lack of adequate audio-visual aid materials. Radio and television are considered as very important educational devices particularly for adults. The use of other methods such as programme learning and teaching machines are very important for speeding educational progress in Africa.

There is also a great need of the implementation of programmes related to technical and vocational training. The programme should be designed to meet specific needs and conditions and their implementation should lead to the acceleration of the country's development scheme.

Human resources

Progress, which does not result in the development of human resources, is likely to be defeated by the tendency for quick conspicuous consumption, resulting in wastage of productive capital. Although the share of public funds spent on the social sector (human development) varies in Africa from one country to the other, it averages 20 per cent of the public fund. The allocation of only 20 per cent of the public funds to social development does not provide for adequate social services in the rural societies which are living under conditions of mass poverty and accelerated population growth.

African villages are usually built where there is sufficient water. They range in size from hamlets of few houses to settlements of several thousand people. The houses are usually constructed of the locally available material. The village is either composed of a cluster of houses surrounded by orchards and fields, or of dispersed family houses, each surrounded by its farm. Some of the clustered villages are enclosed by mud walls which in the past were used for defence. The main occupation of the villagers is agriculture.

Some of the African villages are tribal and others are non-tribal. All the citizens of the tribal villages are united under a leader who usually occupies this position because of his tribal status. In the non-tribal village, leadership is exercised by the heads of the leading families, whose authority derives from their positions of seniority or influence, rather than being representatives of a common ancestor. A man's status in the non-tribal village depends upon his ethnic group, age, lineage, wealth and reputation.

Loyalty to the extended family or tribe is very strong. The position of the eldest male in the family is very high. His position is dominant and all members of the family are expected to submit to his authority, which he is supposed to exercise in all family decisions involving outside activities, such as marriage and enrolment in schools. Honour is largely a tribal consideration. It is based on the individual's reputation for courage, probity, generosity, instinct and sympathy. As a result of the kinship ties and tribal solidarity, the rural African is extremely clanish and this makes everyone increasingly apathetic about national development which in many cases leads to a lack of initiative and originality as a logical consequence of his deep apathy.

With urbanization in many African countries, the extended family or the tribe as an economic unit of production tends to break down, due to individual pursuit of paid employment. The extended family played a major role on account of security. With the weakening of family ties, and the appearance of the monetary system, the greatest threat to the cash earner is unemployment. Unfortunately, the unfavourable land/man ratio in many African countries allows only a small wage earning class among the rural population. Under-employment and unemployment are frequent hazards. Such under-employment creates (a) a problem of life-long indebtedness intensified by credit at a high interest rate, and (b) the emergence of a migrant labour force who returns to the village after gaining a little sum of money. The interrelationship of low productivity and low wages becomes evident. When such low wages are established, it becomes a pattern that they do not receive any above a low wage ceiling, which causes deterioration to both their standard of living and the land.

It is evident that the social and economic organizations in the African countries should be modified to cope with changes in the African culture from subsistence to monetary economy. Provision should be made for improving the methods of production and the efficiency and adaptability of the social, labour and economic organizations. Tenants, sharecropper and agricultural labourers must be trained in the most up-to-date agricultural practices, including moderate mechanization.

The female African spends her day in housework, collecting water and firewood, helping her husband in some agricultural activities, participating in the community trade work. This leaves little time for public activities. She usually marries very young and spends a life overburdened with work. As a result, she loses her youth at an early age and appears older than her real age, a characteristic which is called "premature ageing". This, combined with other factors, stimulates her husband into polygamous relationships.

In many African countries women live in privacy and are not seen by men other than their husbands and close relatives. Only in matriarchal countries the countrywomen are influential and superior to men.

Income levels

The rural family derives its income in the following ways:

- (a) Goods and services bought with the total money income of the family;
- (b) Family production for its own consumption such as vegetables, fruits, eggs, chickens;
- (c) Government and non-government services extended to the rural families such as education, health, drinking water;
- (d) Services provided to the family through supplementary income.

The annual cash per capita income in Africa is \$100, which is considered very low, when compared with Western standards. FAO has given the following classification in Africa according to per capita income:

Ghana, Central African Federation and Senegal \$151-200
Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon and Ivory Coast \$101-150
Congo (Leopoldville), Dahomey, Guinea, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan \$77-100
Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, Mali, Niger, Tanganyika, Chad, Gambia, and Uganda \$51-70
Ethiopia and Upper Volta \$50 and less

The main factors responsible for low per capita income in Africa include subsistence conditions, low productivity, illiteracy, unfavourable market conditions and decline in death rates without change in birth rate, associated with peasants' resistance to new ideas concerning improving agricultural practices. While the world population increased by 485 million (19 per cent) during the last decade (1950-1960), the increase in Africa was 23 per cent during that period. The percentage of African population was 7.9 per cent of the world population in 1920, 8.2 per cent in 1950, and became 8.5 per cent in 1960.

Such a high rate of population increase requires large investment for social and economic development to raise, the income level, which most of the countries cannot afford. It will also require the modernization of agriculture which many African peasants resist due to their lack of appreciation for its importance in raising the family income. Furthermore, modernizing agriculture, especially through the use of machinery, requires in most cases a reduction of the number of people working in the land, which could increase social problems resulting from increased unemployment.

To be able to raise the income level of the African peasant requires careful planning including modernization and mechanization of agriculture, improved rural transport to facilitate the marketing of agricultural surplus. This must also be accompanied by training of peasants to accept and master technical innovations. Measures should also be taken to encourage family planning in order to slow down the high birth rate and also to make more land available for cultivation to absorb the ever increasing population.

Due to rapidly increasing population the UAR is attempting horizontal and vertical expansion of agriculture. The population of the UAR (in round figures) increased from about 10 million in 1901 to 21 million in 1951, 27 million in 1961 and 30 million in 1967. The rate of population increase is estimated to be 2.5 per cent per annum and it is projected that by 1981 the population will reach the figure of 41 million. This tremendous increase of total population unaccompanied as it has been by a proportional expansion of the cultivable land area has resulted in a serious deterioration of an already adverse cultivable land/man ratio. While in 1907 the cultivable land amounted to 0.5 acre per head of population, while in 1967 the figure had dropped to a mere 0.2 acre per head.

Measures for the vertical development of agriculture in the UAR include replacement, renewal and modernization of irrigation systems, improvement of the drainage systems and installation of tile drains. As regards the horizontal expansion of agriculture the Government is achieving this goal through the reclamation and cultivation of one and a half million acres of unused land at an average of 150,000 acres per year.

Housing

Housing has been defined as dwelling units which meet minimum building standards of safety, health and comfort situated with easy access to place of employment and to related residential services. There is a growing need for better housing standards in rural Africa where the changes are taking place from a subsistence to a cash economy.

Houses in rural Africa are built from local materials on a traditional pattern. The major problem in rural housing in Africa is concerned with introducing improvement in traditional building methods, in the type of materials used, in the provision of services and in designs.

Many houses in rural Africa are single room units built of mud, constructed in close proximity with each other, allowing little ventilation. There is often a small open place in the house, used for cooking, washing and tying the animals during the day time. A mud oven occupies the central portion of the place and is used for baking bread. Any negligence on the part of those cooking or baking the bread would set fire to the whole village, destroying all the huts and their possessions.

Poor housing associated with low incomes are responsible for many pathological and health diseases such as crimes, delinquencies, typhoid, trachoma and tuberculosis.

The financing of rural houses is by both public and private investments. People should be encouraged and motivated to contribute towards rebuilding or remodelling their houses. This contribution can be in terms of labour, money or material.

The government should supplement self-help efforts with financial and technical assistance. Rural housing institutions may be organized for the provision of village, and home designs making land and housing materials available at reasonable cost, and giving to the peasants loans on easy terms through the rural co-operative societies.

A great effort for establishing villages in the newly-reclaimed areas of the land irrigated by the water from the High Dam is being accomplished by the UAR Government. New settlers move to villages of two hundred houses each. The house is made of burnt bricks, composed of two rooms, kitchen, bathroom and a space for a small garden. The animals live together in an externally located stable owned by the community. There is a central village for each six villages in which is concentrated the facilities and services of general value to the locality. Electricity and water are provided to the new villages. The nation building department provides services and personnel to the new villages in their respective fields of specialization.

Many new independent States in Africa have introduced home-financing institutions, which operate for the rural areas through the provision of skilled personnel and credit. These institutions are also used for savings and mortgage advice.

Industrialization

Although Africa is increasingly drawn into the stream of world trade and industry, leading to higher income levels, it still suffers from fluctuating world prices. These changes, together with the establishment of western type enterprises, are in the nature of an economic revolution. They have been reinforced by rules and regulations designed to accelerate social and economic development.

In most African countries, industrial development is hampered by an insufficiency of skills. The development of industry is frequently, either particularly or totally, controlled by the government. In some African countries government interference in the management of economic affairs is very minor. In other countries the government influence in economic affairs is pervasive to the extent of repression. In every society there are certain individuals who benefit by the confusion brought about by extensive change. When such changes occur, these individuals become the new power elite and ruling class. Eventually, they assume the prestige symbols of their predecessors.

The growth of the town usually occurs as the result of a large migration of population from the villages seeking better employment opportunities resulting from industrialization. If the immigrants received adequate practical training and find employment in the town they cause an upward trend in the standard of living, in terms of social provision such as housing, education and health. If they are not trained for any industrial or commercial activity they cause a marked deterioration in the town which will propagate "slum" conditions.

During the 19th century, the increasing rate in the industrial population was more rapid in Europe and North America than in Africa and Asia, while during the first half of this century, the increase was higher in Africa than in the other two continents. This urban growth in Africa is one of the aspects of the general economic and social changes due to the African countries' share and contribution towards the world economic and social changes.

Although no standard definition has been accepted by all African nations for an urban unit, North Africa and the Republic of South Africa are the most urbanized sub-regions. Tropical Africa is the sub-region with the lowest proportion of population living in non-agricultural communities. The urban population in North Africa, Senegal, Mozambique, Nigeria, Zanzibar and South Africa exceeds 10 per cent. Some 10 per cent of the total urban population of these countries live in towns of more than 200,000 inhabitants while the rest of the urban population live in smaller towns. In some African countries, the population of certain major centres is increasing much faster than the natural population increase. In some cities like Oran, Constantine, Casablanca, Oujda, Accra, Abidjan, Dakar, Leopoldville, Nairobi, Salisbury, Cairo and Dar-es-Salaam, the population is increasing four or five times faster than population of countries concerned.

The percentage of the working class age group is higher in the urban dwellings than in the rural areas, because a considerably large portion of the urban population are immigrants from the villages who left their families behind. Both death and infant mortality rates are lower in the towns than in the villages. Though urbanization is associated with higher per capita income, it leads in Africa to major problems.

- (a) Lack of suitable employment opportunities. The unskilled village labourer cannot find good opportunities for work. He, therefore, accepts any unskilled job. This tends to stimulate and aggravate unhealthy competition among his fellow immigrants as well as with the urban class;
- (b) Lack of adequate social institutions. The educational institutions are not coping with the increasing educational needs and as a result many school-age students are left without education in many African towns. The same problem exists in relationship to transportation, housing and health facilities, in fact with the basic amenities which town life requires;

- (c) Increase of pathological diseases. With better educational facilities in the African town for the girl than in the village, the young girl of the African emigrant family usually seeks better living standard and employment. This changes her outlook completely; she has more freedom, and becomes, for instance, interested in fewer children when she marries. Since she is no longer completely dependent upon her husband, she is not forced to live in an unhappy family and therefore divorce may occur for the slightest reasons. She also may often leave her young children with the eldest child and with a maid, causing a lack of proper supervision which is a root cause of juvenile delinquency. Statistics also show that suicide and crime rates are highest in the towns.

The people in the new towns are also impatient. They see or hear about other development areas and they wish to reach the same stage faster than their resources will allow. Some of them become frustrated when they find that progress is unnecessary and slow and this creates a great deal of anxiety;

- (d) Institutionalization. The main characteristic of the rapid expansion of the urban areas is the institutionalization of the society and of the individualization of man. There is an increase in number and size of social institutions with lesser co-ordination among them. In some cases, even communications between officials of the same institution break down so that the official ceases to have the feeling of belonging to any coherent body. The individual also no longer lives among small number of well-defined fields of action, but among a large and confusing number of widely separated fields. He is no longer receiving any security from his kinship group.

As a result, efforts should be made for a more effective co-ordination system under which each institution realizes its role as a supplementary organ to other institutions and work in close collaboration with them.

- (e) Heterogeneity of the town population. Since the growth of the urban districts is made mainly from rural emigrants with widely differing backgrounds as regards race, tribe, education, religion and other social factors, there is great cultural disparity among the different groups composing the town. This creates the problem of adjustment to each other and adaptability to the new living conditions. This heterogeneous society is also made visible in terms of status symbols such as clothing, care and housing.

In every African country provisions should be made for careful town planning in order to solve many of these problems. Allocation of land should be made within each urban area for the expansion of residential, industrial, commercial and

recreational zones. A pattern of communication, transportation and power should be provided in each town. Planning of physical allocation of social services institutions such as schools, clinics and social centres should be made. Community development as an approach should motivate the urban population to realize their problems and to participate in solving them.

Leadership and agents of change - methods of communication

The success of any rural programme does not depend only on the extent to which material resources are developed, but also on the growth in the skills of the workers and the involvement of the community as a whole. People's awareness of their problems and attempts at solution through self-help methods tend to modify attitudes with regard to resisting change, thus facilitating the full expansion of individual capacities. This can be attained through the development of mature and able local leadership. ^{1/}

In many African rural areas, particularly Rwanda and Burundi and parts of the Gold Coast, the churches appear to have developed the most effective local leadership through the organization of group recreation, educational and social welfare activities. In Uganda effective work has been carried out through men's and women's clubs. These clubs are used as child clinics, meeting places, and for literacy classes. Such clubs also provide agencies through which technical departments can carry out their extension activities.

Co-operative societies have also been organized with success in Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, the French Territories in West Africa and the Gold Coast for marketing agricultural crops such as cotton, coffee, maize, cocoa and dairy products.

In the French West African territories, an association called "Sociétés mutuelles de production rurale" (SMPR) offers a democratic method with the "extended family" for participating in the planning of economic and social development. The implementation of the community project is carried out on a self-help basis, even in respect to programmes of direct economic impact such as the modernization of agriculture through mechanical cultivation. This association is also training voluntary leaders for better community organization.

Another experiment of local leadership development is what is being accomplished through the agricultural councils in Liberia. These agricultural councils are people's organizations receiving technical advice from the Government, but depending on the people for financing their activities. Each community member pays a fee of fifty cents a month, and

^{1/} According to this concept of leadership, any member of the group is to some degree a leader in so far as he takes action and serves in group functions.

other funds are raised by special contribution. The activities of those councils include land surveying, distribution of improved poultry, establishment of plant nurseries for coffee seedlings, setting up garden clubs, conducting vocational training centres, and providing better community activities. These councils contributed towards the promotion of public interest, the integration of private efforts with government administration, in order to reinforce the activities of the technical departments on the basis of the people's wants.

Leadership, which is based on personal qualities such as objectivity, loyalty to the community, sincerity, power of persuasion, knowledge and high cultural standard, nobility of purpose, can play a very important part in the life of the community and can help towards desirable and direct cultural change. It can introduce modification in the life of the people of Africa and bring about the acceptance and institutionalization of these modifications as a part of a role. Modification of certain attitudes, habits and patterns are truly accepted and adopted by communities only when they have been introduced democratically, that is when the members of the community have been given the chance to discuss them freely and decide on their relative merits or demerits.

Problems of local leadership in rural Africa

Among the major problems of local leadership in rural Africa are the following:

(a) Leadership is an "ascribed" status rather than an achieved one

In many African communities, the social structure includes the way in which activities in all fields are organized and channelled in terms of the position of a limited number of people and the roles they carry out. Leadership, in such communities, is not based on personal qualities or democratic election, but rather determined by obligations to ancestral background and influence, sex, age, and traditional privileges. Such leadership is inherited, and community leaders abide with this cultural framework and transmit it to their children. Individual initiative is very limited and cultural change is very slow because it is centred around established ways rather than searching for innovations.

(b) Non-involvement of influential community members

In many African communities, there are individuals who influence public opinion but due to their "ascribed" status are not permitted to exercise an overt leadership function. They are willing to exercise their influence whenever they feel that an unwise decision has been taken. Their influence may lead to disharmony and community conflict if their opinions and real participation in community life is not considered.

(c) Lack of integration between the roles of appointed and elected leaders

Government officers such as the school teachers or extension officers may remain outside of all community life and activities except for their specific functions. Activities of other officers may give them the possibility of carrying out leadership functions in other areas and accordingly they may be able to integrate themselves in the community's social structure. They become an agent of change through dissemination of information and informal and formal meetings with the community members, aiming towards linking the community more directly with national life. Such outside leadership, if not wisely exercised may cause a severe conflict in opinions between the traditional ascribed status leadership and the progressive external leadership specially in terms of the speed rate of change. While the former leadership is aiming towards a very slow change in the cultural folkways and mores, the latter leaders are in favour of rapid change.

(d) Danger of quick cultural change

Any change to be introduced in the rural community should be consistent with the social structure of the community, otherwise it will cause an imbalance to the configuration of the culture. Since leaders introduce changes without this consideration many social and cultural disorganizations result. Many examples may be mentioned in this connexion such as the introduction of heavy agricultural machinery in an over-populated country with very few trained technicians to handle the machines or the quick emancipation of a country woman in an illiterate community. The problems resulting from undirected change may lead to the loss of confidence in their leaders. Local beliefs and values should not, therefore, be undermined without new ones to replace them which should be carefully integrated into the local culture.

National socio-economic integration

Most African countries suffer from the lack of an integrated national socio-economic policy. The activities of many of the nation building departments are unco-ordinated. Departmental policy integration is yet to be attained.

Community development may be considered as an important social instrument for securing such an integration. It helps to reorganize the activities of the local institutions making self-help activities fully effective, and providing the necessary channel of governmental service at all levels, from the local level to the national.

In some countries the local institutions are viewed with suspicion and fear. The agronomist is only seen as an official who fires the poor farmer for not following the instructions of the Ministry of Agriculture, concerning drainage, irrigation, or harvesting. He fails to follow instructions, not because of his obstinacy, but possibly due to his ignorance and the laziness of the district agronomist who does not explain the law and the factors involved. The same applies to the district health or veterinary specialist. The technicians are unaware of their functions and lack the capacity to co-ordinate their activities as a team with the local community. Through the methodology of community development they will co-operate with each other and direct relationships with the local people for meeting the most essential felt needs. Their work will be integrated with the National Development Plan. Rural programmes should be designed to enhance and support substantive programmes to ministries at the national level.

Community development is not in itself a substantive programme. It aims to secure co-ordination at all levels for combining the government's efforts with those of the people for the nation's prosperity. It should not duplicate other substantive efforts. It helps to eliminate departmental isolation and bureaucracy, and harnesses the enthusiasm and energy of the people for making government services more readily available at the local level.

If we consider freedom of speech, worship, from want and from fear as the four basic freedoms, community development may be considered as the fifth freedom because it gives the liberty of each individual to have a voice in the direction of the affairs of his community, enabling him to participate in securing co-ordination of socio-economic development at local as well as national level.

Rural settlement of migrants

A significant trend in many African countries is towards the conversion of the largest number of tenants and agricultural landless labourers into landowners.

The construction of the High Dam in Egypt is the largest investment for the period 1960-1970, both in terms of its amount and of its strategic significance. Apart from its value as a source of power and a means of flood control, this dam is the principal investment for providing the nation with the additional water resources needed to employ agricultural labour through a well planned settlement scheme. Through the utilization of the water of the High Dam, a total of 1,500,000 acres are to be added between the period 1965-1975 to the existing 6 million acres under irrigation. This represents an increase of twenty-five per cent. The scheme aims at permanent settlement on the reclaimed land, so as to guarantee an adequate level of productivity necessary to support a family on an average of five acres.

The Egyptian Authority for the Utilization and Development of the Newly Reclaimed Land (EAUDRL) is responsible for land utilization and settlement in the UAR. It has specific responsibility of improving soil fertility and productivity of the land. The Authority then distributes the land to the settlers and provides them with a number of community services designed to improve the rural communities aimed at accomplishing better standard of living for the farmers.

The first phase in the scheme is that of land reclamation, which includes construction of main roads, canals, drains, houses, levelling the land and improvement of the physical and chemical characteristics of the soil through the specific methods according to soil types. Upon completion of the reclamation stage, cultivation is carried out by migratory labourers. When the land reaches the marginal technological level, it is distributed to prospective settlers who are selected on the basis of prescribed qualifications from among the small cultivators in over-populated areas, as well as from amongst those who have previously occupied and cultivated the reclaimed areas. Before becoming full owners of the land, settlers must complete a probationary period of 3 years during which they are considered as tenants paying an annual rent. At the end of the probationary period, those who have remained in residence at the settlement sites and have proved to be good farmers participating in the Co-operative Society's activities and other community affairs are given priority in land ownership.

The village type of settlement is adopted. Farmers are settled in villages composed of 200 houses. The size of farm per family will have an average area of 5 feddans (acres), so that each village will incorporate an area of 1,000 acres. The settler's house consists of 2 rooms, a kitchen, a bathroom, a small stable and a yard. Drinking water and electricity will eventually be made available to each village. In addition, each settler is provided with a cow, the value of which is to be repaid over 5 years, and is encouraged to raise some poultry.

A multipurpose co-operative is established in each village, and membership in these societies is compulsory for all settlers. The main objective of the co-operative is to improve the economic and social situation of the members. In this respect its functions include increase of productivity and fertility of the soils, improvement of the quantity and quality of the produce, provision of short-term loans to members and distribution of production requisites such as farm animals, fertilizers, seeds, feed, pesticides and farm implements and machinery. Moreover, the co-operative society will undertake the marketing of the agricultural output of its members, the establishment of rural industries and other economic, social and cultural activities. Furthermore, the co-operatives are also responsible for the maintenance of the physical infrastructure (such as irrigation and drainage canals and water pumps, etc.). Upon

its establishment, each co-operative society is granted a loan from the EAUDRL of about L.E. 700-1,000 which is to be repaid interest free over 10 years. Settlers take a share of L.E. 1 per acre in the capital of the co-operative. Sources of income for the co-operative consist of the profits made on loans to settlers, charges for services, marketing of agricultural produce and other similar activities.

The Egyptian Authority for the Utilization and Development of the Reclaimed Land also assigned one or two agricultural school graduates plus two middle-level assistants to each co-operative and to assist in its management and administration, as well as to extend agricultural advice to settlers.

During the first year of settlement, the land is cultivated by the EAUDRL agricultural machinery and implements without any charge to the tenant settlers. In subsequent years, however, a charge is assessed and levied in accordance with the services rendered. Eventually such machinery becomes the property of the co-operative society established in each project area which in turn is sub-contracted to settlers. Water is supplied free of charge during the first year, while seeds and fertilizers are provided against a percentage of the crop equivalent to the value of such inputs. However, the collection of fees for agricultural inputs is adjusted in accordance with the quantity of crop yields. In years of crop failures collection does not take place.

The average income per farm during the first year of settlement is estimated to vary between L.E. 80 and L.E. 110 ^{1/} (labour cost is included which amounts to about L.E. 50-60 per year). It is contemplated that an overall increase of 20 per cent in farm income could be achieved during the first three years of cultivation. Full production is anticipated to be reached within seven years from the first year of settlement.

Successful settlers will have the right to land ownership after the three-year probationary period. In this case, they will have to pay approximately L.E. 1,600 over 40 years without interest. This amount covers the cost of land reclamation, housing and facilities, but it does not cover the cost of irrigation which is estimated to cost between L.E. 2 and L.E. 4 per acre per annum, depending on various circumstances and conditions.

In Libya the National Settlement Authority was established in 1963 as a government agency for land settlement. The Authority is undertaking the functions of agricultural settlement, the promotion and development of agriculture, increasing agricultural production and improvement of rural communities through (a) the development of farms, (b) the

^{1/} An Egyptian pound, L.E. is equivalent to \$2.25.

preparation of projects for agricultural settlement, (c) the transformation of wastelands into productive farms, (d) the encouragement of citizens to reclaim land, (e) and the supervision of the co-operative movement in the reclaimed areas.

In Sudan, the need arose to settle 50,000 inhabitants of Wadi Halfa who were affected by the building of the High Dam. The Government provided all required facilities for their migration to Khashm-el-Crirba area of 400,000 acres. Each farmer was given 15 acres. Since this area is a cotton area and the new settlers are not accustomed to its cultivation, an extension service programme commenced with the establishment of practical demonstrations and dissemination of agricultural knowledge. The Wadi Halfa people, although feeling bitter about leaving their old homes, become enthusiastic towards the new area. They were provided with good houses and adequate amenities.

The new settlers who settle on new African land encounter many social and economic problems, among which the following are to be mentioned:

(a) Isolation from other government agencies

Land settlement is being carried out by an autonomous body in most African countries in isolation from other national programmes. Land settlement is not sufficiently integrated within an overall plan for social and economic development.

(b) Fragmentation of holdings

Although the area given to each settled family is small, as is the case in the UAR, it is further divided into portions as a result of customary inheritance practices. This produces small economic holdings.

(c) The low fertility of the land

Sometimes the newly reclaimed soil lacks some of the major elements required for high fertility which would bring about remunerative returns, and these cannot be attained until some years after settlement.

(d) Inadequate credit and marketing facilities

In most reclaimed areas, credit is very hard to obtain and communication between the communities for marketing and other contact is often difficult.

(e) Failure to relate production to the type of land and marketing demands

Most of the new settlers are not acquainted with the agricultural products for which the new land is suited. Moreover,

they only know how to raise one or two of the traditional crops. In the absence of proper agricultural extension production is kept even lower.

(f) The changing political status of the tenant

The new owner was previously a tenant who used to receive orders. He now has rights. This requires an adjustment on his part before he is able to use his new property rights intelligently.

(g) The race between productivity and population

This is true particularly in the UAR where the rise in family income is often absorbed by the rapidly increasing size of the family.

(h) Political involvement

Agricultural labourers are usually too poor to be unduly concerned with political activities or to be able to express discontent or dissatisfaction. By contrast, political articulation of discontent is greater in a private land ownership community and the necessity for political and economic education seems to be justified.

(i) The heterogeneity of the settlers

Previously he was part of a homogeneous group, but presently he is a part of a heterogeneous group. He should adjust himself to the new social structure.

(j) Complete dependence on the government

Since the new settler is in a completely new environment, he is completely dependent on the government. It is this period of growth that can be utilized to educate the settler both to the social and economic necessities and his role in meeting some of their needs. He should assist in creating a harmonious new society by acknowledging the obligations and duties that arise.