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FROM THE VILLAGE TO THE GLOBAL ORDER ,

Elements in a Conceptual Framework for 'Another Development'^{1/}.

prepared by

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Introduction

At no previous juncture in history has mankind been more aware of the potential resources, scientific knowledge, technological capabilities and unprecedented opportunities available for the satisfaction of its needs, not only in narrow economic terms but in wider social and human terms. And yet, the strategies that are being pursued by industrialized and Third World nations alike seem to be leading to a dead-end, from the point of view of the national perspectives and the global order.

The process of economic growth as it has been unfolding in the past quarter century has multiplied the problems of both the industrialized and the Third World countries, as well as those of individuals within each group. Affluence and technological advancement have not resulted in the improvement of the quality of life for people in the industrialized countries' on the contrary, it has alienated them from their societies, polluted the environment, wasted resources and generated fear and uncertainty regarding their basic values. The inability to manage their economic systems and the frustrations of youth are the clearest manifestations that even in rich countries some fundamental changes are required. In the non-industrialized countries, not only have the larger masses who are poor grown poorer, but they are becoming increasingly unfulfilled and restive without access to the elementary necessities for life such as food, clothing, adequate housing, elementary health facilities and even safe drinking water. In both groups of countries the creativity and potential of people is unlimited, yet life lacks a fullness, resources continue to be misused and major social and political contradictions remain unresolved.

A number of conferences and studies within the United Nations system and in academic circles have analysed the nature of the problems that confront the world today and the magnitude of the development "crisis" in industrialized and Third World countries and its national and international dimensions. There is now a great deal of consensus on the causes of failure, even in its own terms, of the earlier development strategy and the depth and nature of the social and political problems that confront

industrialized and Third World countries which, if left unresolved, would lead to an even greater crisis by the year 2000. There is also an acceptance that causal factors for the crisis are to be found not merely in the Third World, but also in the industrialized countries and in the actual workings of the international system.

Despite this better understanding there is still an ambivalence among some theoreticians and practitioners who are still locked into the old framework of thinking and action and afraid to let go of concepts and paradigms developed in the past. Policies and solutions continue to be recommended and carried out which are marginal in character, in comparison with the magnitude of the problem that now confronts all mankind.

Leaders and élites in the Third World, as well as in industrialized countries, while voicing the need for rethinking and new approaches and sometimes even stating new objectives, are unable to respond meaningfully to the compulsions for change by initiating structural changes and new mobilization processes.

A fragmented bureaucracy and highly trained technocrats in Third World countries with "technical assistance" from the international community are continuing to try to make an outdated framework of development work "efficiently" without questioning its relevance or stopping to wonder whether "bureaucratic" and "technocratic" solutions would not by themselves only help to get to the wrong objectives faster. While the pronouncements of the World Bank recognize that structural changes are required to reach the poor, the operations of the Bank lay away from the social and political implications of this strategy and are confined to purely technocratic thrusts.

Many social scientists, including some in Third World countries, have a great deal to learn from "developed" countries and lend their support to the old framework of development and try to provide the intellectual justification for a kind of highly centralized technocratic planning. A great deal of the sophistication and refinement that is currently being exercised is proving to be a matter of trivia in the present context of human misery and lack of fulfillment in all countries, irrespective of whether they are rich or poor. The confusion in concepts and mishmash of theory that have resulted have further complicated the rethinking process.

The positive element in the picture, however, stems from the fact that there are elements both in industrialized and Third World countries that have gone further than questioning the old framework of development and marginally tinkering with it. They are providing powerful new ideas and elements in the conceptual framework of "another development". In 1975 the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation confronted the seventh Special Session of the General Assembly with a study entitled What Now: Another Development, which contained a critique of the old framework and elements of a new framework aimed at satisfying the fundamental needs of the masses of the Third World. In Africa sustained effort in the last few years by the United Nations Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) is being crystallized into alternative scenarios for self-reliant development in Africa. In Asia, four Asian scholars, working under the auspices of the United Nations Asian Development Institute (UNADI), have pointed to an alternative strategy for Asia in their study Towards a Theory of Rural Development, which is based on fundamental humanistic values and the mobilisation of the creative initiative of people for the all-round development of their lives. In Latin America, a team sponsored by the Bariloche Foundation has refuted the "limits of growth" thesis and propounded a "Latin American World Model". Within Europe several country studies are being conducted focusing on "another development" for these countries. Many individuals and other groups, working in relative isolation, are reinforcing these concepts and the guidelines for operationalising them. All this work, which is based not on a priori theorizing but on a study of the historical realities in these regions and countries now offers a viable alternative framework of development, which can influence and give direction to future efforts at nation-building and restructuring the global order.

This article deals mainly with the thinking of the Asian Team (see Annex I) and their understanding of the Asian reality, but elements in the framework may be more widely applicable.

Rethinking the old framework of development

Asia is predominantly a rural society. And yet, a quarter century ago, when the Asian countries emerged as politically independent nations from centuries of colonial rule, they adopted a development model which was indifferent if not inimical to rural development.

Support for this model, which essentially permitted continuation of existing international economic relationships, came from two external sources--the developed countries of the West and the developed centrally planned countries.^{1/}

The framework that has influenced the development process in the past quarter century assumed that there were "developed" countries and "developing" countries and that if the experience of the former, along with some resources, were transferred to the latter, the gap would be narrowed. The objectives and processes were viewed in economic terms and great reliance was placed on economic factors to achieve results. The framework assumed that rapid economic growth could take place if there was central planning and control of the economy as a "top-down" process, with emphasis on industrialization, modernization and urbanization. Capital, the factor in short supply, was conceived as the main input into the process. Internal capital accumulation would be assisted by inflows of foreign capital and technology. The cumulative benefits of this kind of growth in the modern sector were expected eventually either to "trickle down" automatically or at best be handed down in an administrative fashion to the large numbers who in Third World countries live predominantly in the rural areas. Material accumulation was expected to solve other human problems.

The widening gap between industrialized countries and Third World countries and the results of the "green revolution" in helping the rich get richer and making the poor poorer within Third World countries confirms the irrelevance of the framework and indicates the limitations of this narrow "techno-economic" view and approach to development, even in its own terms.

Apart from the model's irrelevance for Third World countries and its narrow orientation, the realities of the quantity and quality of foreign aid and transfer of technology to supplement indigenous capital, the factor in short supply, and weak internal mobilization efforts made the assumptions regarding possibilities of rapid growth in the model of little operational value. There is sufficient evidence from World Bank and other studies to confirm that, by any standards, neither the quantum of aid nor its quality nor the kind of technology transferred from industrialized to Third World countries were sufficient or appropriate. While there is general apathy towards aid in most industrialized countries today, there is also a growing body of opinion which supports the view that the earlier kind of aid-giving and technology transfer is a thing of the past and may have helped to

^{1/} Haque et al., Towards a Theory of Rural Development, Bangkok, United Nations Asian Development Institute, December 1975, p.1.

create "soft" societies and increase the dependence of Third World countries. Further, the transnational corporations, which control the stock of "modern" technology and which are still the main instruments for its transfer, extract high prices for their know-how and equipment, and the "borrowed", highly capital-intensive, import-substituting technology which is continuing to be implanted in Third World countries has little relation either to real factor endowment, particularly labour, or to the existing technological stock. The entire process is wasteful and the contradictions too numerous.

Throughout the 1960's and early 1970's some token attempts have been made to modify these narrow techno-economic notions of development and effect some reforms.

The reformists argued that a modified framework of economic development could still be made to work "efficiently" (a) if redistributive or social justice were built into the objectives, (b) if there were an element of popular participation in an essentially top-down planning process and (c) if the UN's New International Economic Order were to ensure a continuous process of transfer of an appropriate proportion of the income and technology from industrialized countries to Third World countries (see Figure 1).

The reformist position continues to be based essentially on conventional development thinking. Even with social justice built into it the development process is still considered as mainly an economic exercise, subject to allocation of scarce resources. Further, it assumes a conflict-free social framework for change. The myth of "one" world continues to pervade the climate of the New International Economic Order, with the assumption that it will result under existing conditions and structures in an orderly and continuous process of significant amounts of income and technology transfer from industrialized countries to the Third World. Underlying all this are further assumptions: that the problem of development is still mainly in the poor countries; and that a consistent set of "policy packages" based on technocratic considerations can be evolved, ranging from structural changes to investment decisions to employment opportunities, which can be carried out from "the top" with some participation by the people and the goodwill and assistance of "developed" countries and the international community.

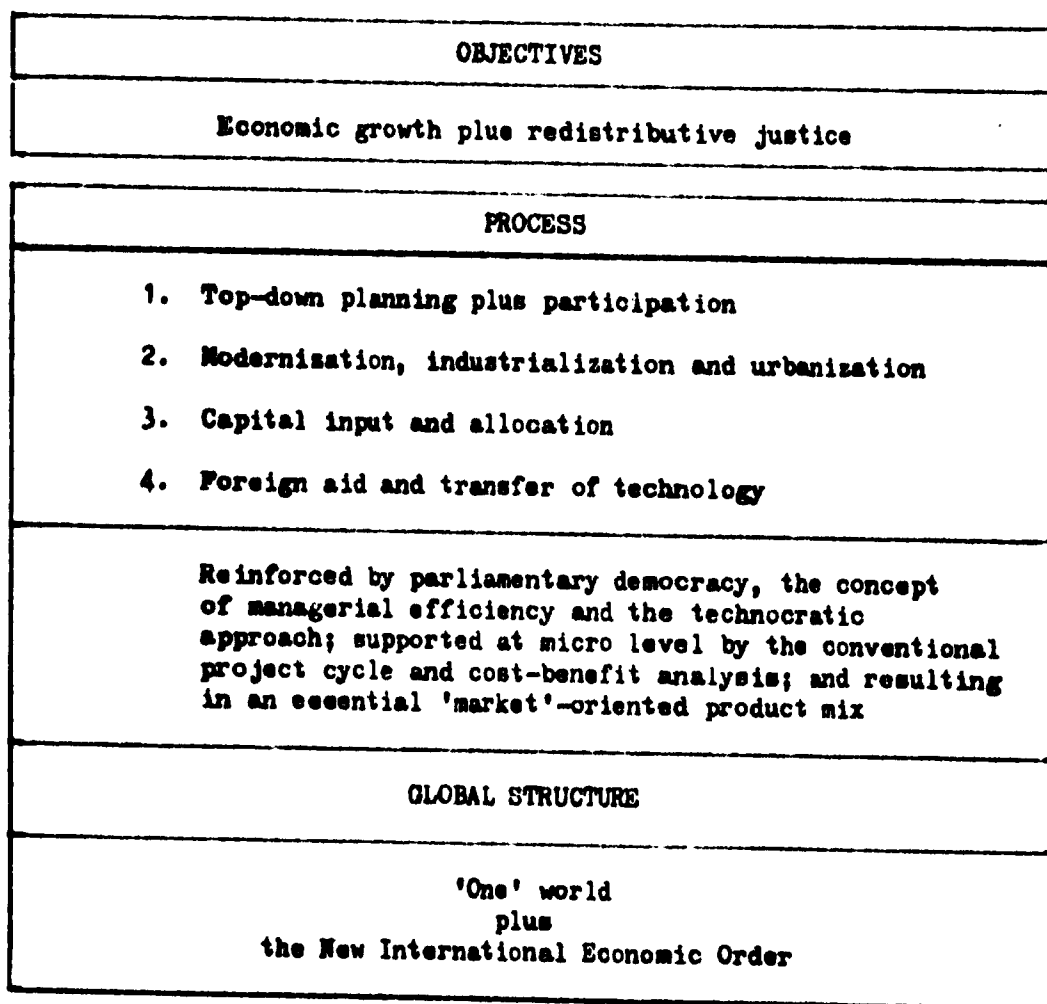


Figure 1 - The old framework of development and the reformist option

Towards "another development"—the macro framework

For the large numbers of people in the Third World nations, the driving forces for growth and change that pertain to the industrialized countries no longer offer a viable road to accumulation, let alone fulfilment in wider human terms. Therefore the compulsion to seek alternative driving forces is mounting.

The main contention of the approach that is outlined below is that people are the world's greatest asset. Bringing out their creativity and their potential is the means, as well as the end, of development. A strategy of development can only lead to a dead-end, irrespective of the present stage of affluence or otherwise. Hence, the conditions for social and economic progress are simply those which release the energies and creativity of the people and transform this creativity and motivation for work into the means of production. Reforms based on "distributive justice" alone are too weak a prescription to achieve this. In fact, bureaucratic redistribution can even thwart the initiative of the people.

There is increasing acceptance, albeit in differing degrees, across the intellectual and political spectrum on the following:

1. Development is fundamentally about human beings and they must participate in the decisions that affect them.
2. Development is now the concern of rich and poor countries alike and it has to be viewed in its totality.
3. The world's resource potential and technological capabilities are sufficient to meet the reasonable felt needs of men and women everywhere, if properly mobilized through the release of their creative energies.
4. Development is not an imitative exercise, borrowing a ready-made package, but an endogenous process which each country would need to operationalize in keeping with its own values, political systems and resource endowment.
5. A flexible global system can be evolved to supplement national efforts towards self-reliant development and be mutually reinforcing, but this would require structural changes at the global level as well and the initiation of a de-linking and re-linking process.

What this measure of increasing agreement implies is that, instead of prolonging the debate about whether the old framework can work and a priori theorizing in terms of the values and processes of the past, a new vision of development can be attempted on the basis of the actual historical experiences of rich and poor countries, the current realities and the future potential by those who are committed to "another development".

The new conceptual framework which is beginning to emerge on the basis of the above consensus not only responds to the new driving forces for change that are in evidence all over the world but also permits a linking of the critical interrelated phenomena affecting development everywhere. It also demonstrates that the response to these driving forces for change cannot come from ad hoc reform of the old framework of economic development, functioning more "efficiently" with distributive or social justice built into the process, and tinkering with the international framework, or merely by covering old processes with new objectives. It requires a redefinition of the philosophy and objectives of development in human terms, structural shifts and a total mobilization effort suitable to the ecological and technological reality, as well as the potential. Redistributive justice is simply not the issue. The new framework must reflect an integration of available knowledge and a sense of purpose which go beyond the narrow view of development in the old framework.

Country-specific submodels would evolve when attempting to operationalize the new framework. An overview consisting of a new set of broad objectives and a new process is, however, a necessary precondition if the submodels themselves are to be relevant and operationally valid. A supportive international dimension, on new terms and with new institutions, would also have to evolve in the proper sequence. It would not be a mere quantitative extension of existing international economic relations, such as the New International Economic Order, which may lock Third World countries into the very system from which they should initially de-link, but would be one which emerges naturally as the new process of national development is set in motion.

The elements to be included in a macro framework are set out in Figure 2.

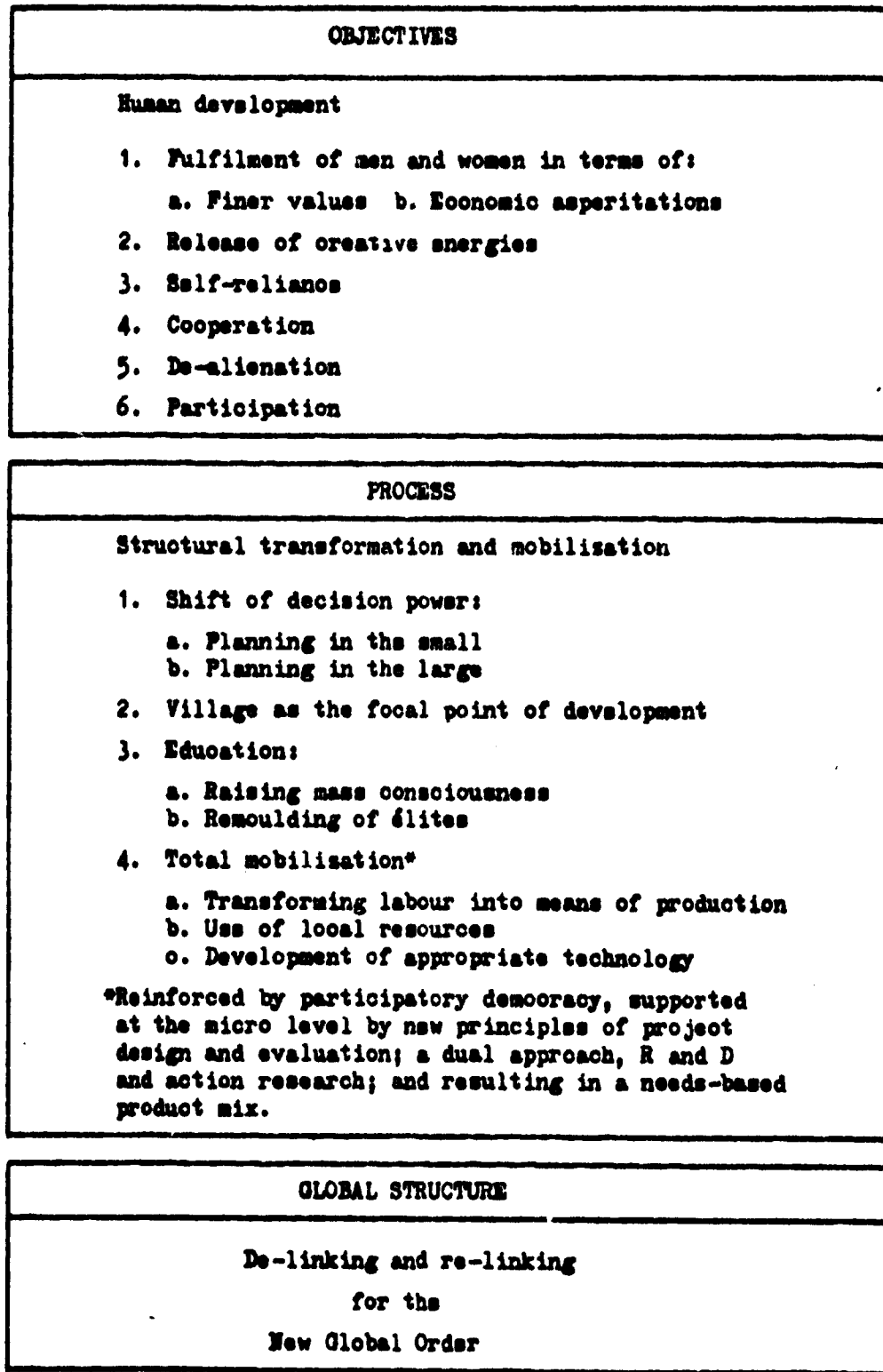


Figure 2 - The macro framework for 'another development'

New objectives

The main objectives of an alternative approach to development can be briefly summarized. The main objective is human development. The strategy seeks the total fulfilment of human beings both in relation to finer values as well as to their economic aspirations. All this is to be achieved primarily through the release of their creative energies.

People must be liberated themselves and must feel at home with whatever process is initiated, which must progressively satisfy their needs, and they must participate in decisions that affect them.

Self-reliance and the development of the collective personality of men and women is naturally a basic element of this new strategy, which is characterized by the innovative genius of the people in shaping their development. It is an expression of their faith in their own abilities. This implies the elimination of "dependency" relationships, irrespective of whether they are of a national or international character, and development through a country's own efforts, recognizing the value of mutual assistance. Self-reliance is not to be confused with a narrow concept of self-sufficiency or autarky and elements of necessary interdependence can be expected to flow from the process as it unfolds.

A new process

To achieve these objectives, the conditions for social and economic progress are simply those which release the energies and creativity of the people and mobilize these for the all-round development of their lives.

A social transformation of enormous magnitude has to be envisaged. In Third World countries the crucial structural changes relate to a shift of decision-making power towards the poor by initiating a "bottom-up" process, the village becoming the focal point of development, and a change in the education system redirecting it towards raising mass consciousness and remoulding élites. There is in the light of this no easy way to bring about the structural changes required, which themselves have to be supported by an integrated process of total mobilization, involving raising people's consciousness and the inculcation of democratic values, the transformation of labour power into the means of production, the fullest utilization of local natural resources and the systematic development of appropriate technology. But for most countries

this process of mobilization is also the only viable method of accumulation that leads to faster economic growth. There is now sufficient historical validity for this process of mobilization. Further, this process of mobilization flows from the consensus relating to development that is now emerging and can be consonant with the objectives stated above. Industrialized countries would also need to make structural adjustments not only to permit self-reliant development in Third World countries, but also in their own interest.

Further elaboration on these key elements of the mobilization process in Third World countries is in order.

1. For this process of mobilization to be effective it implies raising mass consciousness, a committed leadership that trusts the people, participatory democracy, decentralization of decision-making and a continuous self-correcting mechanism which the people themselves will devise. This is the essence of a democratic ideal. Except for those decisions which involve the vision of the society and matters relating to the larger issues of social transformation, all other decisions of a detailed nature can be taken by direct involvement of those affected. This implies a system which differentiates between the larger issues of planning that can meaningfully harness the potential energies of the people and give shape to their initiatives and those of a smaller, detailed nature.
2. Transformation of labour into the means of production cannot be achieved by the mere offering of employment contracts. People have to be stimulated to work through collective participation in production. The capital fetishism of the past must give way to the fullest utilization of labour power and creativity.
3. Local resources would not be allocated and distributed through the dictates of the "market mechanism", but in response to the satisfaction of the felt needs of the people which become "effective demand" as a result of new institutional changes. This implies a new product mix and the satisfaction of local needs as far as possible by optimal use of local resources, with gaps being filled by surpluses exchanged first with neighbouring areas, thereafter with more distant areas and so on. Every blade of grass should be looked at as a possible food item, a raw material for industry or an import substitute.
4. The technology involved would not be an outright transplantation from other environments, but one which integrates human development with

available local resources. In other words, the strategy of technological choice would be related to the basic social philosophy and the resource position. While the process would start from the existing level of knowledge and improve upon it, sophisticated technology would also be used and would reinforce the linkage between the two to achieve the objectives. The flow would not be in one direction only; rich countries would also borrow appropriate technology from poor countries on equitable terms. The technology used should be non-alienating in that the appropriate technology makes for the greater dignity of man. "Experts" should go to the village and learn from the people.

The pursuance of such a strategy has far-reaching implications for the basic values and the life styles of the people in all societies, both industrialized and in the Third World. It may be necessary for the countries to go through a period of shared austerity, if this is required for the ultimate good, until such time as the new process is under way. In a fundamental sense, it also calls for the re-designing of institutions and processes, their value and premises and the goals set. Efforts towards self-reliant development, as the key orientation for the new strategy, would require articulation of the felt needs of development by the people themselves, and a corresponding reorientation in the international relations system with a view to encouraging societies towards collective self-reliance, whenever feasible, in order that a lead may be provided in support of a new global order.

Development should be looked at as a total process. The technocratic approach which has influenced thinking and action for the past quarter century has fragmented the process into narrow specializations. A re-examination in terms of a total approach is long overdue, and on its basis the process would respond to the needs of the times. Transforming growth- and consumption-oriented societies into humanistic and self-reliant elements in a global community of nations would demand bold and imaginative steps, commitment and participation by all concerned. The overall framework identified above should be viewed as a perspective, but one well within the realm of possible achievement.

Micro-level development: principles of project design and evaluation

The old framework of development was supported at the micro level by the conventional technocratic approach to project development and evaluation, which is known as "cost-benefit" analysis. In spite of their minor variations,

the OECD Manual, the UNIDO guidelines, IERD's approach etc. have fundamentally the same assumptions. The limitations of the approach, which has generated a vast literature, are both fundamental as well as technical. As the approach failed to deliver results, many variations have been attempted, but these variations are proving to be a matter of triviality in the wider context of development as conceived in the macro framework outlined above. Recent evaluations of the "new style" integrated rural development projects of the World Bank, using this conventional micro-level methodology for project development, indicate that a technocratically evolved package aimed at a "target group", identified as the rural poor, even with a little better coordination of bureaucratic procedures and some attempt at consultation with the target group, does not in itself ensure that the economic benefits reach the poor, let alone result in development in wider human terms. As long as the basic economic and social institutions in the village are controlled by the rich, a mere physical separation of the poor from the rich does not safeguard the interests of the former against the manipulations of the latter. A purely technocratic thrust cannot bring about the desired changes and a different process of development would be required at the micro level as well, if the ills of the earlier efforts are to be avoided.

Typically, Asian villages do not represent homogeneous economic and social entities. The relationships have a "prism" effect, as it were, which distorts any purely technical thrust, because the unequal social and political relationships tend to reproduce themselves. Without first understanding the basic contradictions in society—the dominance/dependence relationships, the power of the dominant to bring about a crisis of immediate survival for the poor, the divisions among the poor themselves, the inhibitions of the poor from taking economic, social, political initiatives for improving their lives, etc.—no feasible strategy can be formulated. This is the very first step in project designing.

Project design

Basically, under these conditions any strategy to reach the rural poor or any other oppressed group has to begin by bringing about unity among the poor. Unity among the poor and a spirit of cooperation cannot be legislated into being. Disunity among the poor arises from asymmetrical dependency relationships that tie the poor individually to the rich; this then generates dependency attitudes and a vicious circle is initiated with disunity built into

it. Under these circumstances, before the poor can benefit, their dependency on the rich has to be reduced, by giving them independent standing power in a conflict-ridden social environment.

The question then is how to break out of this vicious circle and this is where "another" approach to project designing and evaluation itself is necessary. The project should be looked at in terms of an interrelated and varied set of activities which are undertaken in stages. The first stage or the initial activity is that which begins to unite the target group or a part of it and to set a positive spiral of activities in motion. It is becoming increasingly clear that a positive interaction among people can be generated and sustained. The steps towards this end are as follows:

1. Separate out the target group.
2. Work on their minds to actuate cooperative values.
3. Initiate cooperative activity among the target group or a subsector of the group (e.g. a women's group or a youth group) starting with a non-confrontational activity.
4. As the cooperative base of the activity makes progress, further activities have to be initiated to promote positive values in the minds of the target group.

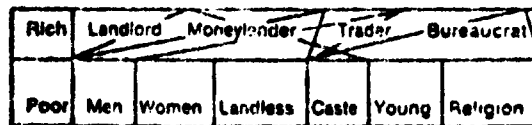
Together, the above steps constitute a movement towards the creation of a self-reliant base for the target group and a process which permits it to de-link from economic and psychological dependence, thereby building on its own creativity and self-reliance. Projects must evolve in this carefully staged manner and subsequent stages must be built on the collective experience of the previous stages. They cannot be formulated in a ready-made package, anticipating all the stages and assuming that all stages will proceed according to a preconceived technical plan designed from the "top" without involvement and understanding of the target group. (See Figure 3.)

By way of example, in Papua New Guinea, taking advantage of a government policy permitting those working with government to take one year's leave on half pay to work in their villages, a Health Ministry technician returned to his village and began exploring the possibility of getting the people to help themselves. Focusing on bowel diseases and malnutrition, which appeared to be of major concern to the people, he set in motion a process of discussion among them in the traditional village forum to analyse the causes and find solutions. First it was found that, despite having wells, the water was

AN APPROACH TO MICRO-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT

Principles of Rural Project Design and Evaluation: A

1 Understanding the contradiction tree



2 Training of committed village cadres for initiating (and multiplication) of activities

3 Building organizations of the poor



4 Strengthening critical institutions

- a Village forum assembly
- b Village organizations: women's groups, youth groups, landless labour etc.
- c Village fund

Figure 3 - Project designing

polluted because the wells were not banded or covered. Once people got together and banded the wells to resolve this problem, it was possible to get them to agree to collect rain water for the same purpose. This led to the harnessing by simple technology of a tank which was located six miles away to ensure a permanent water supply for drinking as well as to provide irrigation facilities for village agriculture. This then led to increased food cultivation and livestock breeding with consequent improvement of income, nutrition, elimination of bowel diseases, environmental sanitation and what was most important, reinforcement of the community spirit which was an integral part of the Papua New Guinea culture. Such examples of rural mobilization using an initiator and village institutions, whereby the perceptions of the people are enhanced through discussion, can be found in all countries in Asia.

In Bangladesh the second Independence had generated an urge for self-reliance among the youth. A young medical doctor practising abroad returned to the country and set up a medical camp to treat the wounded freedom fighters. After the war, along with a small team, he moved his camp to a village and started a People's Health Centre with field clinics. This was a point of first contact with the villagers. A feature of the centre was its cooperative character and the contribution of the rural poor towards the cost of health administration for the village. As the centre expanded it attracted a large number of young men and women who volunteered to work alongside the young doctor, as paramedics. These paramedics were trained in an unelitist and unbureaucratic, field-oriented style of operation under the guidance of the doctor. They learnt a little environmental sanitation, primary health care, family planning, etc. The paramedic girls started visiting the homes of the villagers, interacting with the housewives and discussing a wide variety of issues, not only those technical matters on which they had been trained, but also other aspects of community development. The young women paramedics were able gradually to bring the women of this Muslim village, who being in purdah had led relatively sheltered, confined lives, to practise simple methods of primary health care, and family planning, which was a sensitive area embedded with deep-seated prejudices, and also to participate in a variety of community activities. The project is moving ahead as a viable venture. This illustrates a case of the mobilization of rural women. The process started with the provision of simple health services and

stirred up the village society—a step in the process of releasing the creativity of women—and finally integrated itself with a community development programme.

A third illustration serves to demonstrate not only that this kind of mobilization is possible under a variety of conditions, but also that it provides a viable alternative to conventional approaches. In Sri Lanka in a district in the "dry" zone (still so designated as it was in colonial times, despite having nearly sixty inches of rainfall per year), cattle owned in small numbers by individual villagers were an untapped and in a sense also wasting resource. The cattle merely grazed on village pastures and when a villager needed some money he simply sold one of his head of cattle to the butcher for cash. A concerned government official saw in the cattle a possible source of additional income for the villagers. The official initiated discussions with the government-owned milk-marketing authorities for the establishment of a chilling plant in the vicinity for the storage of milk, collected from the villagers, prior to transmission to a factory for pasteurizing, homogenizing and also processing into other forms of milk items, to be marketed mainly in the urban areas. In other words, as a result of the establishment of the chilling plant, which incidentally would have had to be imported on the basis of a foreign loan, the villagers would have got some small additional income, but the milk itself would have gone to feed persons in urban areas who could afford to buy the expensively processed milk.

At the same time, a recent health survey indicated that these same villagers, particularly the children, were suffering from malnutrition and bowel diseases. A suggestion had been made to the concerned official that this was a situation that was ideal for an alternative method of mobilization, with the people participating in making the decisions relating to the use of the resource, rather than following a decision taken at the "top" by the officials themselves. Initial discussions with groups of villagers revealed that there was a preference for their children to consume part of the milk to improve their nutrition, as well as to convert part of it into yoghurt, a traditional method for countering bowel diseases. Any surplus milk over and above that used for this purpose could of course be sold to the modern factory to generate some additional cash income. This perception by the people is in its initial stages, but one can see how a process started this way, supported by improvement of the cattle stock through better veterinary facilities and fodder provided from rice chaff which is plentiful in the area, could not only

upgrade the wasting resource that the cattle were earlier, but also lead to the making of clay pots, mainly by the women in the village, for setting and selling the yoghurt and so on. As the health of the people improved, one could envisage the harnessing of the full creative potential of the people for a variety of other tasks that they would find fulfilling, using available local resources to the fullest. This village is located in an area where King Parakramabahu in the twelfth century stated his once famous but now nearly forgotten dictum that no drop of rain water should be allowed to flow into the sea without in some way benefiting the people--the concept of total mobilization is indeed not a modern invention.

Project evaluation

For the process to evolve and the spiral to be sustained until it can reach the stage of providing a self-reliant base for development, continuous summing-up of experience from stage to stage, as each stage is unfolding, is required. This, then, is evaluation, which needs to be undertaken by those involved, although an external evaluation is not precluded. The latter, however, may assume secondary importance to the evaluation by those affected by the process itself. Evaluation is a part of the internal dynamics of the project and not merely something carried on from the outside on the theory that someone does the planning, others the implementation and still a third group does the evaluation. In the view being expounded design and evaluation are two sides of the same coin. These are the fundamental objectives, and the continuous assessment of progress from the standpoint of these objectives by vigilant forums of the target group itself will ensure that the development effort is not sabotaged by vested interests.

The internal evaluation requires that the target group itself should understand the experience, i.e. that there is improvement in a range of values it sets for itself and that there is motivation for further action.

The values of criteria to be used as a focal point for such evaluation purposes are not narrowly quantifiable economic ones and cannot be laid down externally in a prescriptive manner. However, a number of values can be generally perceived as being of strategic importance for the realization of a rural development project. In the first instance they need to be separately stated and measured, though not necessarily quantified in respect of every value in the conventional sense. (See Figure A.)

AN APPROACH TO RURAL -LEVEL DEVELOPMENT

Principles of Rural Project Design and Evaluation: B

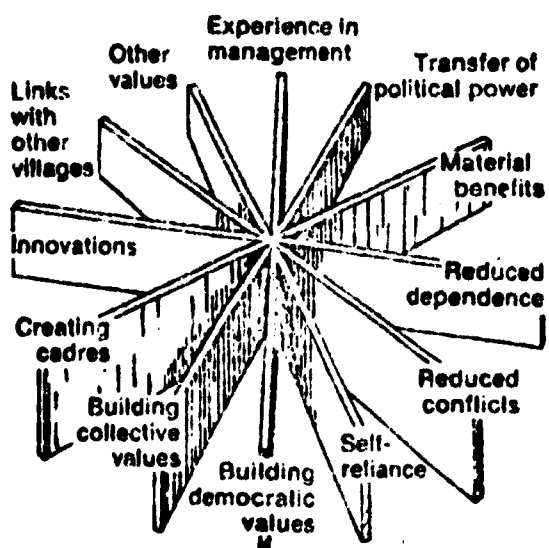


Figure 4 - Illustrative criteria for project evaluation

The participants themselves must choose the specific values or criteria they wish to apply for a particular phase of the project, keeping in mind the fundamental objective of evaluation, which is to bring about qualitative change in overall social relations, going beyond the incremental changes in any particular value.

To arrive at a final judgement the values may be broadly grouped under the headings of (a) economic benefit, (b) attitudinal changes, and (c) experience in management and forward momentum. All the values are important and mutually reinforcing. There is no question of a linear trade-off between them and the use of quantitative weights for aggregating them in terms of a single indicator of progress. Some criteria may have priority over others in a particular stage of development, but there must be significant and simultaneous progress in respect of each of them for balanced development of the project.

A basic question that may be asked, however, is whether as a result of the progress being made in several of the values a change is taking place in the social consciousness of the target group. By social consciousness is implied the ability of the target group to understand the degree to which they are being exploited, the extent of their psychological and material dependence and their ability to assert their rights and bring out their potentials. From social-consciousness raising, progress towards changing social relations and enhancing the political power of the target group should be evaluated. This is the final criterion.

The evaluation of progress for the stage under review in terms of different values and the final criteria may be presented visually as shown in Figure 5. Progress made in terms of the criteria represented in the smallest circle are to be viewed within the framework provided by the two upper bands of progressively larger circles representing social consciousness and political power respectively.

In conclusion

The strategy outlined above is neither abstract nor new. It is a reflection of an observable reality. In some countries it is already being operationalized as part of macro-national policy. In many others, where the bankruptcy of old policies has become manifestly obvious, compulsions

AN APPROACH TO MICRO-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT

Principles of Rural Project Design and Evaluation: C

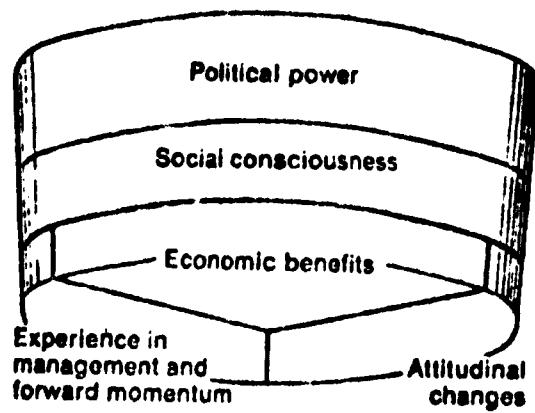


Figure 5 - The performance badge

for change in this direction are beginning to emerge, and this strategy offers a real option. The decisive moment has arrived to break out of the old framework and move into another development, to realize the real possibility of progress, both in material and human terms, through a release of the creative energies of the people.

The framework that has been presented would require continuous refinement, and country-specific submodels, as has been stated earlier, would need to be evolved when attempting to operationalize it. This requires not only new institutions, but also new kinds of information, research methodologies and educational approaches. Those who are working on this need also to be systematically linked both as individuals and groups in order that the interchange of their respective experiences and understandings would help to articulate the necessary global framework in support of another development at all levels, which however, must start at the level of the people in their largest numbers.

The background to the Asian Team Study

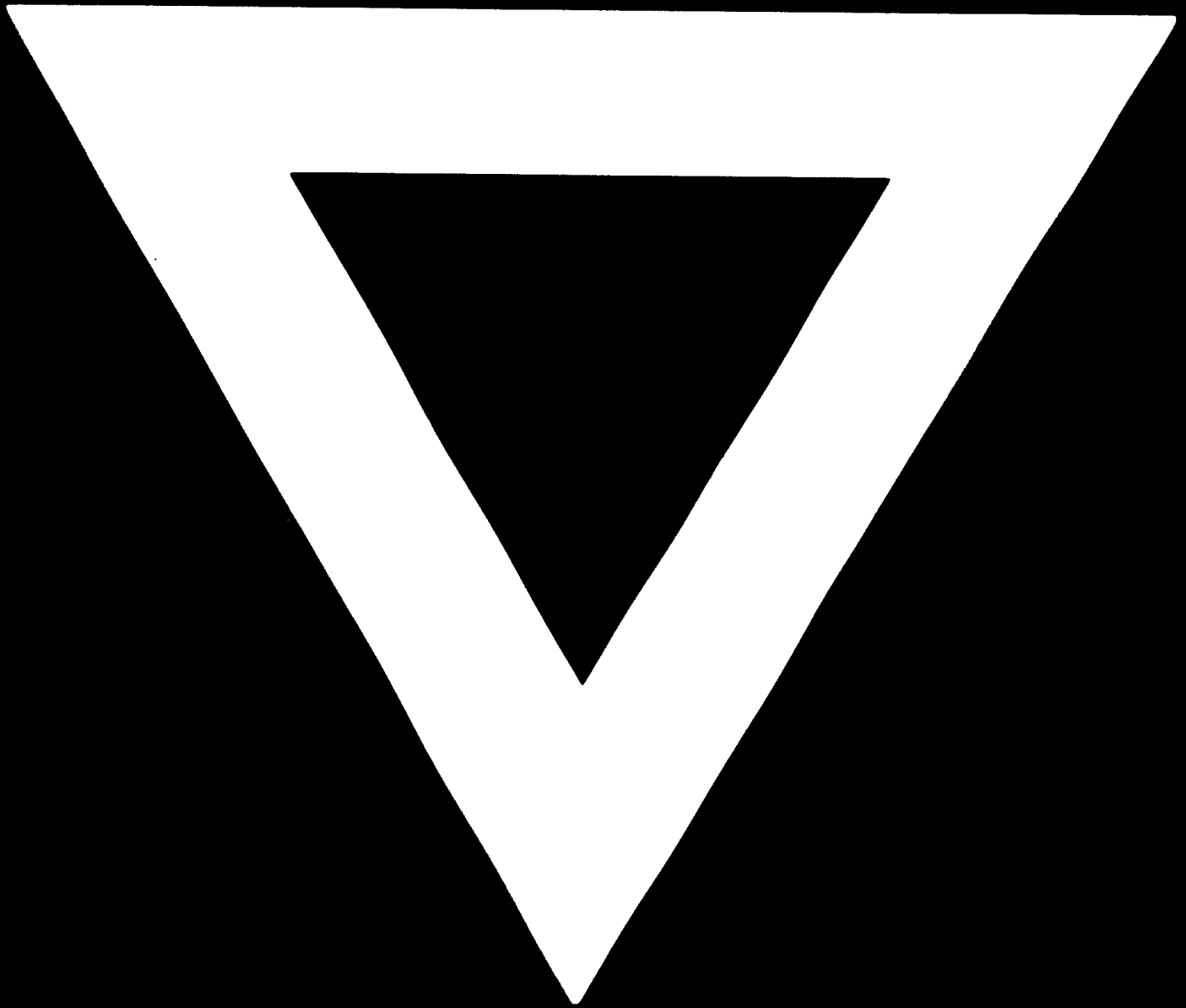
The United Nations Asian Development Institute (UNADI) convened an Expert Group meeting in 1974 which helped to clarify the differences between those who felt that the existing methodologies could be expanded to include the particularistic features of rural development and others who felt that a fundamentally different framework was needed, beginning with the definition and objectives of development itself, in view of the accumulating positive and negative experience of the post-war decades.

Following the Expert Group meeting, UNADI in 1975 requested four Asian scholars who were of the latter viewpoint to form a study team and initiate work on an alternative strategy of rural development. The team attempted a broad analysis of Asian development experience and indicated a direction of rural development theory. Derived from actual experience of several Asian countries, the broad construct of this theory sought to explain the long-run direction and goals of the development effort and the mobilization process involved.

Continuing the work in 1976 the study team reverted to the investigation of the basic unit—the village—in order to gain insights in evolving principles of project design and evaluation in consonance with the concepts developed in the previous work. Further refinements to the micro framework are being undertaken in 1977.



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