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THE ROLE AND RELEVANCE OF NON-GOVERNMENT AID:

A CASE STUDY OF KENYA

VOLUME I

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THE ROLE AND RELEVANCE OF NON-GOVERNMENT AID : A CASE
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Summary

How effective are non-government organisations (NGOs) in their response to Third World poverty? That is the question which this thesis examines.

The thesis begins with an overview of the problems facing Third World communities, and notes the way in which people in Britain have responded through NGOs.

A second part of the thesis sets out the issues on which the analysis of NGOs has been made. These are :

- the ways in which NGOs analyse the process of development;
- the use of 'improving nutrition' and 'promoting self-reliance' as special objectives by NGOs; and
- the nature of rural change, and the implications for NGOs as agents of rural development.

Kenya is taken as a case study. Firstly the political and economic structure of the country is studied, and the natures of development, nutritional problems and self-reliance in the Kenyan context are noted. The study then focusses attention onto Kitui District, an area of Kenya which at the time of the study was suffering from drought. However, it is argued that the problems of Kitui District and the constraints to change there are as much a consequence of Kenya's structural underdevelopment as of reduced rainfall. Against this background the programmes of some British NGOs in the country are examined, and it is concluded that much of their work has little relevance to the principal problems which have been identified.

A final part of the thesis takes a wider look at the policies and practices of NGOs. Issues such as the choice of countries in which NGOs work, how they are represented overseas, and their educational role in Britain are considered. It is concluded that while all NGOs have a concern for the conditions in which the poorest communities of the Third World live, many NGOs take a quite narrow view of development problems, giving only little recognition to the international and intranational political and economic systems which contribute to Third World poverty.

Key words: Aid; Development; Kenya; Voluntary; Organisations.

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PREFACE

(1) ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has been a purpose of this study to bring together ideas from many different people and sources, and hence thanks are due to many more people than it is possible to mention here.

However, particular thanks must go to two people - Professor William Gutteridge, Professor of International Studies at Aston University, who has been the principal supervisor of the work, and without whose encouragement the study would never have been completed, and Iain Macdonald, formerly International Director of War on Want who conceived the project and contributed many of the main ideas.

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The fieldwork stages of the project were made possible by the Kenya Freedom from Hunger Council and the Tanzania Community Development Trust Fund. Many other non-government organisations in both East Africa and Britain have given much assistance. Unfortunately this thesis, in places, makes criticisms of their work : these criticisms, however, are only made out of a shared concern for the Third World poor and out of a respect for the sincerity of these organisations in their efforts.

During the study many other people have given advice, but it is perhaps appropriate to acknowledge the contribution through their writings made by Colin Leys (on underdevelopment in Kenya), Jorge Lissner (on non-government organisations), Philip Mbithi and Gideon Mutiso (both on rural sociology and development in Kenya).

However, although this thesis has drawn heavily on the work and advice of other people, responsibility for the views expressed and the conclusions reached remains my own.

Finally, thanks are due to Mrs. Gwen Saunders who has efficiently typed the final work.

(ii) Some notes on the research

The research has been carried out under the auspices of the Interdisciplinary Higher Degrees (IHD) Scheme of Aston University in Birmingham. This Scheme permits the collaboration of "sponsoring" organisations with the University on research into matters of concern to the organisations. In the case of this project, the "sponsor" was the non-government aid agency, War on Want.

Most of the study was conducted through desk research supplemented by conversations with other researchers and development workers.

During the study two periods were spent in East Africa - four weeks in November/December 1974 and December 1975 to June 1976. About half of each visit was spent in each of Kenya and Tanzania because at that time a comparative study of the possible roles for NGO aid in these countries was being contemplated. This plan, however, was abandoned as being over-ambitious given the time constraints, and the study concentrated attention on Kenya on which more relevant information was available.

Full-time research work came to an end in September 1976. Since that time, however, a number of new thoughts have been included in the thesis through my involvement with non-government aid organisations as a practitioner rather than as a researcher. The work load imposed by this involvement has inevitably delayed the production of this thesis, but it has no doubt strengthened it through its being based on a wider range of sources and experiences.

(iii) Notes on the thesis

Volume I of the thesis contains 15 chapters, grouped into parts as follows :

Part		Chapters
I	Introduction	1
II	The theoretical issues	2-5
III	Kenya : A case study	
	A. Kenya : a country study	6-8
	B. Kitui : a district study	9-10
	C. NGOs in Kenya	11
	D. Observations and conclusion from the case study	12
IV	General comments and conclusions	13-15

Major sections within chapters are numbered using a decimal notation, e.g. section 2.3 is the third section of chapter 2.

Footnotes : These are listed at the end of chapters, and vary from notes on sources of information to more extensive comments which have not been included in the main text so as not to digress from the central arguments. References to footnotes are indicated by the symbol '**' : thus '**3' refers to the third footnote of the appropriate chapter.

References : A list of references is given at the end of volume I. Reference is made to this list by a single asterisk : thus (*Leys, p.16) or Leys (*, p.16) refers to page 16 of the listed book or paper by Leys, and (*Hunt (2)) or Hunt (*(2)) refers to the second listed paper by Hunt.

Volume II of the thesis contains appendices which report on sub-studies which are ancilliary to the main thesis.

In a thesis such as this, problems arise in defining terms such as 'development' and the 'Third World'. Here the terms are used as a convenient shorthand either when the meaning is clear from the text, or when no great precision of definition is required. 'Underdevelopment' is only used when referring to the types of models in which this concept is defined (see section 2.3).

(iv) Non-standard abbreviations used

AID	Action in Distress
BVP	British Volunteer Programme
C.2b (etc.)	A constraint to change (see Section 5.3)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DEC	Disasters Emergency Committee
G of K	Government of Kenya
IDS Nairobi	Institute of Development Studies, Nairobi University
KFFHC	Kenya Freedom from Hunger Council for National Development
KNGO	Kenyan non-government organisation
KRCS	Kenya Red Cross Society
KVDA	Kenya Voluntary Development Association
LBC	Limuru Boys' Centre
NCCK	National Christian Council of Kenya
NGO	Non-government organisation (see Section 1.2)
ODA	Overseas Development Administration (formerly ODM - see below)
ODM	Ministry of Overseas Development (of British Government)
PCM	Protein-calorie malnutrition
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SRDC	Samburu Rural Development Centre
SWOW	Scottish War on Want
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WDM	World Development Movement

PART I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

NGOs : A NON-GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSE TO THIRD WORLD NEEDS

"...some 800 million individuals continue to be trapped in what I have termed absolute poverty : a condition of life so characterised by malnutrition, illiteracy, disease, squalid surroundings, high infant mortality, and low life expectancy as to be beneath any reasonable definition of human decency." (*World Bank (2))

So wrote Robert MacNamara, Director of the World Bank, in 1978. How have people in Britain responded to this situation ?

Non-government aid from Britain began through missionary activity in the days when Britain was an imperial power, but it is mainly in the last thirty years, when most of the poor of Africa and Asia have achieved constitutional independence, when Britain's influence in world affairs has diminished, and when there is greater understanding of Third World problems, that the 'aid business' has been established.

This introductory chapter takes a first look at the field of research - the poverty of the Third World, and the response in Britain through NGOs.

Contents :

- 1.1 The magnitude of the problem
- 1.2 Non-government organisations (NGOs)
- 1.3 NGOs : their historical background
- 1.4 The nature of support for NGOs
- 1.5 NGOs and government aid programmes
- 1.6 Some comments, questions and notes on the thesis

Related appendix :

- I Sketches of some British NGOs

1. SETTING THE SCENE

1.1. The Magnitude of Third World problems

It is likely that more than 460 million people, about half of them young children are suffering from a severe degree of protein-energy malnutrition (*ILO (2), p.20). In 1975 it was estimated that 28% of the population of Africa, 36% of the population of Asia and 11% of that of Latin America had incomes of less than US\$50 p.a., being about 640 million people in all (*World Bank (1), p.4). Moreover, in the developing countries (excluding China) in 1975 there were an estimated 283 million people, which is about 40% of the labour force of these countries, unemployed or under-employed (*ILO (2), p.18). And the situation is not improving: "More people suffer from hunger, pain and exposure in 1969 than they did at the end of the Second World War, not only numerically, but also as a percentage of the world population" (Illich, p.136) (see also the GNP growth figures in (a) below).

These statistics are difficult for the people of the developed countries to understand - they represent poverty and destitution on a scale and of a degree which is hard for a person in Britain to imagine. The absolute measurement of poverty may not be precise (*Ahluwalia, pp.4,5) and inter-country comparisons may have their difficulties, but nevertheless, the statistics show a huge gulf between the standards of life in the developed and under-developed worlds.

For example :

(a) GNP in 1976

	Per capita GNP US\$	Growth 1960-76 % p.a.
Low income countries (34 countries, total population 1216 million)	150	0.9%
Middle-income countries (58 countries, total population 895 million)	750	2.8%
Industrialised countries (19 countries of West Europe, North America, Australasia, and S. Africa, total population 684 million)	6,200	3.4%

(Figures exclude "centrally planned economies" including China and USSR, and three major OPEC countries - see **1) (*World Bank (2), pp.76,77).

(b) Nutrition (1977)

	Calories per cap. per day	Protein gms. per cap. per day
United Kingdom	3345	91.3
India	1912	57.8
Tanzania	1999	46.3
Guatemala	1993	52.8

(*Oxfam (1))

(c) Infant Mortality (1975)

	Deaths before 1 year per 1000 live births
Low-income countries	122
Middle-income countries	46
Industrialised countries	15

(*World Bank (2), pp.108,109)

(d) Health Services (1974)

	Population per nursing person
Low income countries	6,710
Middle-income countries	1,570
Industrialised countries	230

(*World Bank (2), pp.108,109)

(e) Literacy (1974)

	Adult literacy rate
Low income countries	23 %
Middle-income countries	63 %
Industrialised countries	99 %

(*World Bank (2), pp.110,111)

The above figures do not even show the full picture as they hide the inequality within the developing countries themselves. Data compiled by Ahluwalia (* pp.8,9) shows that the high levels of inequality are more common in the poorer countries than in the rich (e.g. in many Third World countries 40% of the population earn less than 10% of the total income, while in UK, the lowest 40% earn 18.8%, and 19.7% in USA). In many cases the economic structures of the colonial era - small, affluent, middle-class elites in populations living in dire poverty - have not disappeared with the attainment of political independence.

Similarly, country averages for nutrition and health data hide large variations within countries, and for many the situation is therefore much worse than is suggested by the figures. For example, World Bank figures (*World Bank (1), pp.82,83) show that in Brazil, Columbia and India, the daily calorie intake of the rich is twice that of the poor. In Kenya in 1969 (ibid) the doctor per population ratio was 57 times higher for urban dwellers than for rural areas, in Haiti it was 25 times and in Pakistan, 7 times.

As well as, and no doubt linked to these problems of poverty and inequality are social and political problems. Vested interests, both of national and international character, and the political weakness of the poor, have led to a situation in which many communities in the Third World live under oppressive governments, and the 'developed' countries spend about 20 times more on military programmes than on assistance to the Third World (*Jolly).

1.2 Non-government organisations (NGOs)

Few people when faced with the above statistics would regard the state of the world as satisfactory. Drastic changes are needed to improve the conditions of the great majority of mankind. Thus concern for the Third World exists in Britain, and out of this concern have arisen the NGOs described in this thesis. NGOs have not been the only response to Third World poverty - governments and international agencies also have their aid programmes, and governments, political parties, trade unions and others have on occasions taken political action in support of Third World peoples suffering from particular injustices. Indeed, NGOs are only a small part of the relationship between the 'developed' countries and the Third World. Nevertheless, NGOs do not appear to be insignificant in terms of the amount of money they channel overseas, the flexibility they have in the use of their funds, their possible influence on public opinion in the countries in which they are based, and in that their existence may be a reflection of public opinion. This thesis looks at the role which NGOs play, and at whether this role is relevant to the main problems to which NGOs address themselves.

For the purposes of this thesis, an NGO is taken to mean

an autonomous organisation which raises money through appeals to the public, and gives direct assistance to people in Third World countries.

This group of organisations includes, as well as organisations whose

main purpose is to give overseas aid, missionary societies for which 'relief and development' work is ancilliary to their evangelical work, and welfare organisations active in 'developed' countries which also have overseas programmes. Although requiring support from the public, many NGOs will receive, and may even be largely dependent on support from other non-governmental institutions (e.g. trusts and commercial bodies) and from government sources. However, provided an organisation has appreciable public support, and provided government support does not mean government control (other than a government veto of projects of which the government does not approve through withdrawal of funds), it has been classed as an NGO for the purposes of this thesis.

Although not covered by the above definition, much of what has been written will be of relevance to:

- organisations which although non-governmental have as their sole purpose the education of people in Britain and the West about Third World problems;
- foundations whose incomes come from investments and commercial institutions, and which generally only support overseas projects through NGO intermediaries;
- governmental and international agencies working in overseas aid and development education.

This study deals primarily with British NGOs, and it has not been possible to make any detailed comparisons with counterpart NGOs in other Western countries. In overseas activities many similarities will exist, as NGOs from different countries often co-ordinate the support they give to overseas projects (projects often receive support from NGOs of several countries), and a certain amount of co-ordination also takes place through groupings such as the World Council of Churches, Euro-Action Accord (** 2), and the NGO forum within the EEC (** 3). However, historical, political, social and religious differences among the Western countries may have created some differences in the nature of public concern, and hence generalisations from this study on matters such as public support

and development education would need to be treated with more caution (although it would be surprising if many similarities did not exist).

The NGOs described in this thesis have a structure of the following type :

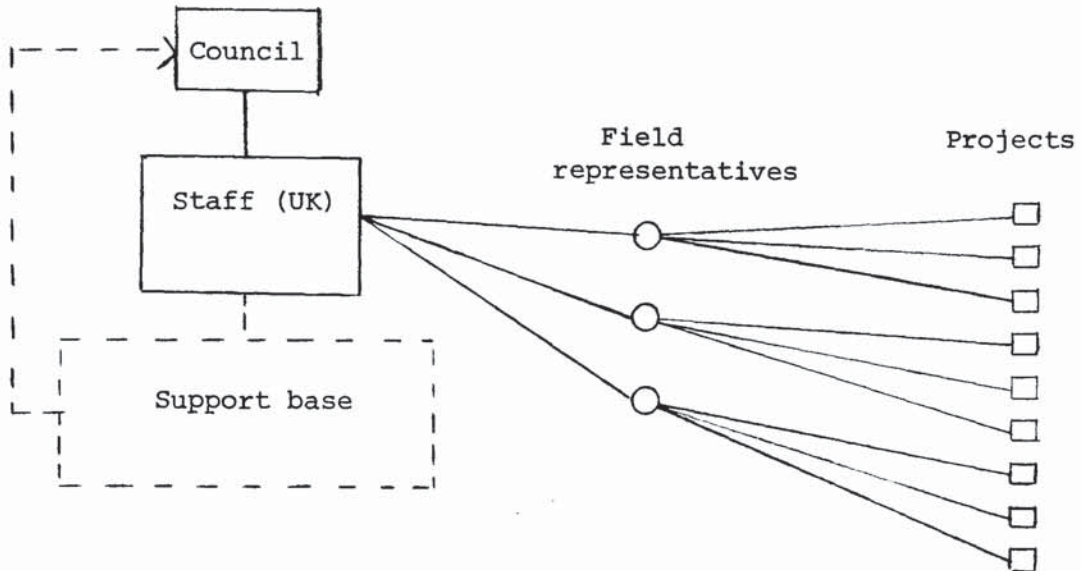


Diagram 1 : Outline structure of an NGO

Every NGO has a 'council' or equivalent body which holds the legal responsibility for the work of the NGO. In principle the Council determines the policy of the NGO, although in practice much control is often delegated to staff (or is in the hands of staff by virtue of their access to information and of their role in servicing the Council).

UK staff are responsible for implementing the policies of the NGO. On the one hand their work involves the channelling of aid, often through field representatives (who may or may not be staff members) to projects (in some cases in Britain as well as overseas), and on the other, they must maintain a relationship with the NGO's support base (this relationship may have an educational as well as a fund-raising aspect). The support base may include 'members of the NGO' which elect the Council, but this is not often the case.

Diagram 1 is of course a very simple representation of an NGO, but it nevertheless shows some of the main functional parts considered in this study.

1.3 NGOs : their historical background

Giving help to others within a family or community in situations in which help can be expected in return should the need arise has no doubt been a feature of societies since pre-historic times. Helping others, however, becomes 'charitable' when there are no social obligations to give, and when the only reward is self-satisfaction. A report on British charities (** 4) has suggested that "the growth of civilisation could be measured by the extent to which the obligations of philanthropy have been felt to include those outsiders whose fate was previously a matter of no concern ...".

Although Whitaker>(* (1), p35) gives examples of charity in Graeco-Roman times, the main inspiration for charity in Britain has been the Christian religion. Charity was a method by which the rich (one had to be rich to be philanthropic) could buy salvation, and charitable activity grew to such an extent that in the twelfth century, "ecclesiastical foundations possessed well over one-third of the public wealth of England" (*Whitaker (1), p.38). Charity became an object for legislation, and current charity law is based on a statute of 1601.

Britain's charitable help for the Third World poor also began as a Christian activity. When evangelical missionary groups accompanied Britain's commercial and administrative penetration of other continents, Christians were brought into contact with societies which appeared to be materially worse off than the poor at home. Early 'aid' programmes were often aimed at enabling people to read the Bible, and material help was offered as an incentive to conversion.

Lissner (*, p.59) has analysed 1502 NGOs based in OECD countries according to the years in which they were established (although it is not certain that all NGOs examined have been involved in overseas aid since the times of their establishment) : of the 66 NGOs in the list which had been established by 1850, 63 were mission societies. The earliest of these was a Canadian society founded in 1653.

Secular NGOs, according to Lissner's analysis, emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century, the earliest ones providing medical aid (9 national Red Cross societies were established in the 1860s). However,

with the exception of the Red Cross, all of today's major NGOs are twentieth century creations.

Lissner has identified three main periods in which there have been marked increases in the number of NGOs - the end of the 1914-18 and 1939-45 wars, and the early 1960s.

That NGO activity should have increased after wars which left parts of Europe in a critical situation and many people as refugees is not surprising, and the public response was secular as well as Christian. Save the Children Fund was started in 1919, World University Service and Service Civil International (** 5) in 1920. In the inter-war years, however, NGOs were mainly involved in welfare aid for victims of disasters and other emergency situations : Lissner views 'development aid' as a "post-World War II phenomenon", and indeed a brief look at the history of British NGOs suggests that the 'development' aspects of NGOs' work did not become significant until after 1960.

This is illustrated by Oxfam's history. Oxfam was created during Lissner's second peak (actually in 1942, although it did not 'take off' until after the war). Having been formed to help refugees in Europe, it turned its attention in 1949 to Palestinian refugees, and to refugee problems in Korea, Hungary and Algeria in the 1950s. Large-scale famine in India in 1951 was the first major area of post-war NGO involvement not related to the effects of warfare, after which the victims of famines, earthquakes and floods were included in Oxfam's concerns (*Oxfam (1)). In its early days most of Oxfam's aid was in the form of clothing for refugees : during the period 1954-55 to 1958-59, 72% of Oxfam's aid was "clothing and supplies" (** 6), but in 1959-60 to 1963-64 this proportion had dropped to 26%. Oxfam's first field director was appointed in 1961-62 (*ibid.). Similarly, during the 1950s what is now Christian Aid was called the 'Department of Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service' (of the British Council of Churches) and was primarily concerned with refugee problems - it took its present name only in 1964.

Whether Lissner's third "peak" (the early 1960s) was significant in Britain is not clear. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) began in 1958, and in 1964 the Lockwood Committee was formed, a grouping of volunteer-sending NGOs which later became the British Volunteer Programme (BVP). In 1962 Help the Aged was founded by Cecil Jackson-Cole who in 1972 launched Action in Distress (he was also a founder member of Oxfam). However, Lissner's explanations for a peak in the early 1960s are no doubt relevant factors in the continuing growth of NGO activity in Britain in the 1960s and beyond :

"...undoubtedly among the most important direct factors are the Development Decade, the establishment of governmental development agencies which in turn provided financial and other incentives to voluntary aid agencies, plus the interest generated by the World Refugee Year fund-raising campaigns in 1959-60. More indirect but no less significant impulses have come as a result of growing affluence, reduced working hours, the spread of television, rapid developments in international telecommunication and transport, inter-continental tourism and the like. There is no doubt that the Cold War also contributed to the growth of voluntary organisations ; literature on the subject in the 1950's and early 1960's frequently emphasises the usefulness of voluntary organisations in keeping Communism in the Third World at bay." (*Lissner, p.62)

From essentially fund-raising operations have arisen more sophisticated organisations (which is not to imply a loss in idealism) with specialist staff in Britain and often overseas. Educational work has increased (although in many cases as an aid to fund-raising), and some agencies have been formed, free from the restrictions of charitable status, to work entirely in Britain campaigning on behalf of the Third World countries.

The total income of British NGOs now probably exceeds £30 million p.a.. The totals of overseas grants (as distinct from income, and excluding government contributions) made by NGOs in recent years have been :

Year	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
£ millions	23	24	26	29	29	29	27

(*ODM(2))

These figures indicate that total support for NGOs has not always been keeping pace with inflation in recent years, and in spite of the total having been relatively steady, individual NGOs have had different fortunes, perhaps suggesting a competition effect amongst them. (The 1979 total given by ODA is surprising as the major NGOs considered increased their incomes in that year.)

The major fundraisers in Britain have been :

	Total income (£)	
	1977/78	1978/79
Oxfam	7,677,892	9,641,250
Save the Children Fund	6,406,503	6,638,715
Christian Aid	4,694,399	5,404,564

(** 7)

(Since the completion of this study, Oxfam's decision to mount a large relief programme in Kampuchea dramatically affected Oxfam's income. Helped by press publicity and television appeals, Oxfam's own fundraising rose from £9.6 million in 1978/79 to £18.8 million in 1979/80, and to this was added £5.2 million contributed by other NGOs to Oxfam's work. SCF and Christian Aid also made appeals for Kampuchea, raising their incomes to £9.8 and £7.0 million respectively. It remains to be seen, however, if these NGOs can maintain higher income levels in subsequent years without the wide publicity of the type given by the media to Kampuchea.)

1.4 The nature of support for NGOs

NGOs (as defined in this thesis) depend on public support for their existence. They no doubt therefore exist because sections of the public want them to exist, and the reasons for an NGO's public support will influence the general values - Lissner (*, p.74) uses the term "Weltanschauung" - which lie behind the NGO's policies. These values are not likely to be well-defined, and they may not

be held by all supporters of an NGO, but nevertheless they may be important determinants of what an NGO is and of what it can do. Some of the different motivations for NGO support are considered below :

(a) Religion :

Christian charity remains the generator of much NGO support. Alms-to-the-poor is a central theme of the Christian doctrine : "...give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven" (Matthew 19, v.21), and "... by an equality ... your abundance may be a supply for their want" (II Corinthians 8, v.14). (A Christian motivation to help need not, however, be accompanied by any analysis of the causes of poverty - e.g. it is likely that many Christian givers do not see their motivation in terms of the warning of Proverbs 22, v.16 : "He that oppreseth the poor to increase his riches ... shall surely come to want" !)

Judaism has also given rise to many charities, but as most are concerned only with Jewish causes, they have not been included in this study (*Whitaker (1), p.48). (**8)

(b) Humanitarian :

Although Christian conviction may no longer be a major force in British society, Christian ethics prevail. For many, the motivation to support NGOs may be a general, humanitarian concern for others, even if the logic on which the concern is based is not clearly identified. Others may take a more intellectual approach, regarding a caring society as the only satisfactory form of society, their concern for the Third World being a necessary part of the ethic of the society they are trying to build around themselves.

(c) Economic self-interest :

How important a role this plays as a motive for aid-giving is difficult to say, but it is often the justification of aid programmes, particularly government programmes. The idea is that "Without the accelerated development of the Third World, the industrial nations' prospects for obtaining key supplies, or expanding markets for their goods, or even promoting world

peace, may be seriously threatened" (*Ul Haq). Prior to the 1979 general election in Britain, a Labour Party spokesman put it simply : "Third World development means jobs for our people" (in *CWDE), and different British governments have often justified their aid programmes on the orders they produce for British industry (e.g. ODA press release of 11 June, 1979 : "British industry gains over £90m from aid grants and loans to developing countries". The Brandt Report (*Brandt) in 1980 based its recommendations on aid, trade, and international monetary reform on economic self-interest (described as the "mutual interests" of 'North' and 'South').

Ivan Illich, however, points out the dangers of aid given with this motivation :

"...the plough of the rich can do as much harm as their swords... Once the Third World has become a mass market for the goods, products and processes which are designed by the rich for themselves, the discrepancy between the demand for these Western artifacts and the supply will increase indefinitely. The family car cannot drive the poor into the jet age, nor can a school system provide the poor with education, nor can the family refrigerator ensure healthy food for them." (*Illich, p.131).

As noted above, the self-interest may be more than economic as world peace may depend on world development, and in Britain, the peace lobby is now looking for means to shift resources from arms to development (**9). UN Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim, has stated that "The New Economic Order is the price of peace" (in New Internationalist, Oct. 1975, p.13), and Basil Davidson quotes an African who puts it even more dramatically : "Poverty of the people is a gunpowder" (in New Society, 10.7.75).

(d) Political Solidarity :

Some may see the struggle of the Third World peasant against exploitative forces as part of their own world-wide class struggle. The companies with which the work-force contests for power in Britain are often the same companies employing labour and determining commodity prices for Third World peasants. Roberts states that "...world development will become possible as and when (the working peoples of the developed and under-developed worlds) begin to realise that they have greater common interests with each other than they have with their own elites..."(*Roberts, p.47).

Political commitment does not, however, appear to be a main factor in NGO support. Marx and Engels (*, pp.58,59) described "philanthropists" and "organisers of charity" as a part of the bourgeoisie "desirous of redressing social grievances in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois society". NGO support remains predominantly middle-class, and despite efforts by NGOs, only the intellectual fringe of the trade union movement has become involved in their work. Trade unions themselves are, of course, NGOs, channelling money to counterpart unions in Third World countries, but Don Thomson has found, with a few remarkable exceptions, trade-union aid is lacking both in its quantity and its effectiveness, partly due to trade union structures and their control by external political forces (*Thomson and Larson).

These components of NGO support are important determinants of the nature of NGOs. However, they are not likely to be the only determinants of NGOs' policies : the historical development of an NGO, the particular interests of staff and policy-makers, the views of Third World contacts, and organisational factors will all influence policies. Lissner (*, e.g. p.70) compares NGOs with political parties, choosing programmes which will command support, trying to move their constituencies to their own viewpoints, and trying to attract new constituencies. Different NGOs may appeal to different groups of people, e.g. some NGOs may have a Christian appeal, while that of others is secular, but as the sets of values held by different NGOs are only loosely defined and overlapping, so too can one expect considerable overlap in the constituencies of different NGOs.

Finally in this section, it should be noted that NGOs not been entirely successful in getting the backing of the public at large. A survey by Bowles (*) in 1979 showed that only 46% of a sample of the British population favoured giving aid. Judith Hart, in a foreword to the survey, commented that "too many attitudes are still moulded almost entirely by irrational feelings, misconceptions, and prejudice".

1.5 NGOs and government aid programmes

The history of many NGOs confirms that their beginnings were truly non-governmental. SCF began from a protest against government policy, and in its early days Oxfam came into conflict with the government over wartime aid to Greece. In other cases NGOs were formed by people with interests which, even if they did not conflict with government policies, did not necessarily coincide. For example, Christian Aid and CAFOD had Christian support, and War on Want was formed by a predominantly left-wing group of people around the time when the Conservative Party regained power in 1951. What, however, are the present relationships between NGOs and government, and government aid programmes in particular ?

Government aid is generally seen as having started since the 1939-45 war :

"Foreign aid is a relatively new part of the international scene, developing after the Second World War to the point where it might also be described as a new international industry, with its own procedures and institutions and leading to the creation of an international development profession." (*Hawkins, p.17)

There was, however, what could have been termed 'government aid' in earlier colonial times. As well as providing some help to alleviate the effects of famine in their colonies, the European powers provided some economic and social services and assisted in the development of economic infrastructure, even if such aid was only given to the extent to which the colonial economy required it. Aid was provided to maintain an economic and political system : although the major present-day aid institutions have been created in the post-war period (e.g. the U.S. Agency for International Development in 1961, the Swedish International Development Authority in 1962 and the British ODM in 1964), the basis of government aid-giving is still a mixture of political, economic, and perhaps altruistic interests (see, for example, George (*), Hayter (*(1)), and Lappé, Collins and Kinley (*)).

Quantitatively British NGOs' contributions to the Third World may seem of little significance when compared with government aid and other private flows of resources from Britain :

	Flows in £ millions		
	1977	1978	1979
NGO grants	29	29	27
Net official flows	647	807	1039
Private flows (excluding NGO aid)	3311	4335	4223
Total	3987	5171	5289

(**10)

Private flows (other than NGO aid) include bank lending, investments and export credits, and in what senses they can be classed as 'aid' is debatable. However, leaving these private flows aside, NGO aid was only 3.4% of official flows in 1977 to 1979. Lissner, looking at aid from all OECD countries, argues that official figures are overstated because of loan elements, and that a more accurate comparison with NGO aid would give a ratio of about 8 : 1 (but for Britain it would be higher) (*Lissner, pp. 43-48). The comparative quantity of aid, however, appears to be of little importance to the work of NGOs. NGOs argue that their aid is more effective - it goes directly to those who need it and not through government bureaucracies (as is often the case with government aid); this means that NGOs can sometimes give help where government programmes cannot (or do not wish to) because of political constraints (**11). NGOs claim to have a more direct relationship with the Third World poor making NGOs more responsive to "real needs", and they argue that their work is based on concern for the Third World rather than the more mixed motivations behind government aid (**12).

Nevertheless, the amount of co-operation between NGOs and government, as well as between NGOs and the EEC, through the co-funding of projects is increasing. In 1978/79 around 6% of the incomes of Save the Children Fund and Christian Aid came from ODA, while ODA and EEC grants constituted about 12% of Oxfam's income. While in 1977 War on Want was wary of using

co-funding schemes (partly to avoid any compromise of its non-governmental status and partly because of the complex accounting procedures which the schemes initially required), by 1980 it was seeking co-funding grants to meet nearly 20% of its budgetted expenditure. VSO has always had a special relationship with ODA - although VSO qualifies as an NGO by the definition adopted in this thesis, Lissner (*, p.25) would describe it as "quasi-voluntary" - and ODA support for its costs of administration, volunteer recruitment and training, etc., has risen from 50% to 90%, which even VSO admits is the limit of what it can accept without loss of non-government status.

This expansion of co-funding raises questions of policy. It has also perhaps become possible because NGOs and official aid programmes have been moving closer to each other in terms of policy : from being primarily relief agencies, most NGOs now see their roles in terms of 'development', while official programmes are giving more consideration to the 'basic needs' (see section 2.3 (2)) of the poorest. Nevertheless, in February 1980 the Minister responsible for the British aid programme announced that the programme would "continue to have regard for the needs of the poorest countries" but that "alongside developmental objectives, political, industrial and commercial considerations will receive greater emphasis". That ODA has concluded that support for some of the work of NGOs is in keeping with ODA objectives might be regarded as a cause for concern for NGOs which claim to have purely altruistic objectives (**13). Moreover, while all NGOs may want to increase their resources, some are anxious that they do not compromise their non-government status both in Britain and in the eyes of those they wish to support overseas, an important consideration when working in politically sensitive areas.

Some, if not most, NGOs regard themselves as having a role in trying to influence official aid policies, often calling for a greater quantity of aid as well as for qualitative changes, e.g. for grants rather than loans, and for grants not 'tied' to the purchase of British equipment. It would, however, be difficult for NGOs to claim much success in this area. Even in the Netherlands where there is

stronger public support for official aid programmes, some attribute this support to the government's own educational programmes rather than to the action of Dutch NGOs (**14). Nightingale (*) has concluded that charities often have a value in that they point the way for government action, tackling areas of need which later come to be regarded as government responsibilities. But it is not clear that this applies to British NGOs : the official aid programme has probably developed more in response to international pressures than to the example of NGOs, and even if the official aid programme were to be considerably expanded, it is unlikely that NGOs would cease to operate - they will continue to exist as long as people want to (or can be persuaded to) respond to the extremes of poverty and human suffering in other countries.

1.6 Some comments, questions, and notes on the thesis

NGOs have come a long way from their early mission-work beginnings in terms of size, support and sophistication, and in the socio-economic environment in which they operate. Whereas most NGOs started in the colonial era, they now work in independent countries, often needing to relate to governments which are articulating their own ideologies of development - sometimes these governments will represent the interests of the poorest sectors in their countries, but sometimes they will act in the interests of already privileged groups. Moreover, 'aid' has become the business of governments and international institutions which, in terms of resources, make NGOs appear very minor participants in the field of 'international assistance'. 'Development' has also become an international political issue with Third World countries pressing their demands within the United Nations system and in other international organisations, these demands dealing not just with aid, but with all aspects of the economic relationship between the Third World and the industrialised countries.

Given these changes, what now is the relevance of NGOs to those people in the Third World they wish to help ? How effective are they as instruments of change ? How do they view the development process in which they want to take part, and in what sense can they

claim to be "development agencies"? Can they even claim to be 'aid agencies', or, in other words, does their work really help the Third World poor ? These are some of the questions which this thesis hopes to address.

The study looks for some of the answers through an examination of six NGOs, and through a case study of the nature of development and the role of NGOs in Kenya (the extent to which generalisations might be made from Kenya to other countries in which NGOs work is discussed in section 12.5). The six NGOs are :

Action in Distress : created in 1972, a relatively new and fast growing charity based on child-sponsorship schemes with an income of over £1 million p.a..

Christian Aid : which grew out of the work of the British Council of Churches after the Second World War. It raises about £6 million p.a. which is mainly channelled through church groups in the Third World.

Oxfam : began in 1942 and has grown to the largest of the NGOs considered. In 1978/79 its income was nearly £10 million (but in 1979/80 this was more than doubled through donations for Kampuchea).

Save the Children Fund : began in 1919, and with an income of around £6 million in 1978/79. As the name suggests, it concentrates on children's welfare projects.

Voluntary Service Overseas : differs from the other NGOs considered as it sends people rather than money or equipment overseas. It receives substantial government support.

War on Want : formed in 1952, its income is less than £1 million p.a., but it has been more outspoken on what it sees as the causes of poverty, and this has involved it in more controversial areas than most other NGOs.

These six NGOs are described in greater detail in appendix I. They were selected as what appeared to be the major NGOs in Britain, and they cover a range of NGOs' policies and operational styles. (CAFOD and Help the Aged were also approached for information, but did not respond. However, similarities might be expected to exist between Help the Aged and Save the Children Fund, and between Christian Aid and CAFOD (**15) and therefore their exclusion should not detract much from the study.)

Footnotes

1. "Industrialised countries" are OECD members, excluding Greece, Portugal, Spain and Turkey. Regarded by the World Bank as "centrally-planned economies" are the Soviet bloc countries (USSR having a population of 257 million and a per capita GNP of US \$ 410), North Korea and Cuba. Other than Saudi Arabia, Libya and Kuwait, other countries are regarded as being "developing", being either "low-income" or "middle-income" depending on whether the per capita GNP is above or below US \$ 250 p.a. (*World Bank (2), pp.76,77).
2. Euro Action - ACORD ('Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development') is a consortium of 19 European and Canadian NGOs, including Oxfam and War on Want (although the latter has not been a very active member). EA-A staff identify projects and administer programmes in East and West Africa on behalf of member organisations.
3. The EEC has a co-funding scheme for NGOs (see section 1.5). A 'European Assembly of NGOs' makes suggestions on the criteria by which the scheme should be run. In Britain the meetings to elect delegates and to discuss the issues before the Assembly provide some of the few opportunities for many British NGOs to meet together.
4. The 'Nathan Report' (Cmd. 8710, HMSO), referred to in Whitaker (*1), p.35).
5. SCI is an international volunteer movement of which International Voluntary Service (IVS) is the British branch.
6. Most of this proportion was clothing, and the value of Oxfam's aid at this time would have depended on how the clothes were valued.
7. Oxfam uses May-April while Christian Aid and SCF use April-March as their financial years. The income shown includes some grants from government sources, and the totals are used in administration and some UK projects as well as for overseas work.

8. Other religions have similar ethics. For example, Buddhism calls for the identification with the suffering of the poor (*Humphreys, p.53), and Islam expects "the righteous" to "give sustenance to the poor man, the orphan, and the captive, saying : "We feed you for Allah's sake only; we seek of you neither recompense nor thanks ..."" (*Dawood, p.18). However, the 'developed world' is in the main 'Christian' and therefore Christianity is the most important religion for this discussion.
9. The hypothesis that military expenditure inhibits development is not new. A UN General Assembly resolution in 1970 (no. 2667 (XXV)) noted that:

"... the elimination of the enormous waste of wealth and talent on the arms race, which is detrimental to the economic and social life of all States, would have a positive impact, especially on the developing countries, where the need for skilled personnel and the lack of material and financial resources are most keenly felt ...".

In 1977 a UN report on the 'Economic and Social Consequences of the Arms Race and its Extremely Harmful Effects on World Peace and Security' noted the effects of military expenditure on social spending, inflation, investment, and the use of manpower. Writing in the 'New Internationalist' (May 1977) Philip Noel-Baker claimed that :

"...if UNESCO were given a fund of \$ 200 million for a worldwide literacy campaign, it could free every nation from this evil handicap (i.e. illiteracy). \$ 200 million is approximately the price of two strategic bombers of the latest type.

The nations of the Third World suffer grievously from diseases which have disappeared from the "developed" West. Malaria still kills in great numbers... Trachoma...makes the victim blind... Leprosy makes its victims segregated social outcasts. Yaws...makes a man unfit for work or play, and allows him no real rest...

These four diseases impose a heavy annual load of economic loss and human suffering on the Third World. Yet all of them are easily preventable. The World Health Organisation could eliminate them - wipe them out now and for the future - for an expenditure of \$ 500 million - about the cost of an aircraft carrier."

10. Figures derived from 'British Aid Statistics 1975-79' (*ODA (2)).
11. This point is conceded by the British Government. Prior to the 1979 general election, a Conservative Party spokesman stated :

"At the heart of Conservative policy on overseas development lies a simple and straightforward purpose : we want to help people rather than institutions and governments. People in countries which are politically or morally abhorrent to us because of their abuse of human rights may, for that reason, require most assistance. Yet for diplomatic and political reasons, our Government may not be able to help. Accordingly, we accept that government alone cannot always take the action

which will be most effective in dealing with suffering and sickness in other parts of the world. Thus Conservatives want to see the role of voluntary and non-governmental bodies developed more fully side by side with official development assistance." (Quoted in *CWDE).

12. According to the report of a House of Lords' Select Committee,

"Evidence given to the Committee by Oxfam and War on Want showed how the aid philosophy of some, at least, of the ngos differed from the official aid policy of the (European) Community. On the whole, official aid goes on larger projects administered through governments; non-governmental organizations, on the other hand, work through "the application of small sums of money which encourage people to help themselves at the base of the pyramid", The two approaches can co-exist ; but the ngos feel that their efforts often make a more direct improvement in the lives of the poorest people, especially in the rural areas." (*HMG (House of Lords), p.106).
13. It is possible that NGOs may indirectly contribute to British political and commercial interests. Lissner (*,p.99) quotes an US Government report which states that some American NGOs "perform a special service to U.S. interests abroad by contributing materially to the maintenance of an American aid presence...".
14. Reported by Frank Judd, formerly Minister for Overseas Development, based on his discussions with Dutch politicians, in various speeches.
15. Comparisons of CAFOD and Help the Aged are based on discussions with staff of these agencies and an examination of their publicity/educational material which was made after the completion of the main part of this study.

PART II

THE THEORETICAL ISSUES

This part of the thesis examines some of the development issues of particular concern to NGOs. Its four chapters deal with areas for study which have arisen as matters of importance in the case study (Part III) and in the general work of NGOs.

Chapter 2 looks at some views of 'development'. From relief agencies, NGOs have recognised that they are participating in a process in which economic conditions, the nature of societies, and even political structures, are changing in an inter-active way. But how NGOs interpret this process will influence the nature of their interventions. This chapter considers some alternative analyses which are referred to in subsequent chapters.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine two particular objectives of development - improving nutritional standards and promoting self-reliance. These objectives have been selected for special study because of the central positions they hold in the policy statements of most NGOs. Moreover, during this study, the extent to which nutritional status could give NGOs an easily measurable indicator of development problems has been explored, and in Kenya (and in Tanzania) where field work was undertaken, 'self-help' and 'self-reliance' are the most prominent development slogans.

NGOs use their resources to provide (not always successfully) opportunities for change in Third World communities. The ways in which changes are likely to take place are therefore considered : chapter 5 views the work of NGOs as selectively removing constraints to change, but what the major constraints might be, and whether NGOs are in a position to remove them, are discussed at length in the case study of the thesis (Part III B).

Contents :

2. The nature and objectives of development
3. Nutrition
4. Self-help and self-reliance
5. Rural development

Chapter 2

THE NATURE AND OBJECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENT

Most NGOs claim to be 'development agencies'. But what do they mean by this?

'Development' implies change, but when change is, or is not, 'development' is merely a matter of definition. To claim to be promoting development is not therefore a sufficient description of the aims of an NGO. This chapter begins by looking at some of the the problems facing NGOs when they try to set their objectives.

If an NGO is trying to influence 'development' it needs some analysis of the process of change. The success of its work, overseas and in Britain, is likely to depend on how well the NGO can identify the factors and forces which cause poverty. The final, and major part of this chapter looks at three alternative views of 'development': these analyses and their implications for NGOs will be referred to in most of the following chapters of the thesis.

Contents:

- 2.1 Introduction*
- 2.2 Some problems in the choice of objectives*
- 2.3 Three different views of the development process*

2. THE NATURE AND OBJECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Introduction

Development is a process of change which improves the politico-socio-economic state of communities. Most, if not all aid agencies now wish to be considered "development agencies" : they see the provision of relief at times when the existing socio-economic system cannot cope to be too short-sighted an approach to helping the Third World - they see that, even if only from a fairly pragmatic viewpoint, changes in the socio-economic system (and sometimes even the political system) are necessary if crises and the need for emergency relief are not to be regularly recurring phenomena in many parts of the world.

However, the above definition is not very helpful. It does not offer a definition of what constitutes improvement, and it suggests neither the way in which development takes place nor policies which might promote it. Thus the term "development" can be, and is applied to many different sorts of processes and policies, and although most NGOs may claim to be development agencies, their objectives, policies and methods of operation may be very different.

NGOs do not often attempt to define what they understand by development. This is perhaps not surprising, because in moving away from the single clear objective of saving lives at risk through disasters to the task of improving the 'quality of life' of overseas communities, one is faced with decisions on what changes are desirable and which are not, and such assessments will depend on the assessor's view of the ideal society to be aimed at (as well, of course, as the assessor's understanding of the overseas situation). Therefore what is considered good and what is thought of as bad development will not only depend on objective factors, but also on subjective, ideological factors. Thus while an NGO

may have been formed around the desire 'to help the poor', when goals and methodology need to be more clearly defined, the consensus on which the NGO was founded may be put at risk.

However, although NGOs rarely make precise statements on their understanding of development, implicit in their policies and choices of projects are views comprising both objectives and assumptions about the causes of problems and the process of change. Complete consistency need not be expected in the actions of an NGO, as its decision-makers are unlikely to completely agree on aims and analysis, but nevertheless, an NGO operates according to certain consensus views. Moreover, as is shown later in this thesis, these views differ considerably between different NGOs.

Organisational factors also enter into NGOs' approaches to development. The existence of NGOs depends on their ability to attract contributions to their work, and this may influence both the choice of projects and the manner in which NGOs describe their work to potential donors - public statements on development may be subject to fund-raising considerations, and may neither fully nor accurately describe the actual overseas work of an NGO. The relationship between NGOs' statements and their overseas programmes is therefore examined later in this thesis.

2.2 Some problems in the choice of objectives

At a fairly basic level most NGOs have the same objectives, namely the alleviation of the poverty and suffering described in section 1.1. Differences and difficulties arise, however, when NGOs try to formulate their objectives more precisely and take decisions on how to apply their resources, particularly when consideration is given to objectives based on social values as well as those relating strictly to people's material needs for survival.

Firstly there is the problem of priorities. Development is a multi-dimensional process and the state of development is a function of many variables describing incomes, housing standards, nutrition,

health, social relations, institutions, political freedoms, etc., and and as different people will attach different importances to each, the parameters of the function will vary from person to person. Such variations may be significant for people of different cultural backgrounds, and therefore there is a risk of NGOs trying to promote changes (or unconsciously promoting changes) which Third World communities regard as irrelevant, or worse. Projects are generally assessed by expatriate field staff of NGOs, and final decisions on project support may lie with committees of people in Britain whose outlooks and aspirations may differ significantly from those of the people they are trying to help. Thus beyond the immediate task of saving lives, the objectives of NGOs may not always coincide with those of the Third World poor.

Some have argued the case for allowing the recipients of aid to set the objectives of NGOs, maintaining that for NGOs to base their work on their own values would be neo-colonialistic. On practical grounds it would be unwise for an NGO to ignore local priorities, as projects without local support are unlikely to succeed (and not to take account of local priorities would for some be ideologically objectionable). Nevertheless, NGOs cannot escape from some level of decision-making and responsibility for their work. Firstly, NGOs would still need criteria for their choices of participants, and that would require judgements on relative needs and on the intended uses of aid. Secondly, aid may involve the introduction of new technologies, and NGOs, because of their wider experiences, may be in a better position to assess all the effects of new technologies than the recipients. Thirdly, determining local priorities may be difficult because of communication problems arising from cultural and linguistic differences, and because the donor-recipient relationship may influence the responses of would-be recipients to the inquiries of NGO representatives. Moreover, Third World communities are not necessarily homogeneous, and there may not be a single view of local needs - an NGO may need to choose whom to accept as spokespeople for the Third World poor.

As well as the problem of establishing priorities, there are problems in choosing operational objectives - an NGO must choose which courses of action are most likely to achieve the desired results. A difficulty

here may be that the variables affected in any change may not be independent. For example, it is possible that increased incomes from cash crops may cause a decline in nutritional standards, higher prices for crops may increase land prices and lead to more landless peasants, capital inputs may increase the economic stratification of the population, and political changes may alter land tenure and hence the whole economic and social structure. Thus, progress towards one objective may be accompanied in any change by regression from another, and a change which may appear developmental for some may be detrimental for others. This suggests that the choice of objectives cannot be made in isolation from an understanding of the whole development process. Some possible views of this process are examined in Section 2.3.

The above discussion suggests two aspects which need to be considered in assessing the contribution of NGOs :

- the objectives of NGOs and the relevance of these objectives to Third World communities ; and
- the effectiveness of the actions of NGOs in meeting these objectives.

This study hopes to throw some light on both these aspects of NGOs work.

2.3. Three Different Views of "Development"

All countries, and no doubt all communities, are in a dynamic state - technologies, patterns of trade, patterns of consumption and forms of social organisation are all changing in an inter-related way. This process of change has been analysed in many different ways, from a process of accumulation of capital and investment to a process determined by the conflicts between different socio-economic groups, and even in terms of the psychological characteristics of different cultures. Although all NGOs may have the same long-term objective - that of removing poverty - their tactical objectives and their choices of strategy will depend on the form of analysis they use.

Types of analyses can be grouped into those of "development" and those of "underdevelopment". Theorists of the former group

see countries of the Third World as 'developing', i.e. going through a process of transformation from a traditional, backward or undeveloped state into one which portrays the economic, technological and institutional characteristics of a 'developed' country. Economically, this 'modernisation' is generally seen to take place according to the rules of Western capitalism, and often involves greater integration into the world economy. Economic growth often features strongly in such theories, although the distribution of wealth and social-welfare indicators are being given increasing attention. This ideology of 'development' underlies the policies of many Third World governments, those of agencies such as the World Bank, and of other official aid programmes.

The underdevelopment theorists see problems lying in the relationships between the developed and those who are underdeveloped. Third World countries, it is argued, are dominated, economically and politically, by the major centres of Western capitalism, and even within the Third World countries, elites exploit the poorer sectors through unequal economic relationships. Such theorists generally see the way forward in terms of breaking the bonds of dependency.

Three 'approaches' to development have been chosen in this study and the policies of NGOs have been considered alongside them. They are :

- (1) Economic-growth approach
- (2) Basic-needs approach
- (3) Structural-change approach.

The first originates from theories of 'development', while the third, being concerned with changing the political and economic structures of domination and dependency, stems from theories of underdevelopment. The second approach, basic-needs, is not, however, based on any particular theory of development, but rather takes the form of a statement of objectives. These three approaches are described below.

(1) Economic-growth approach

At its simplest, this approach equates 'development' with increases in a country's per capita GNP, and increasing the GNP therefore becomes the primary objective of development plans. The assumption is "that increases in national income, if they are sufficiently fast, sooner or later lead to the solution of social and political problems" (*Seers, p.1). In the 1960s, that economic growth would overcome poverty was the "central thesis" (*ILO(2), p.1) of the UN's First Development Decade.

But writing in 1969, Seers (*,p.1) observed that "the experience of the past decade makes this belief (in the economic-growth approach) look rather naive". For many developing countries economic growth has not removed poverty. Countries such as Kenya, Brazil and Indonesia have all achieved high growth rates, but whether there has been any significant reduction in poverty is questionable (**1). Nevertheless, the quest for economic growth has retained a prominent place in most international development strategies and national development plans.

One mechanism by which economic growth was supposed to alleviate poverty was 'trickle down'. The hypothesis was that by increasing the wealth of the small, modern sector of a developing country (the sector which is best able to offer a high rate of return on foreign investment), the rest of the population will eventually benefit through increased employment, government investments, etc. The theory provided an excuse for colonial governments in establishing the economic system best able to service the imperial power (**2). Such a policy for 'development' necessitates the growth of an economic elite and a widening of the income distribution before a redistribution of wealth can take place, and in 1958, Johnson (quoted in *Elliott) argued :

"... there is likely to be a conflict between rapid growth and an equitable distribution of income, and a poor country, anxious to develop, would be well advised not to worry too much about the distribution of income."

There are, however, flaws in the trickle-down theory, and these have been pointed out by several writers (**3). The growth of inequity will encourage the formation of social classes and interest groups which act against redistribution, and the poor are likely to be exploited by the economically powerful in the country. The upper classes are more likely to import than create a demand in the poorer sectors, and import substitution policies are likely to lead to monopolies and high prices, thereby making the poor worse off. Thus, although "trickle-down" may have improved the condition of the working classes in the now "developed" countries (**4), the developing countries cannot expect to have the same experience (as will be evident from the discussion of approach (3) below).

The argument here is not against economic growth, but against growth as an objective and as a measurement of development. Economic models have predicted that rapid growth will be needed if poverty is to be overcome in a reasonable time period (*ILO (2)), pp.36-43), but economic growth will "not automatically reduce poverty and inequality..." (*ILO (2), p.15). Chenery et al. show that there is no simple relationship between growth and poverty reduction (*Chenery, pp. 1, 8, 9, 14). Economic growth cannot, therefore, be a single target.

Although the theory that economic growth brings development is generally applied at national level, most of the arguments could equally well be applied to a district, or even a village community. Aid to increase the productivity of a relatively small area may increase the economic stratification and reinforce the position of a local elite which buys its luxuries from the capital city rather than creating employment opportunities locally. A goal such as increasing agricultural productivity is therefore not a sufficient objective for NGOs.

Most NGOs would reject the "trickle-down" approach (but not necessarily all NGO staff (**5)). This approach has, nevertheless, been examined because NGOs must often work alongside national and international agencies which have growth as a main objective (**6). As it is also an objective of some Third World governments, and official aid is given to projects approved by recipient governments, it is likely that promoting economic growth is a principal reason behind many of the projects

supported by ODA and other western governments. With growing links between NGOs and government programmes (e.g. through ODA and EEC co-financing schemes, some NGOs having consultative status in UN forums, and exchange of information and advice in the field) the different developmental philosophies may begin to have greater significance.

(2) Basic-needs approach

Here, the idea is to concentrate attention onto the target groups - the poor, the malnourished, etc. - and to look for ways in which their "basic needs" can be satisfied in the shortest possible time. It is a main theme of recent policy papers by ODM (* (3)), ILO (* (2)) and parts of the World Bank (* (1)), (even if such agencies do not always put their policies into practice), and is probably nearest to the approach used by most NGOs. The approach is not based on any particular analysis of the development process, nor does it suggest any sort of policies (* Ghai, pp. 14-17), but is more in the nature of a definition of objectives.

According to an ILO declaration (*ILO (2),p.182) :

"Basic needs...include two elements. Firstly, they include certain minimum requirements of a family for private consumption : adequate food, shelter and clothing, as well as certain household equipment and furniture. Secondly, they include any essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport and health, educational and cultural facilities."

A corresponding definition of development would then be, "a process which leads to the satisfaction of basic needs".

Different statements on basic needs may select priorities in different ways (*Ghai,pp.5-14). Even if there is a fair consensus in the factors to be included in basic needs, it would be difficult (and requiring value judgements) to give any precise definition. However, the approach is more discriminating than (1) above in that it focuses attention onto what is happening to the target groups.

Each NGO selects, explicitly or implicitly, its own set of basic needs with which it is primarily concerned. Thus for some, adequate nourishment for all is the main aim, while other organisations may

concentrate on health services or on education, and some may even see family planning as the main need. The extent to which these specialisations stem from historical or operational considerations and to which they reflect perceptions of the Third World's needs is difficult to say, but the choices present to the fund-raising public of developed countries' particular views of Third World problems, and the choices are, beyond the very basic needs for physical survival, in part ideological.

A weakness in the basic needs approach, however, is that because it is not based on an analysis of the development process, it does not say anything about why people are poor, and consequently does not suggest a strategy for improvement. Statements on basic needs are nevertheless often accompanied by proposals for providing them, ranging from "ownership or control by the producers...of the means of production" (*Ghai, p.8) and "production is determined by social needs and not by profit" (*Ghai, p.12), to the less radical and more-detailed proposals of the ILO declaration (*ILO (2)), even on which the different interest groups represented at ILO could not agree.

Nevertheless, basic needs has become a popular concept for national and international donors alike, and the "aid to the poorest of the poor" slogan has been applied to target groups within countries.

A further weakness of the approach is that it could lead to welfare or relief type of programmes which merely patch up problems with aid. Arnold' (*2), p.45) argues that :

"Aid which, all too often, serves to undermine development is that with the highest 'humanitarian' content. Current Western concern with the poorest or the most disadvantaged may sound constructive but does least to transfer technology and to equip the recipient to manage its own affairs. This concern, however, is likely to absorb aid efforts for an indefinite period so that, while the real problem remains unsolved, the West can claim to be increasing its levels of assistance."

Although this danger is noted in an ODM paper (*ODM(1), Annex B), Arnold (ibid.) criticises British aid policy as a "classic example" of the above "humanitarian" approach. Nevertheless, according to an ODM policy paper of 1975 (*ODM(3), p.8) :

"... no one and no country wants to depend on charity. Instead the incomes of the poorest groups need to be increased by opportunities for productive work."

Not only may basic-needs considerations distract attention from longer-term developmental needs, some have argued that the approach may reduce the "revolutionary potential" of a situation. For example, NGOs have been criticised for delaying the overthrow of Haile Selassie's regime in Ethiopia by providing famine relief, even when they claimed that their work was "developmental", and much earlier, Lenin refused to join famine-relief work on the Lower Volga in 1891-92 on the grounds that famine, "the natural result of the social order, would tend to revolutionise the masses" (*Conquest, pp.21,22). There are also situations in which the "progressive" sectors most likely to bring about change in a country are not necessarily the poorest - e.g. organised labour - and in such circumstances aid to the less-than-poorest may bring more permanent improvements to the poorest more rapidly.

However, these criticisms may relate more to how the basic-needs concept is interpreted and applied than to the concept itself. Basic needs may be seen in social-welfare terms alone, or they may be seen in terms of the poor's need for the means and opportunities to undertake their own development efforts. In discussing basic-needs approaches it is therefore helpful to distinguish between :

- social-welfare/relief approaches; and
- 'developmental' approaches.

As is noted in Section 1.3 and in Appendix I, many NGOs began with relief-orientated basic-needs programmes (e.g. food and blankets for refugees), but they now claim to have moved to a "developmentalist" position. Here the aim is not so much to supply basic goods and services to the poor as to give them the means by which they can earn sufficient to provide themselves with their basic needs.

It is at this point, however, that it may be necessary to make an analysis of the causes of poverty and to examine the poverty of a community in the context of the development process in the country, as the national economic environment is likely to be a major

determinant of the feasibility of poor communities providing themselves with their own basic needs. Seers (*, p.3) suggests an approach by which 'development' is measured by its effects on the poorest sectors, but he uses a wider range of factors than the ILO's definition of basic needs :

"The questions to ask about a country's development are...: What has been happening to poverty ? What has been happening to unemployment ? What has been happening to inequality ? If all three of these have become less severe, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result "development" even if per capita income had soared...A "plan" which conveys no targets for reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality can hardly be considered a "development plan"."

Seers gives emphasis to inequality, while the ILO rejects the use of relativistic measurements of poverty, at least for the present (*ILO(2), p.33). Seers considers equality important, not just because "poverty will be eliminated much more rapidly if any given rate of economic growth is accompanied by a declining concentration of incomes", but because

"Inequalities to be found today, especially in the Third World where there is massive poverty, are objectionable by any religious or ethical standards...More seriously, inequality of income is associated with other inequalities, especially in education and political power, which reinforce it."

(*Seers, p.3)

Thus, although the basic needs concept may be a valuable reminder that development should be about improving the lot of the most disadvantaged sections of the population, Seers raises the question of whether basic needs approaches can confine their attention to those sections without considering the wider systems of which they are a part.

(3) The structural change approach

"What is the point of helping a peasant to produce more if that only means he must pay more to a land-owner, or be more vulnerable to exploitation by a transnational company ?""What is the point in giving services to peasant communities and thereby compensating for

the government's neglect of them ?" These types of questions may lead an NGO to see a community's poverty in terms of its position in a political and economic structure. It may not then be possible to see poor communities as isolated, closed systems - problems within a community may be caused primarily by external factors. Poor communities co-exist with wealthy elites, poor countries co-exist with rich ones, and, it may be argued, it is the relationships between rich and poor which perpetuate the inequalities.

The 'approach' considered in this sub-section is more of a way of analysing problems than a set of policies for their removal. The basis of the approach is to regard the Third World as 'underdeveloped' rather than 'developing' : Cockcroft, Frank and Johnson explain the concept of 'underdevelopment' as follows :

"We see underdevelopment as intimately and causally related to the pattern of evolution of developed, industrialised societies...We consciously follow the general rule of social theory that states that when seeking to explain (or change) a part of something, in this case underdevelopment, one must look for and refer systematically to the whole, in terms of which that part can be understood (or changed).

"It is only in this way and with a great emphasis on historical research, that the development of underdevelopment can be understood. No country was ever in an original state of underdevelopment, although it may have been undeveloped. The processes of development and underdevelopment began when European nations began their world-wide mercantilist and capitalist expansion. Constellations of developing metropolises and underdeveloping satellites evolved, connecting all parts of the world system from its metropolitan center in Europe, and later in United States, to the farthest outpost in the Latin American countryside."

(*Cockcroft et al.,pp.x,xi)

Thus many of the problems of the Third World are attributed to the socio-economic distortions produced in Third World countries by Western-based capitalism. Colonialism and neo-colonialism are main explanatory factors of poverty. Griffen writes :

"... underdeveloped countries as we observe them today are a product of historical forces, especially those released by European expansion and world ascendancy... Europe did not "discover" the underdeveloped countries; on the contrary, she created them." (**7)

Being based on ideas such as the penetration of Western capital, the exploitation of Third World societies and the conflicting interests

of the underdeveloped and the developed, the approach owes much to the Marxist tradition (Ake (*) even talks of the conflict between "proletarian countries" and "bourgeois countries"). Marx and his contemporaries were primarily concerned with the development of capitalism in the industrialised countries of Europe, although they were aware of the then rapidly growing interest of the European powers in other continents, e.g. Marx made a study of British investment in India (*Leys, p.2-6), and later, in 1916, his follower Lenin (*, p.84) wrote of "the export of capital as distinct from commodities", "the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves", and "the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers". However, the emergence of theories of underdevelopment which attempt to explain the present poverty of the Third World as a consequence of this historical process did not take place until more recent times (**8).

Much of the study of structural underdevelopment has been based on examples from Latin America, as is the case with the analysis of Cockcroft, Frank and Johnson (see above), and some care is therefore needed before applying the model to parts of Africa which have a much shorter history of contact with the imperial powers (**9). For example, Frank (*1), p.4) rejects the "dual society" concept which involves an isolated, precapitalist, 'traditional' sector (generally the sector without its basic needs - the target group for NGO action) in the belief that

"... future historical research will confirm that the expansion of the capitalist system over the past centuries effectively and entirely penetrated even the apparently most isolated sectors of the underdeveloped world."

But Hyden (*, pp.20,21) criticises the application of this approach in rural Africa where he argues that precapitalist modes of production are predominant :

"While the social realities in Asia and Latin America are such that the Marxist paradigm can be used without any major modifications, the same can hardly be said of Africa. The structural anomalies in Africa require a re-examination of some basic assumptions underlying the Marxist model." (*ibid., p.250)

(Others have criticised Frank's analysis as an over-simplification of the situation even in Latin America (*Long, pp.85-92).)

Nevertheless, many countries in Africa already seem to have followed the same path of underdevelopment which has been analysed in Latin America - initial trade contacts developing on unequal terms, trade "agreements" often backed by the military force of the imperial powers ; the formation of an international division of labour in which the African is a primary producer, the economic surplus of his work being transferred to Europe ; the imposition of colonial rule to protect this economic structure, and the formation of "comprador" classes to run the colonial machinery ; the gaining of constitutional independence by Africans, and an African bourgeoisie competing with foreign interests, but the structure of the society in which only the export-producing sector "develops" remains unchanged, other prospects for industrialisation being hampered by the non-development of a local market.

If the above view of development were to be accepted, what would the implications be for NGO action ? Colin Leys notes that a limitation of underdevelopment theories at present is that they offer little guidance on how the situation might be changed, other than vague notions of revolution (*Leys, pp.18-21; **10). He also points out that little attention has yet been given to Cuba, China and possibly some of the African liberation movements which appear to have broken the structure : if these represent the only ways of ending underdevelopment, then that NGOs have not been involved (and indeed, may not have been allowed to have been involved) in these situations, raises many questions about the role, if any, which NGOs can play. From acceptance of the theory, a logical step for NGOs would be acceptance of Cockcroft, Frank and Johnson's description of development :

"Real development involves a structural transformation of the economy, society, polity and culture of the satellite that permits the self-generating and self-perpetuating use and development of the people's potential. Development comes about as a consequence of a people's frontal attack on the oppression, exploitation and poverty they suffer at the hands of the dominant classes and their system."

(*Cockcroft et al., p.vi)

This definition would have far-reaching implications for an NGO. The NGO's project support would need to be seen as the support of "a people's frontal attack on oppression...etc." Perhaps more importantly, the NGO would need to recognise that the structure which it wishes to

change is an international one, and that its own support base may be part of it. Political action in the developed countries then becomes as appropriate as project support as a response to conditions in the Third World.

Some comments

The above three approaches are only three examples selected from the range of development concepts, theories and objectives, and their choice has been an attempt to cover the main issues facing NGOs. The three approaches are not entirely mutually exclusive, and in some respects are not even directly comparable : (1) offers a well-defined strategy for achieving less-than-well-defined objectives, (2) is more concerned with objectives than with the strategy, and (3) is primarily a theory of why problems exist. Those who follow the theory of (3) are not necessarily opposed to growth, although not all of those seeking economic growth would be happy to see any structural changes which might alter their positions of privilege. All would claim that as an end result there should be no-one in want of their basic needs, but there is less consensus of whether a 'basic-needs approach' represents the best allocation of the resources available for development. According to an ICDA (International Coalition for Development Action) report,

"The seemingly obvious proposition that development efforts should concentrate on satisfying the basic human needs of the poorest in the shortest possible time has proved a hotly controversial issue. At one and the same time it is accused either of providing a cloak for revolutionary change or a means through which rich countries can opt out of the demands to produce the necessary international structural changes.

And yet, the tenets of the basic needs approach are not new. Its principles would have found a ready echo in the teachings of Jesus Christ or Karl Marx, or Booth and Rowntree." (*ICDA, p.3)

But, as has been pointed out by Arnold (see subsection (2) above), the proposition is not so obvious. There is a concern that 'basic needs' may be an attempt by the industrialised countries to divert attention from the more fundamental changes which the Third World wants.

One strategy towards structural change, at least at the international level, has been the call by a number of Third World governments

for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) - a package of measures dealing with terms and levels of trade, price stabilisation, debt re-negotiations and increased Third World influence in the IMF and World Bank. (Some have criticised the NIEO proposals as not going far enough : e.g. Galtung (quoted in Frank (*2), pp.14,15)) notes that little attention is given to the international division of labour, and that NIEO may mean "some kind of 'capitalism for everybody' charter".) However, many in the Third World have perceived a conflict between the basic needs approach (e.g. as advocated by the World Bank) and their demands for a NIEO. Streeten (* (2)) points out the nature of the conflict :

"The NIEO aims at revising the rules of international economic relations so as to provide more equal opportunities to all governments, whereas basic needs is concerned with the needs of individuals and households...

The NIEO would eliminate conditions imposed on resource transfers : basic needs would wish to make transfers conditional upon their reaching the poor, or would select those governments that are committed to such an approach."

Streeten, however, goes on to argue that such a conflict need not exist :

"A basic needs programme that does not build on the self-reliance and self-help of governments and countries is in danger of degenerating into a global charity programme. A NIEO that is not committed to meeting basic needs is liable to transfer resources from the poor in rich countries to the rich in poor countries."

NGOs exist because people wish to alleviate the conditions described in Section 1.1, and NGOs are therefore unlikely to ignore basic needs considerations. Nevertheless, the ways in which NGOs interpret their objectives may lie anywhere in the spectrum from a restructuring of world society to the "global charity" referred to by Streeten above, and the position in this spectrum will affect the balance which NGOs seek between project support overseas and programmes to change attitudes and policies in Britain.

However, the choice of approach remains both a question of ideology and of efficiency, as decisions must be taken about the desired type of society, and, in the absence of hard evidence, assumptions must be made about the major forces of change. As was noted in Section 2.1, NGOs will rarely be able to completely commit themselves to one or other approach. Overseas staff, British-based staff, fund-raisers,

trustees and management committees and supporters' groups all may have different views of development. There is therefore an element of compromise in what NGOs do and say. This need not always lead to conflict, as support for an individual project may be justifiable under more than one of the above approaches, but as several NGOs are being drawn more openly into the political arena through a shift in policy towards approach (3), or through the provision of basic needs to those involved in conflicts, tension within NGOs and between NGOs and their supporters is likely to increase (see Part IV).

Footnotes

1. Furtado (*, p.87) reports that in spite of rapid GNP growth in Brazil between 1960 and 1970, inequality increased and the increase in incomes for the poorest 80% of the population was negligible. According to Heatley (*, p.7),

"...in 1965...it was necessary to work in Sao Paulo for 87 hours to earn enough money to buy basic food supplies for one month, by 1974, 155 hours of work were required."

2. Even in the post-colonial period the theory may not be free from ideology. Rostow's 'take-off' theory of economic growth has been described as an "overtly political instrument of cold-war ideology" (Barracough, quoted in Letellier and Moffit (*, p.30). According to Letellier and Moffit :

"The function of this notion (i.e. Rostow's theory) during the Cold War era was to convince much of the Third World that by inviting in multinationals, concentrating on primary exports and taking the advice of development economists, they would usher in the stage of "take-off" and thereafter proceed to develop essentially as the advanced countries had."

3. The arguments are described, for example, in Elliott (*) and in Seers (*, pp.5,6).
4. According to Ahluwalia (*, p.17) the trickle-down theory can be traced to a study of historical data for developed countries, but as is pointed out in section 2.3 (3), the experiences of the developed countries cannot necessarily be taken as a guide for the Third World.
5. At seminars for NGOs' staff, this writer has often heard trickle-down-type views expressed. According to one NGO committee member (in an internal NGO discussion paper),

"I am not convinced that the "trickle-down" theory of development has been disproved ; it is taking too short a view of history to suggest that it has failed to deliver the goods

in Third World countries because it has not yet succeeded in reducing inequalities...

...we should, with our own history in mind, be extremely loth to limit our aid policies on grounds of unequal social conditions in a recipient country."

6. Studies by George (*), Hayter (*(1)) and Lappé, Collins and Kinley (*) show the pre-occupation of many international agencies with the modern, growth-orientated, sectors of Third World countries. The World Bank now claims to put more emphasis on alleviating poverty, but retains growth as an objective rather than as a consequence of development : according to a World Bank report in 1978,

"...unless economic growth in the developing countries can be substantially accelerated, the now inevitable increases in population will mean that the numbers of the absolute poor will remain unacceptably high even at the end of the century.

The twin objectives of development, then are to accelerate economic growth and to reduce poverty." (*World Bank (2), p.iii).

Nevertheless, Lappé and Collins (*(2), p.42) comment that :

"...even a cursory survey of AID (i.e. U.S.AID) as well as World Bank or regional bank programs, reveals that "trickle down" still prevails. In many countries the major outlays of AID and of the World Bank (approximately two-thirds of the total lending in the Bank's case) continue to be for infrastructural projects...that at best benefit those who already control a country's productive assets and... further concentrate that control and thereby erode the situation of the poor."

7. Keith Griffen, in 'Underdevelopment in Spanish America', Allen and Unwin, 1968, quoted in Long (*, p.71).
8. Lists of references in Edwards (*), Leys(*, chpt. 1), Long (*, p.71) and the 'Africa Study Group' magazine, Vol. 1. No.4, London, 1978 (?) all suggest Baran (*) (1957) as a principal starting point of underdevelopment theories. According to Leys (*, p.4), "Paul Baran...has good claims to be regarded as the most influential founder of contemporary 'underdevelopment' theory".
9. Davidson (*(2)) has shown, however, that many parts of Africa have had as long, if not longer contact with European capitalism as countries of Latin America, although European settlement and direct political control are (except in a few cases) more recent. Among those analysing Africa as 'underdeveloped' are Amin (*), Leys (*) and Rodney (*).
10. Adrian Adams (*, p.475) puts this limitation more forcefully. Although she accepts the "radical critique" of development, she writes :

"All it has done has been to create, alongside the activities of development experts a body of ideas which cannot embody themselves in action, and so proliferate in helpless parasitic symbiosis with that which they criticise."

NUTRITION

Chapter 2 has looked at some of the problems facing NGOs in their analyses of Third World poverty and in their choices of approach to improving the conditions of poor communities. This chapter and the next look at two specific objectives - combatting malnutrition, and promoting self-reliance. NGOs often regard these objectives as priorities for their work.

That people may face hunger, or even starvation, gives NGOs a strong reason for demanding support from the public. Here it is argued that quite apart from the emotional appeal of hunger, there is a case for NGOs having a nutritional objective. However, NGOs still must decide how they are to set about trying to improve nutritional standards, and it is noted that the approach they choose may depend of their wider views of the development process. It is argued that it may not be possible to see problems and projects in nutritional terms alone : malnutrition may indicate that a problem exists, but the roots of the problem may lie in the wider political and economic system.

Contents :

- 3.1 The case for a nutritional objective*
- 3.2 Approaches to the alleviation of malnutrition*
- 3.3 Problem analysis using nutritional information*

Related appendices :

- II The possible use of nutritional status as an indicator of rural problems*
- III A possible approach to the analysis of nutritional problems*

3. NUTRITION

3.1 The case for a nutritional objective

The original objectives of many NGOs are shown in their names - Freedom from Hunger, the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, Bread for the World, and so on. These NGOs were formed as a humanitarian response to acute shortages existing in many parts of the world. Through their involvement in critical famine situations, NGOs have become aware of the more permanent conditions of poverty from which disasters can arise, and lack of food has come to be seen as only one component of the deprivation from which many communities suffer.

In a disaster the primary objective is to save lives, but in a more common situation of Third World poverty, how should an NGO set its priorities for action? Although an NGO's concerns must be extended to factors other than nutrition, a case can be made for retaining the removal of malnutrition (**1) as a most important, perhaps the most important, objective.

This proposition has probably been accepted by some NGOs, and the case can be argued in several ways :

- (i) At least 460 million people, about half of them young children, are suffering from a severe degree of protein-energy malnutrition (*ILO (2), p.21).
- (ii) The lack of sufficient food to maintain the body in a state of physical well-being must be one of the worst deprivations from which man can suffer. As Berg (*, p.28) puts it :

"It is well-being, not income, that determines whether a man, rich or poor, has the capacity to enjoy (the) most fundamental sources of human satisfaction. Well-being is the primary requisite, the sine qua non, that determines the utility men derive from all other forms of consumption, whether measurable or not."

- (iii) Although malnutrition may not mean starvation, it is nevertheless a killer. Especially with young children, resistance to disease is lowered resulting in high mortality rates (**2).
- (iv) Initially improved nutrition may reduce mortality and exacerbate population-growth problems. But it can be argued that a high birth rate is a response to high infant mortality of which poor nutrition is often a principal cause, and improved nutrition may therefore be a precondition of a reduced birth rate (**3). A reduction in the birth rate may also lead to substantial improvements in economic growth, in aggregate as well as per capita terms (*Coale and Hoover).
- (v) Malnutrition reduces a man's capacity for work, and this is likely to be a constraint on a community's self-development. The circle of malnutrition - low output - malnutrition needs to be broken (**4).
- (vi) There is evidence that malnutrition may impair mental as well as physical abilities, especially in young children (**5).
- (vii) The cost of preventing malnutrition may be very much less than the cost of treating it. Looking at the cost of supplementary feeding programmes for undernourished young children (assuming their existing diets give 75% of protein and 67% of calorie requirements), Berg (*, p.24) concludes that :

"This annual cost to prevent malnutrition is approximately the same as the daily cost to treat it in a number of countries" (Berg's emphasis).

There is therefore much cause for humanitarian concern over the size and seriousness of Third World problems of malnutrition. Of this NGOs seem to be aware : not only is attacking malnutrition close to the centres of most NGOs' basic aims, but NGOs also appear to have realised that hunger is something which is likely to

arouse the sympathy of their potential donors. However, while hunger may feature prominently in NGOs' publicity, the concern for malnutrition is not nearly so clear from the portfolios of projects supported by NGOs. Whether it is fair to accuse NGOs of emphasising malnutrition to increase fundraising is considered in section 13.3, but assessing the extent to which NGOs are combatting malnutrition overseas raises questions about what the fundamental causes of malnutrition in the Third World are, and as a consequence, about what types of projects are likely to improve nutritional standards.

3.2 Approaches to the alleviation of malnutrition

(1) Food aid

This might at first appear the most obvious response. If a person is suffering from lack of food (or of a particular nutrient) the most direct and immediate form of help may be to supply the food as aid. In the early days of NGOs such as Oxfam when the task was to help refugees survive until political solutions in post-war Europe made resettlement possible, food aid may have been the only option. Such situations were emergency ones, and short-term measures were needed until longer-term solutions could be found.

In the Third World emergency situations also arise in which food aid is needed to save lives, but if NGOs see their role as being to tackle the more chronic problems of malnutrition then food aid may be more questionable as an approach. Food aid can only be considered 'developmental' if it gives Third World communities the possibility of moving towards a position in which they can maintain adequate nutritional standards without further reliance on aid (**6). One approach is through 'food-for-work' projects - development projects (not necessarily concerned with food production) in which wages are paid in food - but a study by Stevens (*) of several such projects found an "extreme inefficiency" (ibid. p.203), partly caused by the lack of other forms of aid for the projects. Moreover, whether reliance on food aid could be overcome would depend on the nature of the project.

Thus food aid on its own is inadequate as an attack on malnutrition. In fact studies at national level in some countries have indicated that food aid can exacerbate problems in the long-term by reducing the prices to local food producers and by reducing the pressure on governments to take appropriate action (**7). From a study of food aid to four African countries Stevens (*, p.202) concluded that, "Except in certain limited ways ... food aid is generally less effective than other forms of finance", and his evidence "showed a very weak link between food aid and nutritional improvement".

Furthermore, food aid can present major problems of distribution. Malnutrition is often found in remote areas where communications are difficult, and finding efficient ways of actually distributing food aid to the malnourished may not be easy - there are reports of food not reaching those who need it, either because of corruption or because of the nature of the distribution channels used, and according to Lappe and Collins (*(2), p.44), "even U.S. government agencies ... agree that food aid rarely reaches the hungry or even gets out of the country's urban areas". That food aid does not always reach those for whom it was intended is a criticism which NGOs often need to face. Even when food aid does reach the area in which it is required, there is the problem of determining who the malnourished are, and what nutrients they require.

(2) Increasing local food production

A clear alternative to food aid is to help the malnourished to grow the extra food which they require. While food aid can usually be seen as a basic-needs approach of the 'relief' type (section 2.3 (2)), increasing the food production of those vulnerable to malnutrition generally corresponds to the 'developmental' side of basic needs. It must be ensured, of course, that the extra food produced will be consumed by those who need it (**8). For communities or households not engaged in food production the approach may be to increase general incomes (e.g. NGOs have often supported handcraft co-operatives), but this will only alleviate malnutrition if there is available food which people can buy.

This approach seems popular with many NGOs : support for market gardens, agricultural training schemes, small irrigation projects and animal traction programmes all appear regularly in NGOs' lists of grants. Assisting food production cannot, of course, be a complete substitute for food aid in famine situations as time will be needed before farmers can benefit from a harvest, but increased food production offers better chances of breaking any dependence on food aid.

Sometimes, of course, malnutrition may be caused by a shortage of a particular nutrient rather than a general food shortage, and in such cases an NGO must be more discriminating, promoting production of appropriate foods to compensate for deficiencies in the diet. Several NGOs give support to mother-and-child health care programmes which include sessions on nutrition, often encouraging mothers to grow vegetables and fruit to supplement cereal-based diets. Nutrition education by itself may raise nutritional standards in cases where problems stem from the use, rather than a shortage of food and resources for food production (appendix III gives examples of such problems) (**9).

(3) Tackling the economic structures which cause malnutrition

The two approaches considered above are based on the premise that malnutrition is the result of a country or community not being able to produce or buy enough to feed itself. This, some argue, is not always the case, and even when it is, the shortage may have been triggered by a natural calamity, but the underlying cause is within the economic system governing the control of food production and distribution.

In support of this proposition it has been pointed out that while famines have occurred from time to time, the number of people affected and the extent of their suffering has not always been related to the amount of food available. Hayter (*2), p.57) notes that :

"The deaths resulting from the Great Bengal Famine of 1943, according to A. K. Sen, amounted to as many as three million. Sen says that there was no significant decline in the amount of food available in that year compared to

previous years in which there were no famines; the problem was that people in the rural areas in Bengal did not have the money to buy it."

Lappé and Collins (*⁽¹⁾, p.89) have examined the Sahel drought of the early 1970s and have noted that :

"During the drought years 1970 - 1974, the total value of agricultural exports from Sahelian countries - a startling \$1.5 billion dollars - was three times that of all cereals imported into the region."

From examples of famine in Africa and Asia they conclude that :

"drought cannot be considered the cause of famine. Drought is a natural phenomenon. Famine is a human phenomenon. Any link that does exist is precisely through the economic and political order of a society that can either minimize the human consequences of drought or exacerbate them."

(ibid., p.95)

The "economic and political order" which Lappé and Collins see as a root cause of much Third World malnutrition is the same structure which some see as dividing the world into 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' parts (in the sense of section 2.3 (3)). Joy (*⁽²⁾, p.9) notes that "poor nutrition is not necessarily a characteristic of rural subsistence communities", and drawing on the work of Castro (*), Rodney (*, pp 258-261) has examined the effects of colonialism in rural communities in Africa, concluding that "Colonialism created conditions which led not just to periodic famines, but to chronic under-nourishment, malnutrition and deterioration in the physique of the African people". Castro's work also led Baran (*, p. 329) to comment that :

"an intra-national and international specialization that is so organised that one participant of the team specializes in starvation while the other assumes the white man's burden of collecting the profits can hardly be considered a satisfactory arrangement for the attainment of the greatest happiness for the greatest number."

The mechanisms by which colonialism, or more generally the penetration of Third World societies by Western capitalism, has left these societies more vulnerable to malnutrition are seen by the above authors to be the expropriation of land and labour

for the growing of crops for export rather than for food, and the impoverishment of the soil and erosion caused by the intensive farming of a few cash crops (**10). Under colonial rule much land, and generally the most fertile land, was taken over for plantations and farms for expatriate settlers (**11), and this pattern of land use (and sometimes even ownership) has not changed much with the gaining of independence (**12). Local labour was required to work the expropriated land, and was obtained by force or by the economic pressure of taxation or loss of land. Thus the proportion of workers growing food for local needs declined, subsistence farmers were often pushed into lands which were agriculturally poorer, and more people became dependent for their food on a market system in which food supplies and prices can fluctuate considerably.

What would be the implications for an NGO if it were to accept the above arguments as the principal explanations of malnutrition in the Third World? The analysis suggests that malnutrition is just one symptom, albeit an important one, of underdevelopment, and the remarks made in sub-section 2.3(3) about the role of NGOs are relevant - working for a long-term reduction in malnutrition would require supporting organisations and forms of political action aimed at changing the economic and political structures of underdevelopment. This need not mean, however, that there is no place for a nutritional objective - an NGO may see a case for humanitarian intervention with emergency food aid to complement its longer-term programmes, and support for food production projects may help communities decrease their dependence on the existing economic system. Some NGOs have also claimed that some nutrition projects can have a catalytic effect, helping people to get a greater awareness of their position in the economic structure, or providing a project around which local organisation can take place. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that an improvement in people's economic situation would automatically solve all nutritional problems (e.g. problems may lie in the composition of the diet, or increased incomes may make it

possible for people to change to diets of lower nutritional value, e.g. processed rather than fresh foods) and thus there is a case for retaining a nutritional objective alongside other wider aims (**13).

3.3 Problem analysis using nutritional information

The fact that NGOs may consider it necessary to see malnutrition in a wider context of underdevelopment does not diminish the seriousness of malnutrition as a Third World problem, and it need not, as noted above, detract from the importance of tackling malnutrition as an objective for NGOs. The case for a nutritional objective can be argued on the close links between measures of nutritional status and other indicators of underdevelopment : many general problems with which NGOs are concerned are causes of malnutrition and in some cases, symptoms. For example :

Poverty : low income, unemployment, land shortage, poor housing, etc. If a family has few resources, there is a high risk that they will not be able to buy or produce sufficient quantity or quality of food, and hence malnutrition.

Social problems : split-up of the family through men searching for work, migration of families because of natural disaster or political upheaval, change in social customs through change in methods of production. Migrations are associated with problems of low income, and therefore malnutrition. Changes in social customs may mean changes in diet, often for the worse, and they may leave mothers with less time for child-feeding.

Problems of the handicapped : these constitute problems because of their inability to provide for themselves. Without the assistance of the local community or an agency, malnutrition will result. Moreover, it has been estimated that there are

100 million people who have been disabled through malnutrition (*WHO).

Health problems : Poor health is both a cause and a consequence of malnutrition.

Thus malnutrition can arise as the result of various different types of problem, and nutritional status can therefore act as a pointer to the existence of other problems (although malnutrition may not be a feature of every situation of under-development (**14)). It remains to be considered whether information on nutritional status can be used by NGOs in identifying and analysing problems.

A first stumbling-block to a nutritional approach may be the availability of data. If an NGO suspects problems in a particular area (e.g. from news reports, project requests, field staff reports, etc.) the likelihood that nutritional information exists may not be great. An NGO may be able to carry out a survey in the area, but there are likely to be constraints of time, resources, and even politics.

Secondly, even where data is available, there may be problems in interpretation. During the study several different types of nutritional surveys were noted, and, as might be expected, the greater the accuracy required the greater are the resources required for the survey. There is also a more general problem in deciding what constitutes 'serious' malnutrition, particularly in view of the fact that nutritional status itself is a multi-dimensional concept (composed of the adequacies of the intakes of different essential nutrients) (**15). These problems of measurement and interpretation are discussed in more detail in appendix II.

Thirdly, if a problem is identified through nutritional measurements, it may be difficult to analyse the cause of the problem using nutritional data as the starting point. For example, if malnutrition is found in a community, it may arise from :

- (i) low income levels (subsistence or monetary) ;
- (ii) the way in which income is used (e.g. variety and use of crops produced) ;
- (iii) the way in which food is prepared and used within the household ;
- (iv) diseases which affect the body's utilisation of food.

If, say, low income levels were identified as the major factor causing malnutrition, it would be necessary to examine food production techniques, other possible sources of income, the distribution of income within the community, etc. Hence to understand the underlying causes of malnutrition it may be necessary to make a much wider analysis of the community as an economic and social system, including an explanation of the outside influences. Moreover, in this more complete analysis it is quite probable that key problems would themselves be sufficiently apparent as not to require corroborating nutritional evidence.

In the course of this research, an attempt was made to devise a scheme whereby NGOs could analyse problems identified through nutritional surveys. However, because of the wide range of circumstances which could lead to malnutrition, it became apparent that this approach would not often be helpful. The scheme which was considered in the research is described in appendix III.

Summarising, there is a strong case for NGOs regarding the removal of malnutrition as a priority in their work, adequate nourishment being perhaps the most basic of basic needs. The knowledge that malnutrition exists, however, will not be enough to determine a course of action to remove it, and it may be necessary to see malnutrition as only one symptom of a state of underdevelopment.

Footnotes

1. In this thesis, following writers such as Bennett and Stanfield (*), Berg (*), Blankhart *(1) and (2)) Joy *(2)) and Maletnlema et al. (*), the term 'malnutrition' has been used to refer to conditions produced by nutrient deficiencies - usually a protein-calorie deficiency - rather than a more precise term such as under-nutrition.
2. See, for example, Berg (*), Cravioto and De Licardie (*, p.3] and Chetley (*, p.18). Sheets and Morris (*, p.43 and 50) give examples of the increase in the incidence of measles and of mortality during the droughts in the Sahel in the early 1970s.
3. According to a UN report ('Strategy Statement on Action to Avert the Protein Crisis in Developing Countries', 2nd June 1971) quoted in Barg (*, p.65) :

"the persistence of high mortality among infants and children is a major obstacle to family planning, as parents will not reduce the numbers of their children deliberately without greater assurance of their survival to adulthood. The reduction of malnutrition among infants and children thus emerges as a prerequisite for the fertility reduction without which the population explosion is assuming disastrous proportions."
4. Studies by Maletnlema (*) in Tanzania show a link between low calorie intakes and low calorie expenditures at work. Berg (*, p.13) gives six references to studies which show a relationship between nutrition and work performance, and Barg (*) considers how nutritional improvement may as a result assist national development.
5. Cravioto and De Licardie (*, pp.9-18) consider a number of studies of the possible links between nutrition and mental development and conclude that :

"All the information available leads one to conclude that the existence of an association between protein-calorie malnutrition in infancy and retardation in mental development has been established beyond reasonable doubt. However, it must be emphasized that the fact of such an association provides strongly suggestive but by no means definite evidence that the lack of nutrients per se directly affects intellectual competence."
6. The dangers of countries becoming reliant on food aid have long been recognised. Indeed, some politicians in USA, the main supplier of food aid, have seen in this type of dependence the possibilities of 'leverage', food becoming an instrument of foreign policy (*George, and*Lappé and Collins (1), pp.378-380).
7. Lappé and Collins *(1), pp.376-378) give an example from Guatemala in which food aid depressed prices to the extent that two NGOs gave financial help to stabilise prices for producer co-operatives. They give other examples from South Korea, Colombia and Bolivia (*ibid. pp.371-374). Stevens (*), however, looking at examples in Tunisia, Botswana, Upper Volta and Lesotho, found the evidence on whether food aid is a disincentive to food production to be inconclusive.

8. Joy (*3), p.35) gives as an example a proposal to introduce grade cattle into a densely populated area of Africa :

"The proposal was supported on the grounds that it would provide milk in an area where there was much malnutrition. However, it seemed likely that (a) only a fraction of one per cent of the largest farmers of the area had the land to support grade dairy cows; (b) the milk they produced would mostly be sold more than a hundred miles away - perhaps to people with already adequate diets; (c) the employment effects would be negligible if not adverse; (d) there was a long run danger of a pressure to absorb small holdings to improve the viability of the dairy farms. Thus, locally at least, there was every reason to suppose that nutrition problems would be aggravated rather than eased by the milk production programme."

9. Although nutrition education could have been treated as a separate approach, it has been grouped along with 'increasing local food production' as it is also concerned with trying to introduce changes in a locality which may lead to permanent improvements in nutritional standards. Moreover, in most cases encountered by the writer, nutrition education had to be accompanied by other measures to increase food production or increase incomes. For example, it was reported in central Tanzania that nutrition education was needed as peasants often sold their eggs and poultry when they were suffering from a protein shortage. But according to local nutrition workers, while the peasants were well aware of the fact that they ought to feed eggs and poultry to their children, eggs and poultry were all that the peasants had to sell to earn their cash requirements.
10. As examples, Hayter (*2), pp.54,55) notes the destructive effects of groundnuts in West Africa, cotton in Egypt, coffee and tea in Sri Lanka, and sugar in Cuba.
11. For example, tea plantations in Sri Lanka (*Bond), plantations of groundnuts, cocoa, palm oil and cotton in parts of Africa (*Lappé and Collins (1), pp.102.103), and European settler farming in Kenya (see chapter 6). Even in countries which were nominally independent, Western investment had similar effects e.g. the plantations of American transnational companies in Central America (*Galleano).
12. Thus Cuba, in spite of having experienced a political revolution, remains heavily dependent on sugar production. Lappé and Collins (*2), pp.27-29) use the case of Cuba in arguing that export agriculture is not "the enemy", the major problem being the control of agriculture by an economic élite more interested in profit than nutrition. Nevertheless, Lappé and Collins do not mention the problems created for Cuba by a heavy dependence on sugar as a single main export crop, and fluctuations in the world market for sugar.
13. Berg, Scrimshaw and Call (*, pp.91-100) report a discussion of the relative priority of nutrition programmes against income and employment generating programmes, concluding only that there is a need for both. Several studies show a strong

correlation between incomes and calorie and protein intakes in Third World countries (*World Bank (1), pp.82, 83; *Sukhatme, p. 13).

14. Before using nutritional status as an indicator of underdevelopment, one needs to ask what problems might exist in well-nourished communities. The most common situation may be when malnutrition is a seasonal or occasional problem, e.g. in drought-prone areas. Clearly an NGO must consider the possibility of variations in nutritional status and not, for example, make an assessment on a single nutritional survey made a few months after a good harvest. Yet it is possible to think of permanently well-nourished communities requiring development assistance. For example :

- a hard-working community of subsistence farmers living in poor conditions with few facilities for leisure;
- low-income employees worked hard by a landlord/employer who gives them sufficient food but little else;
- a community with little productive employment but with nutritional standards maintained by aid inputs;
- a community in which all of working age have migrated to the towns, but remittances to the community are sufficient to purchase food;
- a highly productive community with socially or politically divisive factors leading to tensions and a high crime rate.

By using 'nutritional viability' - the ability of a community to maintain its nutritional standards at a satisfactory level without outside help - may identify some of these problems, but nutritional viability is a much more complex criterion than a single measure of nutritional status. Thus it must be concluded that although nutritional status may not be a perfect indicator of underdevelopment, it may at least identify most serious problems.

15. At a seminar at the Institute for Development Studies in Nairobi in June 1976, a group of nutritionists rejected an approach to problem identification based on the use of a single nutritional indicator (as proposed by the writer - see appendices II and III). Their view was that all forms of nutrient deficiency were important and that to base problem identification on, say, anthropometric measurements, would lead to serious vitamin deficiencies, etc. being overlooked.

SELF-RELIANCE

"Help people to help themselves" is a familiar slogan of NGOs, and many NGOs have the promotion of self-reliance as a criterion for project support.

The idea is appealing to NGOs and Third World governments alike. It provides the NGO fund-raiser with a reply to the reluctant donor who complains of the bottomless pit of aid. It contains the message that aid works, and that a single grant may remove a community's need for outside assistance. To Third World communities and governments it may be an ideology for mobilising resources, a declaration of political independence, or even a marketing policy for development programmes requiring aid. This chapter, however, argues that while the ideas of 'self-help' and 'self-reliance' are related to many important development concepts (by any definition of development), and that while self-help may be an important determinant of the success of a project, the emphasis put on 'self-help' and 'self-reliance' by NGOs may be misleading.

4. SELF-HELP AND SELF-RELIANCE

"Self-help" and "self-reliance" are often used by NGOs to describe the same sets of policies. A "self-help" project is one in which the participants make efforts themselves towards improving their lot. A community will become "self-reliant" if it can maintain its level of consumption through its own efforts, i.e. through "self-help" alone. Self-reliance therefore implies self-help. Conversely, self-help is often seen as a strategy towards greater self-reliance. A self-help project needing aid need not be a contradiction : an input of aid may complement a community's efforts towards self-reliance. (A project which does not itself involve self-help could, of course, assist towards self-reliance, although self-help must be a characteristic of the community if the goal is to be reached). Self-help and self-reliance, although logically different concepts, are therefore often used synonymously.

During the past two decades, 'self-help' and 'self-reliance' have become popular slogans with many Third World governments, and also with many NGOs. But in the same way as NGOs are reluctant to be specific about what they understand by 'development', NGOs rarely give any explanation of what they mean by 'self-help' and 'self-reliance'. This chapter examines some alternative uses of the terms, and relates them to views of development and to the concerns of NGOs.

Firstly, it should be noted that self-reliance is not a new concept. If African communities had not been self-reliant in the pre-colonial era, they would have ceased to exist long before the twentieth century. Self-reliance was a main feature of the ideology of the eighteenth century philosopher, Rousseau (*Tickner), as it was of Mahatma Gandhi (*Sachs). D'Epinay and Necker (*) give Paraguay in the period 1811

until the country's disastrous defeat in the War of the Triple Alliance in 1870 as an early example of a country trying to pursue self-reliance as a national policy. The idea - on which present-day self-help projects are based - of members of a community voluntarily (or at least, compelled only by social norms) contributing their time and resources to a project for the benefit of the community is not new : many self-help groups are based on traditional co-operative work groups of tribal society (e.g. *Mbithi (3],pp.154-158) and such self-help activity has been a feature of the history of western countries as well (*Bolnick).

Why now, in the twentieth century, after most colonial states have achieved their constitutional independence, is self-reliance being stressed as a developmental philosophy ? Self-reliance suggests that a country or a community will develop without outside help, i.e. without needing to depend on others. Thus, self-reliance is a strategy for economic, and therefore political independence, a point made in Tanzania's Arusha Declaration (*TANU). According to Baker et al. (*,p.24) :

"The foundation of self-reliance lies in an awareness of the dangers of dependency, and a desire to follow paths of action which give the local community the greatest command over its future well-being. Poor communities are almost by definition dependent communities, vulnerable to the actions of more powerful authorities and economic interests, and unable to control their immediate environment".

If self-reliance is seen as a strategy for removing the problems of dependency, then it seems relevant when assessing self-help projects as parts of that strategy, to ask the nature or cause of the dependency. The meaning of self-reliance will depend on the level (e.g. community, government) at which the term is used, and hence at which the dependency operates. Baker et al. (*,p.24) write :

"It can be the dominant national ethic, as in China and Tanzania, with greater or lesser attempts to translate this into action at the sub-national level. In openly competitive societies such as Kenya or Nigeria, it may reflect the attempts of emergent groups to break into entrepreneur roles dominated by others who may well be identified in specific "tribal" terms".

Preiswerk (*,p.14) identifies three levels of "collective" self-reliance - regional, national and local - as well as "individual self-reliance".

(i) At regional (supranational) level

Galtung et al. (*) refer to the possibilities of the Third World as a whole, or groups of countries within it, co-operating in such a way as to reduce their dependency on the industrialised world. Although groups like the Andean Pact countries may contain elements of it, little progress has been made towards regional self-reliance.

(ii) At national level

The popularity of self-reliance as a slogan for governments of countries which have gained constitutional independence in the last two decades may arise from their realisation that in spite of 'independence', economic structures leave them dependent on the industrialised West. Another factor may be the realisation that there will be neither the foreign exchange nor enough external aid available to support all the development programmes promised to their populations, and so self-reliance calls on people to make greater efforts for their own development. These different aspects are contained in Tanzania's Arusha Declaration : it equates self-reliance with independence (*Nyerere, p.23); it recognises the shortage of money for development and the dangers of development controlled by external donors and investors (ibid., p.25); and it is an exhortation to hard work (ibid., p.32). Nevertheless, Tanzania has become one of the biggest recipients of aid in Africa (**1), and although it may have retained a certain independence in its foreign policy, it cannot be assumed that compromises have not been made in domestic policies where aid is involved (**2). Thus while self-reliance may be a valuable strategy for development (as argued by Galtung (*)), the extent to which it is an attainable goal is questionable given the present world order (**3).

It would, however, be a mistake to underestimate the potential of a national self-help ethos which can mobilise people for development work, apparently putting the community or nation before immediate self-interest. Self-help has sustained liberation movements in Vietnam, Guinea Bissau and Eritrea, and Cuba in the

face of economic aggression. In these examples, individuals will see support for the nation to be clearly in their own interests, but in more normal circumstances, it would not seem reasonable for an individual to give his labour or money to self-help projects without the prospect of direct benefits to himself, or without some form of coercion (even if only psychological social pressure), and the relationship of a national self-help movement to national policies needs to be closely examined. This leads to consideration of the nature of self-reliance or self-help at a local, or community, level.

(iii) Local self-reliance and self-help

This is the level at which NGOs often work, supporting community-based projects to which the communities themselves make some contribution. As noted above, the concept of a community self-help project is not new - traditionally it has been recognised that certain things can only be, or can more easily be achieved through communal action, and individuals would offer their services to others on the understanding that similar help would be received in return should the need arise. Thus this type of activity takes place when self-interest coincides with community-interest.

How then does such activity relate to self-help and self-reliance as nationally-propounded ideologies? People are urged to initiate self-help projects as part of a national development effort, but even in countries such as Tanzania where national policies are more sympathetic to the rural population than is the case in many other Third World countries, it is improbable that many local projects will arise through a concern for the national interest, and unlikely that national and individual interests will often coincide. Hyden (*) argues that even in Tanzania the peasantry will be suspicious of any form of government advice or interference. A more likely explanation of high levels of participation in self-help projects in Tanzania may be the incentive of aid often offered to self-help schemes, and the risk of friction with the local bureaucracy for those who do not participate. Another factor may be that self-help propaganda makes peasants more aware of what might be achieved through collective action. According to Rogers (*, p.124), this may be, "Because the subsistence farmer's perception of the

possibility of self-help is low, dependence on government is high". In colonial times, certain developmental initiatives may have been culturally beyond peasant communities, and there may have been few ways in which such communities could have attracted outside resources.

Countries much less concerned with political independence than Tanzania have also urged their populations towards self-help as a way of mobilising them for development programmes. Here again, the hypothesis that a self-help ideology creates an environment in which initiatives will be taken is much more plausible than any argument based on national interest. In fact, self-help projects can arise as a reaction to national policies. This may be the case in Kenya, where some explain self-help in terms of an "ever-present confrontation between government programmes and people's popular needs", "a re-affirmation of the periphery's alienation", and an attempt to orientate government planning (views reported in *Mbithi and Rasmusson).

(iv) Individual self-reliance and self-help

Most would consider it undesirable for an individual to live in a state of complete dependency, and thus self-reliance at the individual level is usually considered a desirable goal. The use of the term "self-help" at the level of the individual, however, is often linked to the idea of the individual making progress in society, rather than a general improvement in the conditions of the society as a whole. According to Preiswerk (*,p.12) :

"Liberal capitalism values the individualistic concept of self-help...collective self-reliance is only compatible with a social cosmology which favours the group as opposed to the individual ; recognisable common interests versus personal aggrandisement ; generosity and just distribution versus individual accumulation ; ..."

(Preiswerk's emphasis)

Some NGOs, therefore, only use the term "self-reliance" at a collective level, and indeed, only give grants to groups of people or organisations : they would consider that to enable particular individuals to escape from poverty without affecting the general poverty of the society would not constitute "development". Other NGOs, however, do operate programmes which give aid directly to individuals and also use the term "self-

help' at the level of the individual. These differences are discussed in chapter 12.

At whatever level the term 'self-reliance' is applied, NGOs do not appear to precisely define the concept. As Galtung (*, p.19) notes, "One advantage with the term 'self-reliance' is its open-endedness. The term has a certain nucleus of content, but it is up to all of us to give it more precise connotations ...". Complete independence in the sense of self-sufficiency is not a viable option, except perhaps for supra-national groupings. In Galtung's ideology, self-reliant units would ideally be self-sufficient in basic food production, and would exchange their produce in equal partnership with other self-reliant units. In their aims of 'promoting self-reliance', however, NGOs do not seem to show such sophistication in their thinking.

One important aspect for NGOs to consider is to whom the 'self' refers. Where there is an inequitable distribution of wealth the rich will have greater opportunity for self-help than the poor, and self-help may be effectively the self-advancement of a group or individual in a free-enterprise system, perhaps without consideration of the consequences for other sectors of society. To insist on self-help from a poor community may be adding yet another tax, and thereby causing rather than alleviating hardship, a factor which NGOs must remember when using self-help as a condition for project support (**4). Moreover, it cannot always be assumed that self-help contributions are given voluntarily, and even where the pressure to contribute is only psychological it cannot be assumed that the project is designed to meet a local need.

A positive feature of self-help for NGOs is that self-help involves local participation in project planning, thereby avoiding the dangers of having projects imposed on communities in a top-down fashion with the associated risks of misjudging local conditions, resources, constraints, and people's aspirations (**5). Projects in peasant communities involve not just production systems, but complete socio-economic systems within which all linkages may not be properly

understood. If a self-help project arises as a genuine community initiative, it is more likely to take account of local conditions and to satisfy locally felt needs than if the project was planned externally, using incomplete information. For an NGO this may be an important consideration : the NGO is unlikely to have detailed knowledge of an area and unless a project involves local people in some way, it may prove to be an irrelevance, or worse. (NGOs may define this problem as the need to have a guarantee of local commitment (**6) - thus, the local community can be blamed for the NGO's planning errors !).

Summarising self-help and self-reliance are important concepts, but the situations in which the terms are applied need to be carefully examined before it can be determined whether or not they are positive characteristics. Self-help can be a demonstration of support for national policies, or a reaction against them ; it can be a form of entrepreneurship in a free-enterprise system, or an attempt to break free from a system of dependency ; a self-help ethos within a community may be a precondition for a developmental change, but self-help within a project is not enough to ensure that the project will be developmental (however defined). How self-help and self-reliance relate to different approaches to development will be considered more fully in the case study (Chapter 8), but here a few observations can be made.

- (1) Because of its potential in mobilising resources, it may seem reasonable to conclude that self-help will contribute to economic growth. But the example of Kenya considered later will show that this is not necessarily true.
- (2) Logically, self-help appears to have no particular relevance to a basic-needs approach, yet some see self-reliance as a key element in the basic-needs policy (*Ghai,p.7), and the ILO statement more cautiously claims that "A basic-needs orientated policy implies the participation of the people in making the decisions which affect them..." (*ILO (2),p.32) (although the deduction of the implication is not convincing). Galtung (*,p.27) argues that self-reliance means more than a basic-needs approach, the latter being compatible with the provision of welfare aid in situations of dependency.

- (3) In a structural-change approach to development with its emphasis on removing dependency and external domination, self help for self reliance "as a way of resisting centre-periphery formations" (*Galtung, p.21) must clearly be at the centre of any strategy. In the words of the Cocoyoc Declaration (**7),

"To arrive at this condition of self-reliance, fundamental economic, social and political changes to the structure of society will often be necessary."

But for an NGO to concentrate on the details of local self-help initiatives while ignoring the system and the dependency relationships against which they are directed would be very short-sighted.

Thus self-help and self-reliance are important concepts for NGOs both in project planning and assessment, and in statements of their wider aims. To quote self-help or self-reliance as a general policy, however, could be meaningless or even misleading unless it is put in the context of a wider view of development.

Footnotes

1. Arnold (*(2), pp.171-177) notes that China, Canada, West Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the World Bank all make major inputs to Tanzania. However, Arnold concludes that :

"These and other aid inputs can be said to aid development. Yet the more one examines the aid picture, the less certain this proposition appears. The poorer a recipient, whatever its policies, the most likely it is that aid inputs simply help to keep the economy afloat. They do little to make the recipient country either more self-reliant or spark off any developments that will lead to the generation of more resources. Tanzania is an excellent example of this dilemma."

2. The "independence" of Tanzania's foreign policy must, however, be seen in a relativistic way. Certainly the nationalisation programme which followed the Arusha Declaration ran counter to Western interests, and earlier Tanzania had shown itself willing to forego British aid when it broke off diplomatic relations over UDI in Rhodesia. But even in 1975 Loxley and Saul (*, p.59) noted "Tanzania's continuing dependence on the internationalist system", and they went on to conclude that industrial priorities of the Second Five-Year Plan were partly at the mercy of external donors.

The World Bank increased its lending to Tanzania after initial caution towards Nyerere's policies. However, it cannot automatically be assumed that World Bank aid will not make Tanzania less self-reliant : e.g. World Bank support for tobacco-growing schemes in Tabora Region are likely to make Tanzania more dependent on the transnational companies which control the tobacco market (*Muller). More seriously, at the end of 1979 the IMF demanded major policy changes as a condition for a further loan, although after an initial refusal by Tanzania of the loan and an outspoken protest by Nyerere (reported, for example, in 'Development Dialogue', 1980:2, Dag Hammerskjold Foundation, Uppsala), a compromise was reached.

3. Frank (* (3), pp.25,26) concludes that :

"Independent national development in the Third World has proved to be a snare and a delusion; and self-reliance, collective or otherwise, is a myth that is supposed to hide this sad fact of life in the world capitalist system...

Despite - some now even contend because of - Cuban aid and Soviet backing, Angola gives precious little evidence of moving towards self-reliance... Frelimo is making greater efforts to promote national development through self-reliance, but so far without being able to extricate Mozambique from heavy dependence on South Africa and cautious involvement with Zimbabwe-Rhodesia."

4. It appears that most NGOs regard self-help as a positive feature in assessing requests for project support. Kenya Freedom from Hunger Council (see appendix V) generally insists on local contributions as a condition in making grants, and during the study it was claimed that Scottish War on Want also at one time used this as a strict condition.
5. That an advantage of self-help projects is the local involvement in their planning is a point made by Almy and Mbithi (*) and Mbithi and Rasmusson (*). In a study of ten rural projects, Mbithi (* (3), p.153) found a strong correlation between initiation by the community rather than by government officials, and success.
6. For example, it has been customary for British Volunteer Programme societies to ask organisations requesting volunteers to pay for the volunteers' monthly allowances, accommodation, etc. (the "local costs"). Baker et al. (*, p.30) in their evaluation of the BVP societies found that :

"It is usually argued that in order to demonstrate commitment, local costs should be provided by the project..."

But Baker et al. (ibid.) argue that

"...the degree of local commitment should be regarded as an issue to be resolved by the rigorous application of the project selection guidelines, and not by the arbitrary criterion of local costs."

7. A declaration made by a group of scientists and economists following an UNCTAD/UNEP seminar in 1974, quoted by Ghai (*, p.7).

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

This chapter considers the general nature of the work of NGOs in rural communities.

In pursuit of their aims - improving nutritional standards, encouraging self-reliance, etc. - NGOs become involved with societies in efforts to "promote development", or to "remove the barriers to change".

Firstly, it is argued that communities have a propensity to develop, in which case, if development is not taking place, then there must be a reason for it. The constraints to development, however, may be many and varied - for example, internal social factors and external economic relations may be as serious constraints as the shortage of resources. It is also noted that economic, social and political conditions of a community are so inter-related that any problems must be examined in the context of the complete social system. The final section of the chapter contains a list of possible constraints, and this is used in the analysis of the Kitui District study (Chapter 10).

CONTENTS :

- 5.1. Rural development and the constraints to change*
- 5.2. Problem analysis : some general observations*
- 5.3. The constraints to rural change*

Related appendix:

IV Examples of possible constraints to rural change.

5. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Rural development and the constraints to change

In this chapter the discussion concentrates on rural communities (**1). This is not a serious limitation from an NGO's viewpoint : the great majority of the population of most Third World countries live in rural areas, and it often in the rural areas that the most severe poverty is found, that there is the greatest lack of welfare services, etc. Consequently most NGO support goes to rural projects.

Why, however, are NGOs and other change agents needed to bring about 'rural development', and what roles can NGOs play in it ? It seems reasonable to hypothesise that communities want to 'develop', and that developmental changes will take place unless there are factors which prevent them : an individual is unlikely to suffer from poor health and living standards if he has the capacity to do something about it. It is therefore possible to see the role of NGOs as being to attempt to remove these 'obstacles' or 'barriers' to change (*Hurst, pp.4,42; *Long, pp.41-56), and indeed this is a way in which NGOs often describe their work.

The hypothesis that communities have a propensity to develop and will take the opportunities open to them has been proposed by a number of writers. According to Firth (*, p.35) :

"in the micro-economic sphere, peasants are well aware of the possibilities of rational economic actions and make strong endeavours to better their economic position. In their own traditional economy, they watch margins most carefully and switch their productive efforts accordingly. In conditions of development they have shown themselves

very apt to take advantage of the benefits to be obtained from new crops, such as rubber or cocoa, and it has been often the operators in the Western market or an alien government who have attempted to restrict their production. In the macro-economic field, they have not shown the same perspective, primarily because of lack of understanding of how large-scale commodity markets work and the existence of external competitors with differential advantages."

Also looking at the economics of peasant agriculture, Schultz (*, p.16) has argued that :

"the agricultural sector in a large class of poor countries is relatively efficient in using the factors of production at its disposal",

and hence that agricultural progress requires new inputs.

Firth, however, notes that peasant farmers do not take decisions on economic factors alone : their decisions may :

"involve a rational choice between alternatives offering different kinds of satisfactions, and these satisfactions may embody social as well as economic factors ... I am not **implying** that all economic opportunities are utilised. Institutional factors may often be significant in impeding use of a resource." (*Firth, p.24)

As well as recognising these social factors and institutional constraints, Lipton (*) has also challenged Schultz's economic analysis, noting that because factors such as climatic uncertainties and the dire consequences of harvest failure, farmers are unable to allocate their resources so as to maximise their expected production, and instead must seek a "survival algorithm" (*Lipton, pp.340,341). Thus the economic constraints to change may include, as well as the farmers' poverty, the farmers' consequent reluctance to take risks with the few resources they have.

The social constraints to change need not always be regarded as negative factors - in many societies the social structure may be a safeguard of community interests, and may provide security for a community's weaker members. Joy (*(1), p.182) states that :

"Traditional patterns of social rights and obligations commonly make provision against individual calamity and ensure that in bad years, everybody has some share of what food there is."

Moreover, social institutions may prevent individuals from adopting new methods of production or marketing which may be of advantage to themselves, but at the expense of the community : for most NGOs, 'development' is a process affecting communities, and economic optimisation by individuals within a community is not necessarily the same as the development of the community. The basis of some social institutions may be "the assumption that almost all good things in life, material and otherwise, exist in limited and unexpandable quantities" and that consequently "individual improvement can only be at the cost of that of others" (**2), or as put by Rogers (*, p.117) :

"if the system is relatively closed ... it logically follows that one can get ahead only at the expense of others ... if one man tries to eat a larger slice, the division of the pie for his peers is upset."

The effect of most modernising changes is to open up systems which in the past have been relatively closed. The work of NGOs may generally assist this process, integrating communities, for better or for worse, with national economic and political systems. Although NGOs may improve a community's understanding of the wider system of which it is a part and thereby help the community to be more competitive in that system, it may have a "Trojan Horse effect" (*Adams A., p.475), introducing more control by, and more dependency on, the system. The process of 'modernisation' may remove some of the constraints to change, but the introduction of new practices may undermine 'traditional' institutions (e.g. land tenure and reciprocal work agreements may be altered by the use of new varieties of seeds and methods of cultivation (*Joy (1))) and thereby remove the "institutional factors" which may have protected the community's interests. 'Traditional' societies, however, are not necessarily equitable, and modernising changes may give an opportunity for removing traditional injustices (e.g. *Epstein). To be able to foresee the consequences of its actions, an NGO may therefore need to gain some understanding of the nature of the wider society into which a community is being integrated.

Thus a community can be expected to advance economically, but within the limitations imposed by its resources and its knowledge of external factors, and by resistance to changes in its social structure. An NGO can promote change by removing limitations of resources of knowledge, but whether the change can be considered developmental will depend on the social as well as the economic consequences. The process of change involves both social and economic factors : economic change will bring about a social change, and social change may be a prerequisite of economic change.

5.2. Problem Analysis : Some General Observations

The discussion so far suggests that a systems approach to developmental problems is necessary. In Section 2.1, development was described as a "multi-dimensional process" in which many of the variables are causally related, and even if NGOs do not subscribe to what has been termed the "structural change" approach in Section 2.3, they must be aware of the diverse factors which influence progress towards their objectives, whatever these may be. For example, in Chapter 3, it was noted that malnutrition could be the result of a wide variety of socio-economic conditions, and in Chapter 4, that progress towards self-reliance may be determined by various political and economic factors.

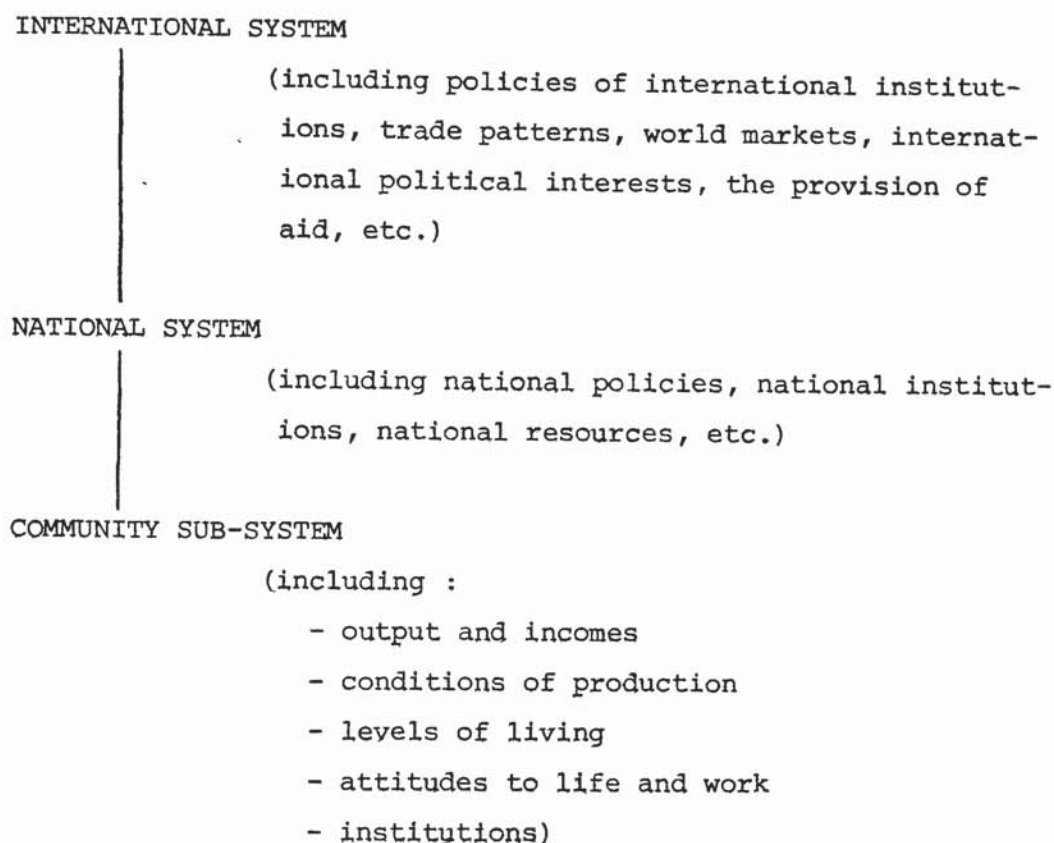
Myrdal (*, p.355) in looking at development problems at national level, has described the system as follows :

"What is actually meant in characterizing a country as "under-developed" is that there is in that country a constellation of numerous, undesirable conditions for work and life : outputs, income and levels of living are low ; many modes of production, as well as attitudes and behavioural patterns, are disadvantageous : and there are unfavourable institutions ranging from those at the state level to those governing social and economic relations in the family and the neighbourhood. They are evaluated as desirable or unfavourable from the standpoint of the desirability of "development" - a characterization afflicted with vagueness but definite enough to permit its use. There is a general causal relationship among all these conditions so that they form a social system. "Development" means the movement upwards of that whole system."

Thus Myrdal suggests a classification of the component parts of the system into "outputs and incomes, conditions of production, levels of living, attitudes towards life and work, institutions and policies" (ibid.). This classification can also be used when looking at problems at community level,

the level at which NGOs usually work, and in section 5.3 it has been used to classify potential constraints to rural change.

This thesis will not attempt to precisely formulate a systems model which could be used to describe the developmental process in a community, but the form of model which underlies the discussion has the following main parts :



In considering the problems of a particular community, an NGO would of course need to describe the system in much more detail, looking at particular levels of living such a health, education, etc., and the variables which affect them, before the NGO could decide how best to give assistance (although it will never be possible to quantify the relationships between all the different variables). An NGO may also need to assess where the principal sources of problems may lie - at community, national or international level - and this assessment may depend on the NGO's wider view of development. For example, although NGOs generally work at community level, they sometimes work with governments which, naturally, perceive the national system as having a beneficial

influence on the community sub-system, while following Frank's analysis (see section 2.3 (3)) NGOs may be led to seeing a chain of dependency and exploitation from the international system through the national system to the community sub-system (and consequently may see campaigning action in the West against what they perceive to be the sources of exploitation as a relevant response to rural problems in the Third World).

The parameters of the system at any time will determine the state of development, including the level of poverty, nutritional standards, employment opportunities and so on. An NGO will use its own criteria to decide if this state constitutes "a problem" (e.g. unacceptable health standards), and should it be regarded as a problem, the NGO will need to identify "the cause" and determine the possibilities for action. Thus the definition of the problem will not be unique as it depends on the NGO's values, but even given a single problem definition, there need be no single analysis of the cause.

Because of the relationship between parts of the system, no one factor can be regarded as "the cause". For example, a water shortage could be simultaneously regarded as not enough rain, an inadequate water supply system, lack of money to invest in water development, etc. and no one formulation need be more valid than another. Nevertheless, some features of the system may be considered more relevant to the problems than others. To take another example, consider a village dependent on cotton production for its income. Cotton yields may be above the national average, but the prices paid to growers may be much below average, leading to unacceptable levels of poverty. Both yields and prices are relevant factors in that an increase in either will improve the situation, but it would seem sensible to say that prices contribute more to the problem than yields. However, the idea of regarding some parts of the system as being more relevant to the problem than others needs to be used with care as it may result in opportunities being overlooked - e.g. in the above example there may be an easy way of making further improvements in yields. Some factors may be relevant in the stricter sense that the problem cannot be removed without changes in them.

Most communities will already be in a process of change before the intervention of an NGO - even if some "traditional" communities were ever in a near static state it is likely that their equilibrium will now have been disturbed by changes in the external influences - and it is likely that the NGO's contribution will have only a small effect on the change. Given this state of change, and the propensity of communities to develop (argued in Section 5.1), it seems pertinent to examine how problems can arise. There are three possibilities :

- (1) Chronic problems : problems from which communities have always suffered, and in some cases only now regarded as problems because of higher aspirations in levels of living.

Many problems may, however, be of more recent origin. In discussing nutrition, Joy (*2), p.9) has pointed out that "...generally, poor nutrition is associated with poverty and also with change, for poor nutrition is not necessarily a characteristic of rural subsistence communities" (Joy's emphasis). Such change may be of two types :

- (2) Evolutionary problems : resulting from ongoing changes within a community, e.g. a growing population causing land shortage, leading to over-use of land and soil exhaustion.
- (3) External problems : resulting from changes taking place outside the community, or imposed on the community from the outside. E.g. the mix of crops grown may be changed by market forces or extension advice leading to nutritional changes, and better development opportunities outside the community may lead to migration and social problems within it.

This classification would appear to offer an approach to problem analysis - an examination of how problems have arisen may help identify the relevant factors in deciding how problems might be removed. It also relates to the "great emphasis on historical research" of Cockcroft et al. (see Section 2.3(3)).

5.3. The Constraints to Rural Change

In Section 5.1 it was argued that the role of an NGO could be seen as that of removing the constraints to change (albeit selectively) and thereby allowing a community to develop under its own dynamic. The effectiveness of an NGO is likely to depend on how successfully it identifies the relevant constraints. Hunter (*, pp.27,28) has compared planning rural development with industrial network analysis : before a community can take a particular step forward, certain other conditions must have been reached - an NGO must analyse which conditions are impeding the next step in development.

This section presents a list of possible constraints, some of which can be regarded as self-evident, and some of which have been reported in other studies, by NGO staff, etc. These constraints , loosely classified according to Myrdal's six categories, are as follows :

1. Output and incomes
 - a. Insufficient resources to implement change
 - b. Insufficient resources to risk change
 - c. Proposed changes not sufficiently attractive economically

2. Conditions of production
 - a. Environmental/technical constraints
 - b. Economic infrastructural constraints

3. Levels of living
 - a. Disability from disease or malnutrition
 - b. Constraints of knowledge :
 - no awareness of possible changes
 - lack of know-how to implement change

4. Attitudes to work and life
 - a. Social conventions
 - b. Attitudes and beliefs
 - c. Lack of innovativeness
 - d. Different value systems
 - e. Mistrust of change agents

5. Institutional constraints
 - a. Constraints arising from existing economic organisation of a community
 - b. Constraints arising from social structure
 - c. Limits on a community's ability to organise

6. Policies
 - a. Government apathy, or even hostility towards change
 - b. Lack of government investment in change.

This classification is used in the analysis of the case study of Part IIIB. The classification is not, of course, unique, and it will not be possible to put every constraint into a single class.

In Appendix IV, examples of the types of constraint envisaged in each of these classes are given.

Footnotes

1. No precise definition of the term "community" is made in this thesis, but the meaning will normally be clear from the context in which the term is used, e.g. a group of people who will benefit from a small-scale project, a village, a cluster of villages with unifying political, social and economic institutions, etc.

2. Foster, G.M., "Tzintzuntzan : Mexican peasants in a changing world", Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1967, quoted by Long (*,p.42).

PART III

KENYA : A CASE STUDY

In this research a case study was made of Kenya and of the possible roles for NGOs there. The case study is in four parts : it begins by using the discussion of Part II as a framework for analysis, looking at the nature of development, problems of malnutrition, the self-help movement (all III.A) and rural development (III.B). The case study then considers the work of NGOs, and a final part contains some observations and conclusions.

Contents:

- III.A Kenya : A Country Study*
- III.B Kitui : A District Study*
- III.C NGOs in Kenya*
- III.D Observations and Conclusions*

PART III.A

KENYA : A COUNTRY STUDY

This part of the thesis looks at some of the characteristics of Kenya which must be examined at national level. What is the extent of poverty and where is it to be found ? What is the nature of social, economic and political change in the country ? How serious is the problem of malnutrition, and how should the self-help movement be interpreted ? These questions, which were raised in general terms in chapters 2, 3 and 4 are examined in the following chapters :

Contents :

- 6. Development and underdevelopment in Kenya*
- 7. Nutrition in Kenya*
- 8. Self-reliance in Kenya*

DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN KENYA

In Kenya, what does 'development' mean? This chapter looks at the process of social, economic and political change which has taken, and is taking place in the country, and concludes that what the NGOs and what the Kenyan Government see as development objectives may not coincide.

After an introductory section which outlines Kenya's main features and its main problems, Kenya's political formation is examined. It is noted that the country's colonial history and the nature of the independence struggle go a long way towards explaining the present political structure. The parallel and related formation of the economic structure is then described, and Kenya's policies in recent years are examined against this background. It is argued that while the Kenyan Government has sought economic growth, 'underdevelopment' may be a better description of the changes which have taken place.

Contents :

- 6.1 Kenya : an overview*
- 6.2 A historical outline*
- 6.3 The economy*
- 6.4 'Development' in Kenya*

6. DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN KENYA

6.1 Kenya : an overview

Kenya is a country of about 15 million people and 225,000 square miles, lying across the equator.

Much of the land is a dry plateau with vegetation ranging from bushland through grassland to semi-desert. There are highland areas in the south with more temperate climates, lying on either side of the broad rift valley which runs north to south through the country, and there is a narrow coastal plain. Only 7% of the land can be considered agriculturally good, i.e. fit for cultivation other than at a meagre subsistence level (**1).

The south-west, comprising Nairobi, the central highlands and Lake Victoria area, is the main productive part of the country. It is about 10% of the total area and contains 75% of the population. It is this area which has experienced the greatest development, on which the country's economy largely depends, and which has received a disproportionate share of the benefits of development. About 12% of the population is urban, of which Nairobi may account for 800,000 to 1,000,000.

History as well as geography has played an important part in shaping the country's economic and political structure. British settlers began arriving in Kenya at the beginning of the 20th. century, and it was only the Mau-Mau rebellion in 1952 which finally persuaded the settlers that they could not continue to hold political power. But the way in which the conflict between African and settler aspirations was resolved led to independence in 1963 with an economy based on free enterprise and containing a wide range of incomes and living standards. Kenya is a de facto, one-party state, and there is no open opposition to the prevailing ideology.

Kenya portrays all the problems with which NGOs are concerned:

- the per capita GNP in 1976 was only US\$ 240 (*World Bank(2), p.76);
- FAO (*) estimate an average food intake of only 2,200 calories per capita per day ;
- infant mortality in 1975 was 51 deaths before one year per 1,000 live births (*World Bank(2), p.108) ;
- in 1974 the adult literacy rate was only 40% (*ibid. p.110) ;
- in 1970 in Nairobi, 23.6% of men and 54.6% of women were either unemployed or earning less than K200/- (about £16) per month (*ILO(1), p.64).

Moreover, these average figures hide large variations within the country. Data compiled by the ILO suggests that the top 12% of households earn about 60% of the total income, while the bottom 63% earn 18% (from ILO (1), p.74).

Thus Kenya undoubtedly has major problems, but two other factors which have made Kenya a major recipient of British NGO aid are the close ties between Britain and Kenya, British concern being brought into contact with Kenyan poverty through the expatriate presence, and the relative ease with which NGOs can work in Kenya. Between them, Save the Children Fund, Action in Distress, Christian Aid and Oxfam probably send £5 - 600,000 p.a. to Kenya, and with the exception of Christian Aid, they all maintain staff in the country. In 1977 VSO had 93 volunteers in Kenya, although this number dropped to 77 in 1978 (see chapter 13).

A feature of the NGO scene in Kenya is a number of Kenyan NGOs (KNGOs), important because of the amount of NGO aid which is channelled through them. These KNGOs are generally modelled on parent organisations in Britain and elsewhere, and in many cases they were started by Europeans in the colonial period. The major KNGOs are considered in section 13.3 and appendix X.

Kenya has also been a major recipient of official aid, particularly from Britain : in 1977 Kenya was second only to Malawi as the largest recipient of British aid in Africa (see appendix XII).

6.2 A Historical Outline

Here, the starting point is taken as the 1890's when Britain established her administrative control over at least the principal agricultural areas of the country. This is not to deny the importance of Kenya's pre-colonial history as a determinant of what might be called "traditional" cultures, modes of production and levels of living. But the significant changes leading to the development, or the underdevelopment, of these traditional societies appear to have risen from the arrival of Europeans and the integration of Kenya with the Western economic system.

The suitability of the central highland area for European settlement was appreciated at the beginning of this century at the time of the building of the Uganda railway. A small, but politically and economically powerful British settler community was soon established, centred on Nairobi, and they saw as their objective the creation of a settler state based on extensive farming of land expropriated from the Africans (**2), and the use of African labour (which the African was obliged to supply through loss of his own land, a tax system, and where necessary, force) (**3).

The Asian community which remained after the building of the railway, not being allowed to settle in the highlands, found itself a role in small businesses, principally trade, but it was excluded from European society and was not integrable with that of the Africans. Some of the Africans who came into contact with the Europeans "developed" educationally, and sometimes even materially, but they "developed" only to the extent to which they were required to service the colonial economy.

It was the Kikuyu, the main tribe of the fertile highlands who had suffered most in loss of land (**4), the humiliation of the "kipande" (identity card) and forced labour, and who, because of their proximity to Nairobi, were educationally more advanced than most other tribes.

It is, therefore, not surprising that it was the Kikuyu who made the first serious political challenges. Kenyatta, on his return to Kenya after 15 years in Europe, had come to appreciate the need for a national rather than a tribal approach if independence was to be granted, but he had only succeeded in getting support from the Luo before sections of the Kikuyu rebelled in 1952.

However, the events of 1952 and the "Emergency" cannot be explained simply in terms of a tribal response to an invading power. The main land expropriations had taken place some 40-50 years earlier, and the first African political challenge had taken place in 1921 (*Arnold, Chapter 2). But since that time, the population on the African reserves, and consequently, the number of landless people had been rising, many had taken to squatting on "alienated" land, and in the urban areas there was industrial unrest and growing unemployment. As a result, more radical opposition emerged, leading to a number of political assassinations, and eventually, the Mau-Mau rebellion. By this time, the economic system had created economic differences within African society, some owning land and using the wage labour of others, and the inter-African conflict which followed was, in some respects, class warfare within Kikuyu society (*Leys, p.50).

The African leadership in the move to independence was not, however, composed of the Mau-Mau generals, and the forest fighters, rather than being rewarded, were left landless. The leaders were drawn from the educated - those who could compete in the existing political system. Mutiso (*, pp.3-39) analyses the emergence of the independence movement in terms of cleavages in African society : firstly, between those (the majority) who rejected the new values brought by the missionaries, and secondly, the former group, on discovering that equality with the Europeans was not being offered, split between those willing to accept their advantages relative to the rest of African society, and those who were not prepared to accept continuing European dominance. Thus, Mutiso views the independence movement as a power struggle within the political-economic system rather than an attempt to overthrow it, and the peasantry only entered the movement in that their support had to be gained to legitimise the demands of the elites.

The Emergency did at least make it clear that colonial rule could not continue indefinitely, and as a result, the following decade saw steps to ensure that independence would not fundamentally change the nature of the economy. Both in the agricultural and the growing industrial sectors, efforts were made to strengthen a class of Kenyans who would respect private property and whose interests would be tied to the foreign capital on which Kenya depended (**5).

Independence came in 1963, and the general direction of the new government soon became clear. Full compensation was paid to British settlers who were bought out (the British government paying much of the cost), and the land was then sold to those who could buy it, rather than being distributed to those who needed it (or, for that matter, those who had fought for it). A government paper on "African Socialism" (*G of K (1)) denounced communism, was ambiguous about socialism, but was clear on the need to make Kenya attractive to foreign investors and to encourage private enterprise. Foreign private and governmental capital flowed into the country, and soon a high rate of GNP growth was achieved.

The government at independence consisted of two parties, KANU (Kenya African National Union), the ruling, predominantly Kikuyu-Luo party with Kenyatta as its figure-head, and KADU (Kenya African Democratic Party) with support mainly from the smaller tribes, advocating regionalism as a counter to the Kikuyu-Luo hegemony. Ideologically, however, there was little between them, and KADU soon merged with KANU.

The real political opposition was a radical group within KANU. This minority was soon out-manoeuvred, and in 1966 it left to form the KPU (Kenya People's Union) with Odinga, the Luo leader, at its head. KPU was firstly obstructed with constitutional changes, but in 1969, after Kenyatta was given a hostile reception in Odinga's home town (during which visit 10 people were shot by Kenyatta's bodyguards), KPU was banned and its leaders detained. Leys has summarised the events as follows :

"...they (KPU) were not prepared to accept without a struggle what they saw as the progressive surrender of the interests of the poor peasants and labourers to neo-colonial interests...Their opposition was based on principle, and the regime finally felt sufficiently threatened by its appeal to the unemployed the landless and the low-paid, those rendered homeless by slum clearances, and similar categories, to suppress it completely."

(*Leys, p.215)

Since 1969, Kenya has been a de facto one-party state, although the party has had little in the way of grassroots organisation or support. Until the time of Kenyatta's death in 1978, the real control in the country lay in Kenyatta and the small group surrounding him, nearly all Kikuyu, but including supporters such as Arap Moi and Ngei. Parliament has been allowed to debate, and even to make minor criticisms of government policies, but any serious challenges to the leadership and its ideology have led to parliament's dissolution, detentions, and in the case of the populist Kikuyu MP, Kariuki, assassination.

Kenya's laissez-faire policies have brought great wealth to some, often through corruption, but most of the population lives in rural poverty and in the urban areas, most wages are low and unemployment is high. The powerful middle class, and popular respect for Kenyatta contributed to the country's stability, but with the co-existence of great affluence and poverty, "Kenya has considerable potential for unrest" (*Cable). According to Leys (*, p.274) the "stability" was "an appearance which resulted directly from the assertion of state power by the currently dominant combination of classes, and did not reflect the underlying reality of increasingly sharp social and economic contradictions."

Because of the unequal development of different parts of the country, much of the opposition since independence has been expressed in terms of tribalism. Because most of the land-owning and industrial bourgeoisie is Kikuyu, resentment has been expressed against the Kikuyu, just as the Kikuyu leadership has mustered support on tribal grounds, and as KPU was denounced as a tribal party of the Luo (*Mutiso, p.81). Tribalism is, therefore, probably a symptom of

Kenya's structure, and it is unlikely that tribal groupings alone will form the basis of any opposition (although they may well be a factor in gaining support for an ideological line). Furthermore, there is much dissatisfaction among the many Kikuyu who have been left landless and unemployed while their tribal elders enjoy the fruits of power.

Most of the analysis available at the time of this study saw the succession, on Kenyatta's death, as being a major problem for Kenya. Respect for Kenyatta kept political opposition in check, and without him it was feared that tensions in Kenyan society would come to the surface (e.g.*Arnold (1), p.210, *Leys, p.274). However, in August 1978 Kenyatta died and vice-president Arap Moi was sworn in as the new leader. Although there were many rumours of political coups and assassination attempts as different factions struggled for power, the succession took place surprisingly peacefully in the view of many observers.

Moi immediately announced that he would try to pursue the political and economic policies of Kenyatta. A first move of the new president was against corruption, and as part of this move, land deals were suspended. However, these could be interpreted as reformist measures needed to ensure the continuation of the existing system, or Moi's attempts to show his independence from the old regime. Although promising a fairer distribution of land, he undertook to respect the constitutional right to the sanctity of property ("Africa" magazine, November 1978), and he gave no indication of how land might be redistributed. And although a number of political detainees were released, his action in banning former vice-president Odinga from standing in the 1979 elections because of a small technicality demonstrated that Moi was willing to use the presidency in much the same way as Kenyatta had done. It therefore appears that the Kenyan style of leadership is a product of the political structure, and that it will take more than a change in president to make a fundamental change in Kenyan policies.

6.3 The Economy

The historical outline given in Section 6.2 has already touched on Kenya's economic structure, as Kenya's political development has been largely dependent on the economic changes which have taken place in the country. This section takes a further look at the economy.

At the end of the last century, Kenya's tribes were dependent on subsistence farming, some practising settled agriculture, while others kept cattle and goats. For some, hunting was a source of food, and other economic activity included pottery, wood and metal crafts for the productive and defensive needs of communities. Barter trade took place between households and often between tribes - an important factor in ameliorating local food shortages. Many parts of Kenya traded with the coast, and were visited by merchants in search of ivory and slaves.

In the early years of colonial rule, the colonisers' interest in the African economy was generally confined to the extent to which it could provide an input (usually labour) to the settler economy, and the extent to which it threatened settler agriculture (**6). But the disruption of the African economy was considerable, especially in the fertile areas where land was "alienated" for the settlers' use. Not only did Africans lose their own means of production, but they were compelled to subsidise the settler economy through their labour for low wages and through taxation (see also (**2)) : by the mid-1920's, more than half of the able-bodied Kikuyu and Luo men were working for Europeans, and Leys (*, p.32) has estimated that in the early 1920's, Africans were earning a total of about £1,000,000 p.a. and were paying in taxes about £750,000 p.a. Moreover, the economic and welfare services financed by taxation were almost entirely for the benefit of the settlers. Thus, although there were two economies, one African and the other settler, existing side by side in Kenya, they were inter-related. Munro (*, pp.94,95) has written :

"Economic dualism arose in the Kenya highlands from far more than the chance meeting in the same geographical location of two economic systems, foreign and indigenous, at different levels of development. Land, labour and capital were all deliberately transferred from the indigenous African economies to create the much vaunted dynamism and prosperity of the European, and the re-allocation of resources undoubtedly hindered the ability of the African economies, actual or potential, to transform themselves into rival centres of market production. None of the African communities escaped the attention of the colonial administration's campaign to mobilise their resources for the benefit of the European community."

However, a start was made in providing extension services to African farmers, perhaps partly following the realisation of the effects of the economic change on African food production and the risks of serious famine, and these efforts assumed greater importance during the depression (*Munro, p.178), and after the outbreak of the 1939-45 war when all the country's productive resources had to be mobilised. In the 1950's there were further measures to improve African production, both as a response to the Emergency and as a preparation for independence. Through the "Swynnerton Plan", fragmented land holdings in the highlands were consolidated and individual farmers given legal titles to their plots (see also (**5)), credit and extension services were provided, and Africans were allowed to start growing coffee. Although these measures increased production, they also created a class of land-owning peasants, integrated with the existing market economy (and often tied to it through debt) and employing the wage labour of their countrymen. This process was continued after independence when the farms of many settlers were divided into "economic" plot sizes and sold (through loans) to African farmers. Thus, in the move to independence there was little fundamental change in the agricultural structure of the country : there were still many people landless, and in 1974, 54 per cent of all registered farms accounted for only 7.4 per cent of farmland, while 4 per cent accounted for 47 per cent (*ILO (1), p.36), and it is the large farm sector which is still the main influence on the government's agricultural policies.

Subsistence agriculture remains important as most of the 88 per cent of the population who live in the rural areas will produce at least some of their own food, although the relative importance of

subsistence production will vary according to the agricultural potential of the land. There are now very few left in Kenya who are not part of the cash economy (**7), and where it is agriculturally possible, most farmers grow a cash crop such as coffee, tea (which together make up more than 50 per cent of Kenya's exports (*G of K (6), p.63)), and cotton. Elsewhere, food crops such as maize are grown in hope of producing a marketable surplus.

Towns, particularly Nairobi and Mombasa, have grown quickly with an increasing number of service and small manufacturing industries, and there is a high rate of urban migration, both permanent and temporary, from the rural areas. Until independence much of the small trade was in the hands of Asians, and most other enterprises were European owned. The years following independence saw the arrival of several multi-national companies and in an attempt to control foreign capital, the government bought shares in many new investments and called for the Africanisation of many management jobs. This, however, may have had the effect of tying the government's and the new African bourgeoisie's interests even more closely to foreign investment. There were also measures to assist Africans into the small trade sector, largely at the expense of the Asian community, many of whom moved into manufacturing.

Much of the manufacturing sector was based on import-substitution, but by the end of the 1960's some observers saw indications that the size of the domestic market was becoming a limiting factor, and that further growth may require a redistribution within the economy (or an approach based on manufactured exports which would present new problems of access to markets) (*Leys, p.147). Moreover, employment in the "formal" sector between 1964 and 1970 grew at less than 2 per cent per annum (*ILO (1), p.82), compared with a population growth of over 3 per cent per annum and an average increase in secondary school enrolments of 12 per cent per annum between 1969 and 1972, resulting in a large number of school leavers in search of jobs.

Although trades unions grew in Kenya in the 1930's and up until 1950, pursued a radical political line, in the 1950's, the colonial government, with Mboya's help, ensured that the unions followed more

'moderate' policies. The power of the unions was further curbed by government legislation in 1964 and 1965, and in 1966 a Central Organisation of Trades Unions was formed whose leadership was appointed, and could be dismissed, by the President. Consequently the days lost through industrial disputes dropped from 167,767 in 1964 to 49,517 in 1970 (*Leys, p.142).

In 1971, an ILO mission was invited to Kenya to study the unemployment problems. Instead, it saw unemployment as only one symptom of the country's economic structure, and it entitled its report "Employment, Incomes and Equality". The report summarised Kenya's economic progress as follows :

"Since independence, economic growth has largely continued on the lines set by the earlier colonial structure. Kenyanisation has radically changed the racial composition of the group of people in the centre of power and many of its policies, but has had only a limited effect on the mechanisms which maintain its dominance - the pattern of government income and expenditure, the freedom of foreign firms to locate their offices and plants in Nairobi, and the narrow stratum of expenditure by a high-income elite superimposed on a base of limited mass consumption. Indeed, the power of the centre over the periphery may well be greater today than it was before, since there is now a closer correlation of interests between the urban elite, the owners of large farms and the large, foreign-owned companies. At the same time, the range and strength of the influence of rich countries on developing countries has been growing rapidly..."

(*ILO (1), pp.11,12)

6.4 "Development" in Kenya

The transfer of alienated land to private African ownership and the compensation paid to former settlers was an indication of the types of policy which the post-independence government would follow. In 1965, the government published a paper on "African Socialism" (*G of K (1)) which, since that time, has been used by the government as its principal statement of its ideology. The paper declared :

"The most important (policy) is to provide a firm basis for rapid economic growth. Other immediate problems such as Africanisation of the economy, education, unemployment, welfare services and provincial policies must be handled in a way that will not jeopardise growth. The only permanent solution to all of these problems rests on rapid growth."

Kenya therefore started after independence with an "economic-growth approach" to development, as described in Section 2.3 (1). Growth was achieved - from 1964 to 1973 the GDP grew at an average rate of 6.6 per cent per annum - but other objectives of development were not. The 1974-78 Development Plan (quoted in *Hunt (2), p.2) admitted that : "In spite of the rapid growth of the economy in the first ten years of independence, the problems associated with a growing population - unemployment and income disparities - have become more apparent than they were in 1963."

That problems of unemployment and income disparities were attributed to population growth is not surprising in view of the ideology.

The 1974-78 Plan put more emphasis on redistribution - "...rural development, the creation of more employment opportunities, a more equitable distribution of incomes..." (*G of K (5), p.iv) - but Hunt (*2), p.2) has observed that :

"...preliminary discussion of the distribution objective suggests that the approach to reduction of inequality will still be somewhat cautious and designed to minimise conflict with other objectives."

Leys (*, p.231) argues that any plans for rural development requiring "transfers of resources from the better-off to the worse-off, and on a national scale" are in contradiction with the overall approach to development, and are therefore unlikely to meet with success. He points out that the implementation of the proposals of the Special Rural Development Programme (**8) throughout the country would have cost £6 million per annum, which was considered "unthinkable", while in 1971 nearly £5 million per annum was allocated to increased civil service salaries.

Most Kenyans, however, may not be actually worse off than they were at the time of independence, although the situation is likely to vary throughout the country, particularly in the marginal areas where low-rainfall years can badly affect incomes. The value of subsistence agricultural production rose by an average of 3.6 per cent per annum between 1964 and 1973, which is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in per capita terms (in many parts of the country, however, there would have been a slight shift to monetary agriculture which was growing

at 6% p.a. in aggregate terms).

More Kenyans may also be 'benefiting' from the government services described in appendix V. As reported in that appendix, the provision of services in agriculture, health and education reflects both the inequalities in the country and its growth-orientated policies : agricultural services favour the larger farms and cash-crop growers; the distribution of health services is heavily biased in favour of the urban areas; and although school enrolments have risen to the extent that the majority of children get some primary education, the curriculum is orientated towards employment in the modern sector rather than the rural areas in which most children will remain.

The above discussion suggests that the type of development which has taken, and which is taking place in Kenya, appears as a product of the country's colonial history. This is not to deny that significant changes have been made since independence, but the structures which have directed these changes have their origins in the type of economy created in the colonial period, and in the nature of the process which led to independence.

The Kenyan Government's main strategy has been to aim for rapid economic growth, but this has brought with it the problems described in section 2.3 (1). What 'trickle down' there has been has not been sufficient to prevent growing inequalities, nor to develop domestic markets on which further growth could be based. Instead the country has become more dependent on foreign capital, and the support which this gives may be jeopardised if policies aimed at a major redistribution in wealth were adopted.

On the provision of basic needs for the poorer sectors, little has been achieved since independence in spite of the increase in wealth within the country. If needs are defined in a relativistic way, then the growth of inequalities makes the poor worse off than they were at independence. If needs

are taken to include psychological needs to participate in the political process, then the situation may have deteriorated as the economic distortions in the country have produced a regime less able to respect political liberties.

Much of this chapter has followed the analysis of Leys (*) who has collected much evidence to support the view of Kenya as an underdeveloped more than an undeveloped country (see Section 2.3 (3)). The ILO mission (*ILO (1)) called to Kenya in 1971 to examine unemployment as a problem of basic needs, also concluded that the real problem lay in Kenya's structural underdevelopment. Leys, however, is sceptical about the ILO mission's reformist proposals (e.g. land redistribution, increased taxation, help to the "informal" sector of labour-intensive industries) having a significant impact, given the existing economic structure and the interest groups within it. Leys himself, however, does not put forward any alternative strategy, and suggests that "the most such studies (i.e. like his own) can do is try not to obscure the structures of exploitation and oppression which underdevelopment produces, and which, in turn, sustain it." (*Leys,p.275).

The possible implications of Kenya's approach to development for NGOs will be considered in Chapter 12.

Footnotes

1. Only about 15 per cent of Kenya can expect to receive more than 30 inches (760mm) of rain p.a. in four years out of five, a rough guide to the minimum for cultivation, other than at a meagre subsistence level (without irrigation), but when soils and topography are taken into account, the proportion of land which can be considered agriculturally good is only 7 per cent (*ILO (1),p.33).
2. Sir Charles Eliot, British Commissioner for the East African Protectorate from 1901-1904 stated :
"...it is mere hypocrisy not to admit that white interests must be paramount, and that the main object of our policy should be to found a white colony."
(*Arnold, (1),p.35)

The colonial administration claimed that land "alienated" for European farming was virtually unused. However true this may have been at the time, none of the land did not come under the ownership of families or tribes in the traditional tenure systems. Leys (*, p.28) notes that much of the alienated land had been temporarily vacated because of epidemics, and where "agreements" were reached with the Africans, the Africans thought they were offering temporary cultivation rights, while the British regarded the agreements as purchases (*Arnold, (1)).

3. Leys (*,pp29-30) describes the process as follows :
"...at first they had neither the knowledge nor the capital to farm it very differently from the Africans on their land. They had not, moreover, come to Kenya to work as peasants. Their "farms" were extremely large - an average of over 2,400 acres per "occupier" in 1932. There was, therefore, only one solution : to make the Africans work for them. This the Africans had no reason to do, unless the Europeans had been willing to pay in wages more than Africans could earn from farming on their own account. But such wages would have meant little or no profit for the Europeans. Therefore, Africans had to be compelled to work, partly by force, partly by taxation, and partly by preventing them from having access to enough land or profitable crops to enable them to pay taxes without working for wages. Eventually, the African populations in their homelands rose, until by the mid-1920s it became less and less necessary to use force and it was gradually abandoned. From then on, population pressure plus taxation assured that enough Africans would be available to work on the modest portion of the alienated land which the European farmers actually endeavoured to make use of."
4. In terms of actual area, the Masai may have lost more land than the Kikuyu. But for the Kikuyu, the loss necessitated a fundamental change in their economic system.
5. In agriculture, the Swynnerton Plan of 1955 involved giving freehold titles of plots of different sizes to individuals. Its political implications were explicitly stated : "Former government policy will be reversed and able, energetic or rich Africans will be able to acquire more land and bad or poor farmers, less, creating a landed and landless class. This is the normal step in the evolution of a country".
(Swynnerton, quoted in *Leys, p.52).
6. Thus the first agricultural extension staff in Kenya were veterinary officers because there was fear that diseases of indigenous livestock would spread to grade cattle, and later, when there was a risk of economic competition from African coffee-growers, opposition was expressed in terms of risks of coffee disease and lowering standards (*Heyer, (1)).
7. Almy (*,p.53) found in her study of Meru District, that :
"Only 12% of the 540 questionnaire respondents grew no cash (non-food) crops at all, and all but one reported having sold some crops in the past year...Although the traditional standard of wealth, livestock, was adhered to by many elders, they also balanced it against cash standard."

Almy's study was carried out in what she described as a "highly progressive area". Nevertheless, discussion with researchers examining the pastoralists of eastern Kitui District suggest that similar moves to the use of cash values have taken place even in fairly remote parts of the country.

8. The Special Rural Development Programme (SRDP) was set up following a conference in 1966. It attempted to experiment with different development strategies in 14 areas with different characteristics with the aim of extending successful pilot projects to these areas. But the SRDP was not considered a great success for a variety of reasons - lack of clarity in the objectives, confusion over how SRDP projects fitted into existing development work and administrative structures, excessive funding and expatriate involvement making the experiments non-replicable and alien to the beneficiaries - and as a result, it had been abandoned by 1976. (*IDS(Nairobi) ; *Leys, pp.230-231 ; Mutiso, pp.132-161, and *Heyer et al.).

NUTRITION IN KENYA

NGOs concerned with malnutrition must be concerned with the situation in Kenya. The statistics presented in this chapter demonstrate that malnutrition exists in Kenya, particularly in the poorer sectors of the population, and in the areas of the country which are vulnerable to drought. In examining the causes of nutritional problems, however, NGOs may need to take a wider view of development in Kenya.

After considering the evidence of malnutrition, this chapter notes that some of the factors which may have contributed to the problems are the same as those which have created Kenya's economic structure. Malnutrition may therefore only be a symptom of Kenya's underdevelopment, and this may have implications for NGOs in their approaches to nutritional improvement.

Of particular concern to some NGOs are the marginal areas in which droughts can lead to famines requiring emergency action. Whether rainfall shortages need cause famines so frequently is discussed further in chapter 10, but here the Kenyan Government's response to food shortages is raised as a matter of concern for NGOs.

7. NUTRITION IN KENYA

There is no systematic monitoring of nutritional standards in Kenya, and the surveys which have been carried out only give a fragmented picture showing the nutritional status of particular groups in society at particular times. Blankhart (* (1), p.413) has constructed the picture as follows :

"Low prevalence rates of underweight...are seen in a Machakos town quarter, in a Nairobi kindergarten, in a prosperous village near Lake Victoria...Slightly higher underweight figures (10-20 per cent) are found in a prosperous housing estate in Nairobi, in an equally prosperous rural location at Machakos and at the Lake Victoria shore...In moderately prosperous rural areas and a rather poor urban area (Nairobi - Kibera) between 20 and 30 per cent of African children are underweight.

Areas with 40 per cent or more of the children showing underweight (PCM) have to be considered as high risk areas where shortage of food and socio-economic factors may have contributed to the high prevalence of PCM, e.g. in Eastern Province at Mbooni and Iveti-Kombo. Other areas have in common rainfall, poor soil and isolation ; examples are in the inland coastal area Mowaleni and Borani...in Rift Valley Province, Lokichar ; in Eastern Province, Kitui-Nuu. Concluding, it may be said that a high prevalence of PCM is mainly to be expected in poor, isolated areas and during food shortages... Cash crop cultivation appears to have had an adverse effect. Living in or near a town has a beneficial influence even if people are poor."

Blankhart (**ibid.*, pp.420,421) gives data from 11 surveys made in different parts of Kenya between 1961 and 1966. Table 7A below shows the range of results found.

TABLE 7A
Summary of 11 dietary surveys
in Kenya

	Lowest	Median	Highest
Average calorie intake of survey (per person per day)	1066	1720	2471
Average grammes protein of survey (per person per day)	44	57	86

The surveys were not, however, chosen at random in Kenya.

Food balance sheets give an overall view of the situation. From estimates of areas under cultivation, expected yields, food exports and imports etc. the following figures in table 7B have been calculated:

Table 7B : Per capita food consumption in Kenya

	Estimates of per capita food consumption		
	by F.A.O.		by Blankhart
	1967-69	1970	1966-69
Calories per day	2230	2200	2494
%age from animal origin	11	12	-
Grammes protein per day	69	68	75

Calorie requirements vary according to age, sex, physical activity and climate, but typically, FAO estimates that men may need about 3000 and women 2000 calories per day (*Rem, p.81). Children will of course require less. Blankhart has calculated the average requirement for Kenya to be :

Calories per person per day	2328
Grammes protein per person per day	54

Thus according to the FAO figures of table 7B many Kenyans will suffer from a calorie shortage, and even using Blankhart's slightly higher estimates (from *Blankhart (1), p.424) the available food in the country would need to be very well distributed to ensure that all have sufficient, even allowing for difficulties in interpreting requirements. But food in Kenya is not likely to be evenly distributed because of the climatic irregularities which affect food production in many areas and income differences. (Blankhart *(2)), for example, has compared the nutritional standards of children in two Nairobi suburbs of different economic status, and, as might have been expected, the poorer area showed much higher levels of malnutrition.) Hence these figures are consistent with the general picture given by Blankhart (above). Thus many in Kenya suffer from inadequate diets, no doubt with consequent effects on health (nutritional standards are likely to be a major cause of the country's high infant mortality

rate - 51 deaths before one year per 1000 live births in 1975) and possibly on production, as well as the psychological pressure on parents who must struggle to provide food for their children (the effects of malnourishment are described in section 3.1).

But Kenya is relatively well-endowed with good agricultural land compared with many other African countries, the majority of the working population is engaged in agriculture, and Kenya is a major exporter of agricultural produce. Why should malnutrition then be such a problem in Kenya ?

Firstly it may be noted that food shortages are not a recent phenomenon in Kenya. A report in 1961 (*G of K (12), p,10) noted that :

"two facts are outstanding : -

- (i) Famine has been reported in Kenya since the beginning of the nineteenth century ...
- (ii) As far back as 1934 reports from Medical Officers showed clearly that local food shortages were becoming worse over the years ...

... in many cases the problem is chronic, In such cases an increase is probable in : -

Morbidity and mortality rates - especially from communicable and nutritonal diseases;
Budgetary expenditure in curative medicine."

Thus during a period which saw a tremendous expansion in agricultural extension services, research into improved farming methods and the introduction of new varieties of crops, the problems of food shortages may have increased. Some of the factors which have been suggested as having contributed to this situation are as follows :

- (i) The expropriation of land for settler farmers in early colonial times made many people landless and many dependent on the low wages paid by settlers for the means of procuring food. Others had to move into agriculturally-poorer areas (see section 6.2).
- (ii) The pattern of land ownership which was established during the colonial period has not changed greatly since independ-

ence. 4% of registered farms account for 47% of farmland : not only is this inequality leaving many landless or with insufficient land to provide food for their households, but it is also inefficient - studies show that on average large farms have a smaller output and provide less employment per hectare than smallholdings (*ILO (1), pp.165-167).

- (iii) Population growth has increased the pressure on land, forcing many farmers into more marginal areas. Relatively intensive farming of these areas has in places caused serious erosion, thereby exacerbating problems. It is in these marginal areas that the risk of malnutrition is now greatest. (Population growth itself, however, need not be considered the problem - as noted in section 3.1, high population growth may be people's response to their economic circumstances, and Lappé and Collins (*2), pp.9-11) argue that with better distribution and utilization of land, few parts of Africa need be considered over-populated.)

- (iv) The move towards commercial agriculture may have lowered the nutritional standards of poorer farmers. A study in Machakos District (*El Baradi and van Rijn) has shown that the nutritional status of a community may drop as their agriculture becomes more commercialised: cash incomes may be spent on nutritionally-poor foods and on relative luxuries (**1). Use of incomes on baby-milk powder and cigarettes in Kenya has been reported by War on Want (**2).

- (v) Not only has there been a commercialisation of agriculture, but much of the best agricultural land is being used for crops for exports rather than for growing food for local markets. In an area in which much tea, coffee and pyrethrum is grown, Dagnelie (*, p.109) has reported that :

"Because of the widespread cash cropping, little land was left for food crops. As a consequence, a part of the food eaten had to be imported from other regions so that food prices were high. Besides, people would concentrate on food crops with a high yield, i.e. staple foods (maize, tubers) rather than on those with a high nutritional value, such as beans."

Lappé and Collins (*1), p.223) refer to a study by Lele (**3) of :

"the substantial substitution of food crops with cash crops such as cotton, tea, and tobacco in Kenya and Tanzania. In one decade the acreage per family planted in tea increased more than two and a half times in Kenya."

- (vi) Government policies in extension services, the provision of credit, the creation of marketing infrastructure and research have favoured large farms and the production of crops for export, rather than peasant farmers who are more vulnerable to malnutrition and food crops. Moreover, the government has done little to redistribute land and incomes, and when food shortages have occurred the government has been accused of being slow to respond and inadequate in its response.

Thus many nutritional problems in Kenya may be rooted in the country's economic and political structure, and in tackling problems NGOs may need to decide the extent to which they should accept that the structure exists and try to alleviate suffering and improve nutritional standards within the constraints it imposes, and the extent to which they should seek solutions through longer-term work towards changes in the structure.

For most NGOs, the areas of the country for which there is greatest nutritional concern are those marginal areas which suffer from periodic droughts and resulting threats of famine. Mbithi and Wisner (*) have argued that the eastern plateau area of Kenya is the area of greatest famine potential : in the north the population is much smaller and the economy is adjusted to low

rainfall, but in the marginal areas, more intensive farming and a rapid population growth has made it the main danger area. They estimate that drought in the period January 1970 to January 1971 cost the government Kf1 million in famine relief. The government, however, is very sensitive about information on the need for famine relief, no doubt fearing that international news on famine would attract bad publicity, damaging the confidence of investors in the economy (**4). During the study, even the staff of the quasi-governmental Kenya Freedom from Hunger Council did not have access to famine relief information, and it was rumoured that a former District Commissioner in Kitui had been removed from his post for giving information on the extent of the famine to a local MP. In a report on the cover-up of the Ethiopian famine by the Selassie government, an investigator wrote in 1976 :

"How high do the bodies need to pile up before an international civil servant decides that action must be taken? ... And from reports I've gotten, I am convinced that there is a famine now in Kenya - one about which the Kenyan government won't allow a word to be sent out of the country. The cover-ups are continuing."

CRS (Catholic Relief Services) is much involved in famine areas because of its 'nutrition intervention programmes' (mobile clinics which distribute American-supplied food supplements) and through this programme they are able to compile quite a full picture of malnutrition in children. The director of CRS in Nairobi, however, stressed the confidentiality of his statistics : he believed that if CRS made such data public there would be repercussions from the government.

Thus any NGO concerned about malnutrition must be concerned about the situation in Kenya. What action to take, however, is more difficult to decide, as an NGO's policy for improving nutrition may need to take account not just of the local technical and social causes of malnutrition, but also the government's attitude to famine. During this study an eminent nutritionist in Kenya expressed to the writer criticisms of NGOs which distribute food, even in emergencies, arguing that there were

sufficient resources in Kenya for the government to eliminate famine if it really wanted to, and that Kenyans must be forced to look for solutions to their own problems. Nevertheless, there may be occasions on which to prevent suffering and possible loss of life, famine relief may be required as a stop-gap measure. However, it does not appear sensible for NGOs to transport food from America to be distributed through government programmes in Kenya while the government exports maize (as was happening during this study) (**5). Famine relief through government programmes may not even be an efficient measure : Mbithi *(1) has noted the dangers of creating dependency on relief, on relief being used as a "political resource owned by sub-chiefs and headmen, KANU officials and local influentials", on conditions which often need to be fulfilled before relief can be collected (work on community programmes, payment of taxes, etc.), and of weakened famine victims needing to travel long distances to collect the food (see also section 9.3). It also may be difficult to work with the government in a famine area when the government is unwilling even to admit the problem.

Meanwhile the government has seemed content to leave much of the nutritional improvement work being done in the hands of NGOs (**6). Nevertheless, in 1973 the government maintained that "expansion of nutrition services is regarded as an essential component of public health work" (*G of K (8), p. 196) and that 137 field-workers were engaged in an anti-malnutrition programme (by 1978 this number had risen to 210 (**7)) and that a Food and Nutrition Council was planned.

But for NGOs the problems in improving nutritional standards are much more than those arising from the government's performance in the nutritional field. Malnutrition may arise from a whole range of economic, social and environmental factors, and the situations of malnourished communities may need to be examined individually in order to identify relevant forms of assistance. Such studies may necessitate a study of the wider changes which have taken place in Kenya - the processes which have led to landless peasants, the need for migration, and unemployment may be the same processes which have led to malnutrition. Thus, any

NGO attempting to improve nutritional standards in Kenya may need to remain aware of the fact that malnutrition may often be only a symptom of Kenya's pattern of development or underdevelopment, and an NGO may need to choose its aid strategy accordingly.

Footnotes

1. Part of the problem is that the women have responsibility for feeding the household but it is generally the men who receive the cash incomes. Dagnelie (*, p.109) found in one area of Embu District that

"Income from cash crops was irregular. ... How the money was kept and spent can not always be decided by the mother: she is dependent on the husband in this respect."

2. Chetley (*, p.59) reports that a survey during three weeks in 1973 showed that 'Lactogen' (baby milk) advertisements accounted for 11% of all Swahili radio advertising, and that according to one observer,

"Virtually every child who enters Kenyatta State Hospital in Nairobi with dysentery and vomiting has been bottle fed from early weeks of infancy." (ibid. p.155)

Yet a group in Kenya has calculated

"that for 60 Kenyan cents a day, the mother could provide herself with sufficient protein and energy to produce enough breast milk for her baby." (ibid. p. 140)

3. Uma Lele, 'A Conceptual Framework for Rural Development', paper presented to the Development from Below Workshop, the Association for the Advancement of Agricultural Sciences in Africa, 1973. However, Lappé and Collins (*(2), pp. 27-29) also argue that "Export agriculture is not the enemy" but only a reflection of which interest groups control agriculture. They conclude that

"where productive assets are controlled by a few, export agriculture further exacerbates the deteriorating position of the majority. Export agriculture:

- makes it possible for the local economic elite to be unconcerned about the poverty at home that greatly limits the buying power of most of the people ...
- provides the incentive to local and foreign elites to tighten their control over productive resources from which export profits are made and to resist firmly any attempts at redistribution of control over productive assets.
- necessitates miserable working conditions and wages. Underdeveloped countries can compete in export markets only by exploiting labour ...

- throws the local population into competition with foreign consumers for the products of their own land, thus raising local prices and reducing the real income of the majority."

4. During the study there was a rumour concerning an International Red Cross consultant who was alleged to have compiled a report on famine in Kenya which was very critical of the government for not facing the problem. As soon as the existence of the report was discovered (according to other development workers) the consultant was deported.
5. A government report in 1961 (*G of K (12), p.14) supports the assertion of Lappé and Collins *(2) that even in times of famine there is generally food available in a country. Faced with food shortages in 1961, Kenya asked the USA for 100,000 bags of maize:

"This request was promptly approved. However, because there was strong urgency for immediate distribution of relief maize, arrangements were made with the United States Government to make an advance distribution of US maize by procuring maize from privately owned stocks available within Kenya."

The report explains that the government had to "borrow" maize from the Kenya Maize Marketing Board "since whatever the financial situation, the people had to be fed". Thus the problem was not that Kenya did not have enough food, but that poor people in Kenya were not able to obtain food.

6. During the field work of this study, the government official responsible for nutrition programmes had only a small office on the roof of a Ministry of Health building, and for general information on the situation in the country claimed to rely on the information which was available from Nairobi bookshops.

The 1974-78 Development Plan (*G of K (5), p.462) stated :

"During the previous Plan, supplementary infant foods have been provided through voluntary agencies. These programmes are being phased out, and the Government has begun to assume responsibility for a variety of urgent child feeding programmes, through child care centres and schools."

But by the middle of 1976 there did not appear to have been any change in the situation (although this observation is based on discussions with only a few working in the field).

7. Although it was not possible to consult the Kenya Development Plan for 1979-83 before the writing of this thesis, that plan estimates that 400 nutrition field workers will be in government service by 1983. It is also planned that nutrition education be incorporated in the training of all health workers, and also introduced in school curricula at all levels.

Chapter 8

SELF-HELP IN KENYA

Some see self-help as a keystone of development in Kenya. But to others it is a symptom of what is wrong with development in Kenya, or a compensation for its underdevelopment.

This chapter begins by noting the importance of the self-help movement. That self-help projects have brought many benefits is not disputed, but whether the benefits have been achieved in the most desirable way, and whether the view of self-help as people making communal efforts for national development is a tenable one, are much more debatable.

How should NGOs regard self-help in Kenya ? Here it is argued that self-help projects must be seen in the context of Kenya's economic and political structure, and that the aid-worthiness of projects may depend more on that analysis than on their self-help status.

Contents :

- 8.1 The importance of the self-help movement*
- 8.2 Some criticisms of Kenyan self-help*
- 8.3 Self-help and development*

8. SELF-HELP IN KENYA

8.1. The Importance of the Self-Help Movement

It was shown in Chapter 4 that self-help is not a new phenomenon, but since independence in Kenya, the "Harambee" movement has given self-help a new impetus. "Harambee" ("let's pull together") was Kenyatta's call to the nation in 1963. The population was asked to contribute to, and to participate in its own development : since then, thousands of self-help projects have been supported by groups throughout the country. Many of the development projects which NGOs are asked to support are described as "self-help", and some NGOs will only support projects with a self-help component. However, NGOs need to carefully examine Kenyan self-help projects to make sure that they measure up to the ideals of the NGOs' definition of self-help and development.

The importance of self-help in Kenya can be seen from the number and value of the projects undertaken. The government reported in 1967 that there were 39,863 projects "under way" (*Mbithi (3), p.163), and it is likely that about 20,000 projects had been completed (**1). In 1974, Mbithi and Rasmusson (*) reported that self-help had already provided 500 secondary schools, 8,000 primary schools and 5,000 nurseries. According to an NGO staff member, 900 health centres had been completed (**2). In their study of self-help in 1973, Mbithi and Rasmusson (*, p.12) found a sample of 451 projects to contain the following types :

Primary schools	27%
Nurseries	22%
Cattle dips and crushes	14%
Secondary schools	11%
Dams and water catchments	10%
Churches and mosques	9%
Health dispensaries	7%

Other studies suggest that health dispensaries may have been much more popular in earlier years (in a study of 14 districts, health and maternity clinics were considered top priorities for self-help among respondents (*Heyer et al., p.37)), but many more clinics were built than the government was able to staff, and many of the buildings remain unused. The government has undertaken to staff one centre in each province each year, but at that rate, little impression will be made on the number of unused centres (see **2).

The value of self-help projects in 1972 was estimated to be K£3,115,000, and this total was made up as follows :

TABLE 8A
Value of Self-Help Projects in 1972

		K£'000
Donated by the people		
Labour	855	
Material	531	
Cash	1,322	
	2,708	
Other assistance		
Central government	233	
Local Authorities	25	
Other donors	149	
	407	
		3,115

The above figures show that 87 per cent of the value of self-help projects was donated by the people involved, compared with only 5 per cent by NGOs and international agencies. In this sense, "self-help" is therefore an appropriate description for these projects. The "people's" contribution is, however, only about K8 shillings per adult member of the population.

8.2. Some Criticisms of Kenyan Self-Help

According to a government report for 1967 :

"The statistical facts...cannot convey the excitement and enthusiasm of the people themselves. The story of working together, of detailed planning, of hours and hours of manual work given freely and joyfully, of the collection of thousands of shillings from persons to whom each shilling represented a real sacrifice - statistics cannot give a true picture !"

(quoted in *Mbithi (3), p.163)

A closer look at self-help in Kenya, however, may show that the above report does not give a complete picture either. In many self-help projects, planning has been deficient, in many projects, not all contributions have been given "freely and joyfully", and the fact that many have needed to make a "real sacrifice" need not be regarded as a point in a project's favour. These shortcomings of the Harambee movement are examined below.

(i) Self-help is not integrated with national planning and may be a reaction to it.

The lack of planning can be seen in the construction of health centre buildings when there has been neither staff nor finance to run them. There are also reports of schools having been built when no teachers were available, and of trenches having been dug for water pipes, but self-help enthusiasm having disappeared with the delay in having the pipes delivered (**3). In many cases, the immediate fault has been attributed to the self-help groups for their not having consulted with local councils on staffing, etc., but it shows a divergence between locally felt needs and national plans. The government's development expenditure and self-help contributions from 1966/67 to 1971/72 can be analysed as follows, showing the difference between government and self-help priorities :

TABLE 8B

Comparison of Government-Developmental and
Self-Help Investments

	Percentages of totals	
	Govt. Devel. expenditure	Self-help investments
Agriculture	28	8
Roads	41	2
Water supplies	4	6
Education	10	53
Health	7	8
Housing, buildings etc.	8	14
Fisheries	1	0
Community development	1	7
	100 *	100 *

(Derived from *Mbithi and Rasmusson, p.19)

* totals do not add because of rounding.

Heyer et al. (*,chapter3) ask whether self-help resources would not be better channelled into agricultural projects. However, it is likely that people have sound reasons for their choices of projects. Mbithi and Rasmusson (*, p.20) consider that self-help concentration on welfare projects

"...reflects areas of myopia among Kenyan development planners and that most grass-roots harambee is essentially gap-filling in a national development strategy where over-emphasis on economic growth in its narrowest sense has ignored critical areas of social development."

Holmquist (quoted in*Mbithi (3), p.164) has argued that self-help projects deliberately choose "divergent strategies and goals" to re-orientate government planning towards local needs, and to "alienate irrelevant planning and centralised decision making". (Self-help as a political protest movement is considered below).

Thus, self-help may be as much a consequence of and a reaction to inappropriate planning (in the view of the local population) as a

result of "detailed planning". Where a self-help project is a reaction against the government's economic policies it is unlikely to meet the criteria of those who see economic growth as their objective, and for those NGOs with other approaches to development, there is nothing to guarantee that self-help is tackling the causes of the problems.

According to the section of the 1974-78 Plan dealing with water supplies (*G of K (5), p.335),

"The need to co-ordinate self-help initiatives with Government programmes is apparent, and in future, all self-help water schemes will be integrated with the national plan for the development of rural water supplies. It is the policy of Government to encourage and to assist self-help efforts in all fields. As a practical expression of this policy, self-help contributions in money and labour towards the cost of construction are expected."

However, while there is a perceived divergence between government policy and locally felt needs, government attempts at better co-ordination and integration may not be entirely successful, and they may detract from self-help enthusiasm. That "...contributions...are expected" leads to consideration of a second criticism of the self-help movement.

(ii) Self-help contributions are not always "freely and joyfully given".

It is unlikely that the harambee movement could continue on its present scale if many did not "freely and joyfully" support it. Nevertheless, people's reasons for contributing to self-help may not always be based on idealism.

Carruthers (*, p.87), in his study of water development projects, reported that "various degrees of coercion" were employed in fund-raising :

"During the fieldwork, the writer found one family that had been denied access to one self-help project - a school - because they refused to support another project, in this case, a dispensary. Some self-help water schemes almost certainly utilise similar methods."

Carruthers quotes from a copy of a circular (in his possession) from a Council Clerk to all county council staff concerning a self-help water project (from which very few staff would directly benefit) :

"Please arrange to collect from staff within your Department towards the above important project as follows :

Heads of Departments	20/-
Their Deputies Shs.	15/-
and the rest Shs.	5/- per person.

Please let me have your contributions by Monday 4th. October 1971...without fail."

Mbithi and Rasmusson (*, p.22) found in their study that :

" ...there was conflicting evidence as to whether Harambee involvement is compulsory. Within certain districts this aspect of direct forced participation was obvious although one could argue that psychological social pressure which characterised harambee self-help contribution tactics at the in-group level is a clear form of compulsion."

They concluded, however, that although "compulsion plays a part in participation",

"...local people appear to have very objective technical reasons for contributing to harambee."

(iii) With self-help the poor must finance their own development.

The government report quoted above points out that for many, the support of a self-help project has been a "real sacrifice". According to Mbithi (* (3), p.163),

"If one were to quantify the human energy sacrificed - that is, toiling in dusty, dry conditions with little water and often no food - the amount of personal sacrifice would be staggering."

"Harambee" is a call to people to invest in their own development. This may appear a reasonable objective, but the more people invest, the less they will have available for consumption. More time spent building a health centre may mean less time spent cultivating food crops or tending children. If it is assumed that farmers have achieved near-optimal allocation of their resources, then the possibilities of collective action, especially actions which may attract external support, may change the optimum, but also may force farmers into less efficient use of their time and incomes.

Self-help is not a strategy which is likely to redistribute wealth. The more prosperous areas of the country have much more potential for raising "voluntary" funds, but these funds will be invested in the same areas and not transferred to the marginal areas where farmers will not have so large surplus incomes for self-help contributions. Certainly, fund-raising for self-help projects often extends to those who have migrated from the locality for wage employment : the extent to which this increases remittances from urban to rural areas is not known, although it has the benefit that remittances are to the advantage of the community as a whole rather than just those households with wage-earning members. However, the number of urban workers from which a community can expect support will, to some extent, depend on the relative wealth of the community, its educational facilities, etc.

Nevertheless, that "harambee" can encourage people in their support of projects aimed at improving their communities and perhaps create a psychological environment in which people are more likely to take developmental initiatives (as hypothesised in Chapter 4) is no doubt good. An NGO funding a self-help project must, however, carefully check that the project is not just in the interests of the community, but also that the community has the resources to undertake the project without making too great demands on the poorer members.

People being asked to contribute more than is reasonable, given their economic status, will generally only arise either

- a) when there is significant economic differentiation in a community and the project is a proposal of a more wealthy faction ;
- b) when a community has created a project in hope of attracting aid (**4) ; or
- c) when the leadership is external to the project community and therefore is either not fully appreciative of, and sympathetic to the community's situation, or with objectives different from those of the community. Self-help leadership in Kenya often comes from politicians, chiefs and other government officials whose personal status will be enhanced by the project (**5) (the implications of this leadership are considered later in this section).

As a result, the number of self-help projects in an area may not be related to the area's capacity to support them. In their study, Almy and Mbithi (*, pp.914,915) found :

"The 1970/71 decline in Tetu in incidence and variety of total projects, and especially in the incidence of small-scale projects (nursery schools, women's home improvement groups, miscellaneous farming and small stock-keeping groups, etc.) leads us to suspect that the grass-roots self-help movement there has lost impetus. The same thing may have happened in 1971 in Mathira and Othaya.

The Area Co-ordinator remarked that self-help in Tetu has been over-taxed by the large number of Harambee projects pushed by aspiring politicians in the last few years, e.g. the huge hospitals, reticulated water schemes and new technical institutes. These are piled on top of an already keen competition among sub-chiefs and chiefs to have the greatest number of mini-projects in their own areas. Poor farmers can only contribute a limited amount to development, but the politicians do not recognise this local problem in their struggle for national recognition. Field workers report that there are, in fact, a number of new self-help groups forming in these areas, but they are avoiding registration so that their project is not expanded by politicians or administrators beyond what they can afford."

A consequence of this over-expansion of self-help activity is that a high proportion of the projects are abandoned before completion. Community Development Division statistics (in *Mbithi and Rasmusson, p.29) show :

	Projects started	Projects abandoned
1971	6597	3325
1972	2841	1057

8.3. Self-Help and Development

In Chapter 4, it was argued that self-help must be interpreted within the context of the type of developmental process of which it is a part. That is certainly the case in Kenya where, as has been shown above, the concept of self-help is closely linked to the allocation of the country's developmental resources, and to the increasing frustration of rural groups who remain on the periphery of the economy. However, self-help in Kenya has positive as well as negative features, and it would therefore be prudent for an NGO to carefully assess each self-help project it encounters before committing itself to give assistance.

The relationships between self-help and the different approaches to development described in Section 2.3 are considered below.

(1) Self-help is not necessarily consistent with an economic-growth approach because, in spite of the fact that it mobilises the resources of rural communities, it may divert resources from more economic investments (although, as noted above, self-help may be a consequence of an economic growth policy). This, however, is probably not a serious objection for NGOs..

(2) If a basic-needs approach is taken, then assisting self-help projects in the poorer areas may help improve conditions there. The willingness of the government to supply school teachers or health centre staff may be a limitation, but with planning, it should be possible to avoid such problems. That self-help contributions may be an added burden for a household already in economic hardship is a serious consideration for NGOs, as such projects would, in some ways, run counter to their basic objectives, but there may be more of a case for involvement to relieve hardship than there is for non-involvement. However, the characteristic of a project that makes it worth supporting is that it is in a poor area and that the local community has expressed a need for it (in their willingness to make a sacrifice), and not that it is "self-help".

(3) To what extent can self-help counteract structural under-development in Kenya ?

If rural poverty in Kenya is considered to be a consequence of the relationships between the marginal areas and the economic centre of the country, then projects which are likely to reduce the dependency of rural areas, i.e. which will lead to greater self-reliance, must be at the centre of any development strategy. The question which then arises is whether the usual type of Kenyan self-help project is likely to lead to self-reliance. As shown in 8.2, Kenyan self-help is far from the idealised concept of some NGOs, but in some respects it may nevertheless be "developmental". This is examined in the following paragraphs.

- (a) One problem is the orientation of self-help towards welfare projects. A health centre, per se, is unlikely to lead to a positive change in economic structure - it may, in fact, lead to a negative change through increasing the community's dependence on government staffing.
- (b) The same may be true of schools, but here the arguments are more complicated, and because of the prominence of schools in self-help activities, they need special consideration. Some argue that educational improvement is necessary if communities are to have representatives who can compete for them in national institutions. In the short term, the community loses the young people who may be able to make the greatest direct contribution to the community, but in the long term it is possible that only if rural communities are represented in central institutions will there be adequate opposition to the urban bias in Kenya planning. A counter-argument is that "harambee" schools equip people for jobs outside the community and therefore increase dependence on the centre (a rural-orientated curriculum, on the other hand, would not enable people to compete nationally), and harambee school pupils study for their own advancement and not that of the community. A community subscribes to a self-help school because it accepts Kenya's pattern of development, not because it plans a radical change. The effects of self-help education are, therefore, difficult to predict, and no firm conclusions can be reached here. However, as the possible benefits appear very indirect, and as more direct consequences are likely to increase underdevelopment, self-help education of the Kenyan variety does not appear as a candidate for support if NGOs view development as a structural problem.
- (c) Another factor which may influence self-help's effectiveness in attacking underdevelopment is leadership. Reference has already been made to the tendency for politicians and others to use self-help projects to increase their status and to win the support of their constituents, and to the reluctance of some project groups to register their projects for fear of them being expanded by politicians (**6). The status of such leaders

may thus be enhanced by NGO support. Mutiso's view (according to Mbithi and Rasmusson (*, pp.39,40) is that this involvement of officialdom in self-help projects is a way in which local communities can strengthen their voice in national decision taking :

"...the high degree of participation in harambee by the periphery is a re-affirmation of the periphery's alienation and their desire to co-opt leadership into, or from the centre. This is essential if the periphery is, in the long run, going to be able to re-channel the allocation of resources and access to opportunity to the periphery."

Also :

"...the organisations involved in collective activity after independence have become the way of organising politically for the selection of those who are to be involved in district and national politics."

(*Mutiso, pp.237,238)

- (d) Mbithi and Rasmusson argue that local communities will not have sufficient awareness of government planning to use the co-option of leadership as a deliberate tactic, but nevertheless, the outcome may be the same, irrespective of the communities' intentions. In this view of self-help as a development strategy, the nature of the project is less important - whether or not a project is worth supporting becomes dependent on the access which the project will give the self-help group to political leadership.

Mbithi (* (3), pp. 165-170) notes that self-help groups can often be regarded as "solidarity" groups. Participation in a self-help project may increase social cohesion and the group may be based on a traditional social institution which is thus preserved and modernised. He suggests that increasing solidarity will lead to "an increasing focus in the definition of the situation" and will be a "Manufacturing ground for new values". Mutiso (*, p.238) suggests that "Harambee has remained the level at which local level politics finds its organisational base rather than in the institution of the party."

Harambee can, therefore, be a political protest movement. The hypothesis is supported by the fact that the poor in the marginal areas are those most active in self-help. (*Mbithi and Rasmusson, p.4), and that

"The Harambee call was expressed in June 1963 but it did not take root firmly until 1967, when the infection of grass-roots disillusionment with the promise of Uhuru became a reality."

(ibid., p.43)

Harambee is unlikely to be a conscious political protest, however, except perhaps to some leaders who are aware of the relative deprivation of their areas and the options open to the government planners. The harambee self-help movement may therefore have potential as a protest against underdevelopment, but it does not follow that the support of a self-help project by an NGO will help articulate this protest (NGO support may, in fact, temporarily diminish the protest, as has been noted in Sections 1.4 and 2.3 (2)).

There are, therefore, reasons for suspecting relationships between self-help activity and structural underdevelopment in Kenya. However, the relationship may be that self-help is a symptom of underdevelopment as well as a strategy for its removal, and that a project is described as "self-help" is no guarantee that it will increase self-reliance.

Thus, whatever approach to development an NGO may take, self-help may be an important feature of a project and one requiring thorough examination, but self-help is far from a sufficient criterion for project support.

Footnotes

1. Mbithi (* (3), p.163) states that in Eastern Province in 1967, 3565 projects were under way and 2185 were completed. Assuming a similar ratio throughout the country, this would give a total of, very roughly, 20,000 projects completed.

More recent figures show that the harambee movement has maintained its momentum : according to the magazine "New African" (December 1979, pp.49-50) there were at least 14,165 self-help projects under way at the time of Kenyatta's death in 1978, and 1979 was a "bumper year for harambee projects."

2. Reported in discussions with Kenya Red Cross Society staff, January 1976.
 3. Noted in discussions with Peace Corps school teachers and with district officials in Kitui.
 4. Cases of projects being created in hope of attracting aid have been reported by KFFHC.
 5. In discussing self-help water schemes, Carruthers (*,pp.86-87) has written :
 "Political leaders are not slow to realise that in water schemes they have a project which affects all their constituents and which accords with their needs. Therefore, leadership of the self-help group is assured. Quite often political boundaries accord with rivers and thus a scheme can easily and naturally be designed to cover a constituency."
 See also Section 8.3 in which the links between self-help projects and the political process are discussed further.
 6. The use of self-help by politicians could clearly be seen in a by-election held in Machakos District in January 1976 : both candidates campaigned on their support for self-help activities. One claimed that :
 "...if re-elected... he would continue giving assistance to existing projects and help start new ones."
 ("Nation", Nairobi,5.1.76)
 His opponent
 "...would also ensure as many Harambee development projects as possible."
 (Ibid.)
- According to an article in the magazine "New African" (December 1979)
 "...in Kenya, where elections are not fought on issues, harambee contributions have proved veritable vote-winners.
 The political aspects of harambee projects became evident last year during the KANU national elections when the party made it clear that candidates will only be sponsored if they have "identified themselves with the development efforts of the wananchi (people)" - clearly understood to mean contributions to harambee funds."

PART III B

KITUI : A DISTRICT STUDY

This part of the thesis is a study of change and the constraints to change in a rural district of Kenya. While Part III A, in considering development or underdevelopment, the problems of malnutrition and the nature of the self-help movement, looked at characteristics of Kenya as a whole, in turning to the fourth area of investigation - rural development - discussed in Part II, attention is focussed onto a particular district - Kitui District - in Kenya's Eastern Province.

In general, NGOs prefer to work in poor rural areas. At the time of the field work Kitui District was being described as a famine area, and hence it was chosen for this sub-study. How did this situation of famine come about? How should problems in Kitui District be analysed? What is the scope for change in the district? These are examined in the two chapters which constitute this part of the thesis: the first sets the scene by describing the district and its problems, and the second analyses change and constraints to change. A basis is thereby established for examining the work of NGOs in chapter 11 and later parts of the thesis.

CONTENTS

9. *Rural Problems in Kitui District*
10. *Changes, and the constraints to changes, in Kitui District*

RURAL PROBLEMS IN KITUI DISTRICT

Kitui District was chosen for the study by the Kenya Freedom from Hunger Council (KFFHC) in 1975 because it had been suffering from several years of drought. This period of low rainfall continued throughout the study, and in 1976 there were frequent reports in the Kenyan press of the need for famine relief. But although all observers in Kitui agreed that the shortage of water was the district's paramount problem, this chapter argues that the drought is not just a climatic phenomenon, but that it must be seen in the context of the socio-economic changes which have been taking place.

After an introductory description of the district, the chapter takes a historical approach in analysing Kitui's present situation. The third section examines the drought problem, and the fourth looks at the high rate of migration from the district. The final section concludes that many of the changes which have taken place in the district could be described as 'underdevelopment'.

This chapter, therefore, gives the background for the analysis of changes and the constraints to change in chapter 10, the implications of which for NGOs are considered in chapter 11.

Contents :

- 9.1 District description*
- 9.2 History of development/underdevelopment in Kitui*
- 9.3 Drought in Kitui*
- 9.4 Migration from Kitui*
- 9.5 Underdevelopment in Kitui*

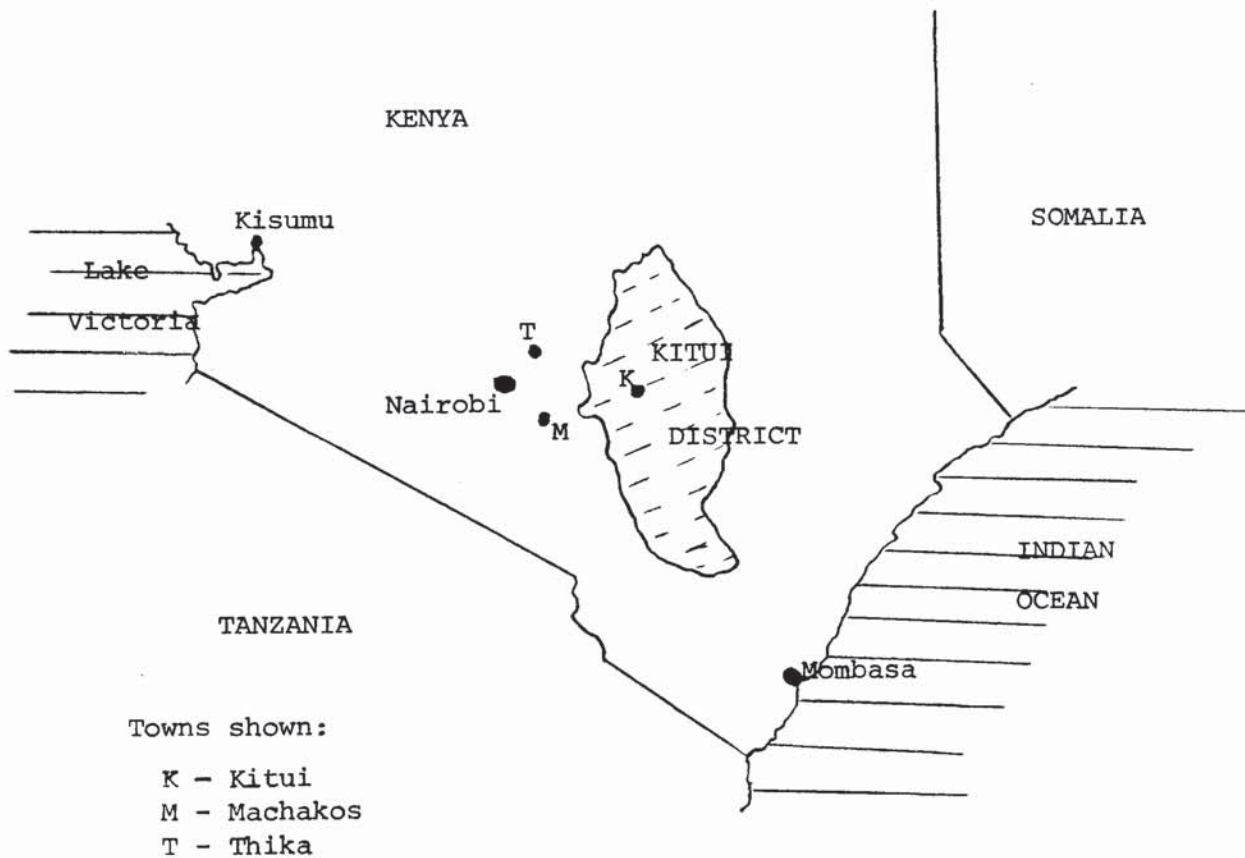
Related appendices :

- VI Drought in Kitui District*
- VII Some statistics on migration from Kitui District*

9. RURAL PROBLEMS IN KITUI DISTRICT

9.1 District Description

Kitui District is part of Kenya's Eastern Province, and its location is shown in map 9A below:



Map 9A

The administrative centre of the district is the town of Kitui, (for brevity the district will be referred to as 'Kitui' and the town as 'Kitui town') which is, by road, about 120 miles from Nairobi, only the first thirty of which are tarred. Kitui town

is the largest of the district's small market towns, and in 1978, it probably had a population of about 4,000. It has several modern buildings, electricity, a few miles of tarred roads, and daily bus services to Nairobi.

The district's population in 1978 was probably around 450,000 (**1) and growing at about 3 per cent. The total area is 31,099 sq.km.

The district is not, however, geographically uniform. The west of the district lies on the edge of Kenya's central plateau, and a line of hills in the west rising to over 4,000 feet is Kitui's wettest and most productive area, with, in places, a population density of over 80 per sq. km. The east of the district is a low plain which is hot and dry, and almost uninhabited (less than 1 per sq. km.). In talking about the problems of Kitui, it must therefore be remembered that the district is far from homogeneous.

Although rainfall in most parts of the district is not adequate to allow farming at much above a subsistence level, farming is nevertheless the most important economic activity :

- it is the main livelihood for the majority of the population ;
- it is the main source of food, and therefore an important determinant of nutritional standards ;
- the agricultural system is a determinant of population settlement patterns and social organisation.

and hence "development" in Kitui is very dependent on agricultural "improvement".

The great majority of the people in the district are peasant farmers, i.e. the basic farming unit is the household farm producing most of the household's food requirements and surpluses which are sold on local markets for cash income. Some crops may be grown for cash sales

only, but few, if any, only produce for their own requirements except in drought years when there may be no surpluses. Typically, a household has 4 to 6 members, say, a husband and wife, two children, a grandparent and another relative, but there is much variation about this average (a study in neighbouring Embu District found from 1 to 15 per household in a sample of 40 (* Hunt (1))). Houses are generally of the traditional mud, wood and thatch variety, constructed by the household with help from neighbours and relatives. The more wealthy farmers use metal roofing. During the study land registration (through which farmers get a legal title to their land) was being carried out in the west of the district.

The type of agriculture (**2) practised depends on the rainfall. Originally, the population of Kitui was mainly pastoral but with , shifting farming in the higher and wetter west. In the west, shifting farming has now almost disappeared, the land being used more intensively and in places leading to the deterioration of the soil and erosion. Typically, the area cultivated by a household is about 1 ha., but this will vary with the household size, land availability and the length of the planting season. Maize is the principal crop grown (about 2/3 of all cultivated land is planted with maize, although not always in pure stands). Other crops include millet, beans, peas and some cotton, and mangoes grow wild on the hills. Kitui has two rainfall seasons each year, and farmers can have two harvests - unless the rains fail, which they frequently do. Cattle and goats are kept, but generally only by the more wealthy farmers.

Most households only use simple tools like a *panga* (machet), a *jembe* (hoe) and a digging stick, although some of the more wealthy may own ploughs, and a very small minority may even hire tractors. Very few buy inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers and insecticides - even if they wanted to buy them, such inputs are not available in many parts of the district. The hiring of labour to increase the household workforce may not be uncommon in areas which have a good harvest, and some groups of farmers still have traditional communal work arrangements.

In much of the dry east of the district, only livestock farming is feasible, although some shifting farming is practised where possible, e.g. near to river beds.

Although agriculture is the main economic activity, many people earn income from trade, tailoring, honey collecting, charcoal production, weaving sisal ropes and baskets, hunting, etc. Only a very small number are in wage employment, and then generally in government service as teachers, clerks, etc.

Standards of living in Kitui are low, and agriculture and other economic activities are scarcely productive enough to provide Kitui's population with what might be regarded as basic needs. Most farmers' incomes are under £60 per annum - some will earn much less (*ILO (1), p.37). A land shortage in the highland areas leads to much unemployment and under-employment, and the need for people to migrate to other parts of Kenya, and the problems are exacerbated when the rains fail. Periodic droughts lead to widespread malnutrition - in places worst hit by drought in 1976, up to 50 per cent of young children were below 80 per cent of the standard weight for their age (**3).

Most of the population are of the Kamba tribe whose tribal area covers Kitui and Machakos Districts. Because of the tribal and geographical similarities between the two districts, some use has been made of the studies of the Kamba in Machakos in this study.

9.2. History of development/underdevelopment in Kitui

Today Kitui presents a picture of rural poverty, a population at the mercy of fluctuations in the weather and dependent on the rest of Kenya for economic help. Yet many parts of Kitui are only a few hours drive from Nairobi and the rich farm lands of Kenya's central highlands. This section looks to historical developments for an understanding of present problems and of why Kitui has seen so little progress compared with other parts of Kenya.

The Kamba who, today, are the principal inhabitants of the district, only spread into Kitui from neighbouring Machakos District in the second half of the 17th or the first half of the 18th centuries (*Munro, pp.7-13). In pre-colonial times, they did not exist as a political unit :

"Kamba society was extremely small-scale, fragmented into shallow lineages and small territorial organisations, lacking in centralising institutions".

(*ibid., p.15 and **4)

Before the arrival of the Arabs and Swahilis around the middle of the 19th century, the Kamba of Kitui were famed as traders, mainly in ivory, but also in slaves and cattle - it has been suggested that the Kamba depended upon trade because of their proneness to famine, and migrations to escape famines resulted in contact with other areas of Kenya (*ibid., pp.20-23). At that time, a good supply of elephants also helped Kitui's trade.

Most of the Kamba trade in Kitui was, however, lost to the Arab and Swahili merchants (**5). Through trade, the Africans acquired cloth, wire and beads, but as the Arab and Swahili merchants were not themselves agriculturists, it is not surprising that they do not appear to have brought technical change. Moreover, they did not bring social change to the same extent as the Arabs did elsewhere (**6) and Kamba society still lacked unifying social institutions. Although a number of Kamba acquired wealth

"...none of the new leaders succeeded in overcoming the egalitarianism of their society to convert their achieved-status position into established offices. They could secure action through persuasion and example, but not by command and injunction".

(*Munro, p.30)

Social change came with European colonialism. To form an administrative structure, chiefs had to be created, and those recruited were generally prominent traders and individuals

"...who had used colonial power to further their claims to achieved status...(this) offered prominent Kamba figures a new institutional framework through which to conduct, to use, restrict or bypass the democratic egalitarian system".

(*Ibid.)

Dundas (*), writing in 1913, was of the opinion that changes brought about by colonialism were causing a breakdown in Kamba society. He was very critical of the character of young Kamba men, accusing them of "indolence" and "drunkenness" :

"I am afraid that there is very little to be said in favour of the Akamba...to be fair to him he has the makings of a most useful native in him...We have to save him from falling into utter uselessness through degeneration, and what we must bear in mind is that this degeneration came and will increase through our influence."

(*Dundas, p.491)

One of Dundas's concerns was the reluctance of the Kamba to accept wage employment. Lindblom's explanation (reported in *Ndeti) was that "...they consider themselves too good to be in the service of white men as workers..." and Dundas (*, p.489) himself noted "...a pride in self-sufficiency which asserts a superiority equal to their demands which scorns improvements...". In 1921 only 7 per cent of Kamba men were in wage employment compared with 36 per cent in Kikuyu, Meru and Embu districts (**7 and *Munro, p.95). Although the Kamba in Kitui did not lose land to the extent suffered by the Kikuyu, or even the Kamba of Machakos, the economic impact of colonial rule was felt through taxation. Where farmers did not resort to wage employment, it necessitated the sale of subsistence production for cash. As in other parts of Kenya, the revenue from this taxation was used to finance the colonial administration and to provide services largely for the benefit of European settlers (**8).

Christian missions reached the Kamba early this century, but generally they were rejected, not so much on the grounds of their theology, but because of the social and cultural changes they demanded and their identification with the colonial administration. Mission schools had little relevance to Kamba society, and they also took children away from work in the family economy (see section 10.1).

The main agricultural change which took place was the move from millet and sorghum to maize as the main crop (see 10.1). Cotton was introduced and a ginnery opened in Kitui town, but cotton has not become a major crop in the district (** 9). Agricultural and veterinary officers were appointed in the 1920s with the responsibility of improving African farming, but because of their lack of numbers it is unlikely that they reached more than a small proportion of the population, and

because of their lack of understanding of local agriculture, they were rightly distrusted by the farmers (**10). Munro (*, p.185) concludes from his study of the Kamba (particularly in Machakos District):

"...African assessments of the opportunities available to them in the economic circumstances contributed more to the advances of the 1920s and 1930s than did the colonial government's (policies)".

By the end of the 1939-45 war, agriculture in the wetter parts of Kitui had been essentially monetised, and within the Kamba it is possible that an increasing level of economic differentiation was appearing, some taking advantage of new opportunities and poorer farmers needing to move to drier areas (**11). An improvement programme which continued throughout the 1950's included terracing, bush control, dams, livestock disease control and track construction, but the programme concentrated on the wetter, higher potential areas of the district.

The first major political opposition of the Kamba to the colonisers was expressed through opposition to destocking in the 1930's, although this took place mainly in Machakos. During the 1939-45 war, many Kamba served in Burma, and whether or not they were radicalised by war service, they returned with new aspirations and status, and had a "tremendous impact on Kamba society" (*Mutiso, p.220 and **12). After the war political activity among the Kamba remained centred in Machakos District where communal work groups (which had become the base organisations for political protest) were stronger (*Mutiso, p.237). When a Kamba political party was eventually formed, however, it was created under the leadership of Nairobi-based Kamba, and after independence the party soon merged with KANU with which this Kamba leadership had similar interests (**13).

Summarising, although Kamba society has never been static, the twentieth century has been a period of immense change. Colonialism brought education, technical assistance, wider markets, etc., but most of what the Kamba achieved was gained through their own efforts, often using their own 'traditional' institutions. The technological changes in the Kitui farmers' lives have probably not been as significant as the social changes, new institutions and forms of

leadership having been introduced, often either replacing or transforming 'traditional' forms of social organisation. These changes took place partly under the control of, and partly in response to the influence of colonial rule and the settler community. Missions (the only form of NGO in Kitui at that time), irrespective of their motives, were part of the colonial presence, shared the values of the colonial regime, and in many cases led the attack on 'traditional' institutions.

The following three sections look at the present situation in Kitui, and it will be seen that many of the problems have their origins in the changes which have been described above.

9.3. Drought in Kitui

For several years prior to this study Kitui had been suffering from below average rainfall. During the field-work period (December 1975 - March 1976) there were regular reports in the Kenyan press of famine relief being provided by government agencies, churches and other KNGOs, and all those consulted during the study regarded drought as Kitui's main problem. In February 1976, senior district officials privately admitted that they considered 250,000 people in the district (more than half) to be "seriously at risk" and in need of famine relief.

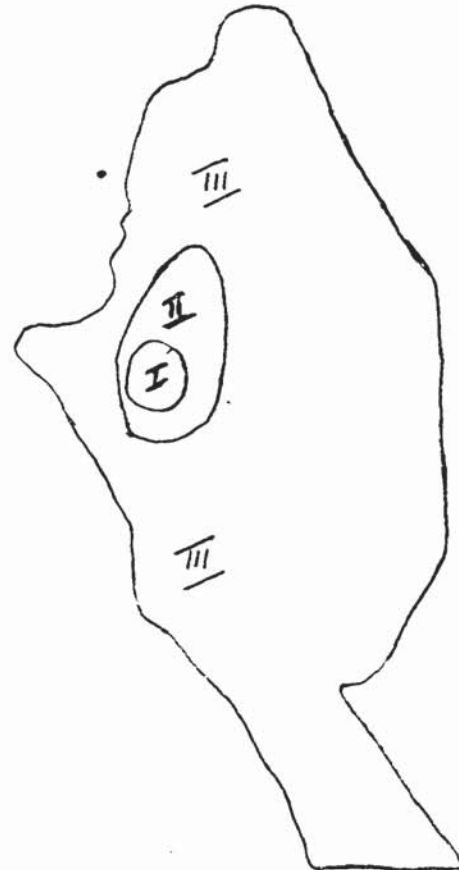
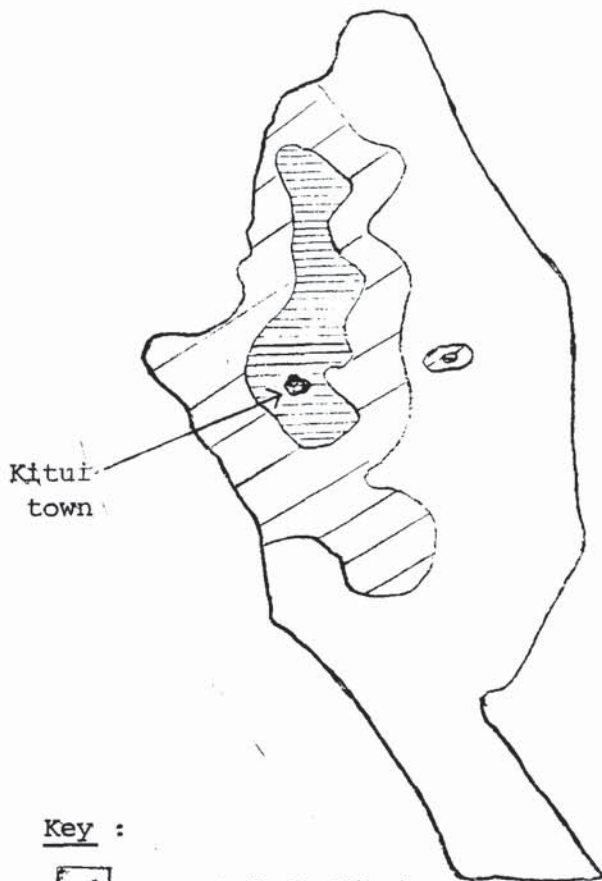
Whether or not periodic droughts in Kitui are the principal sources of economic and social problems in Kitui, they are certainly a main feature of the area. Even in 1913, Dundas (*, p.480) reported that :
"...the frequent failure of the rains results in periodic famines. Such famines have, in the past, harrassed the Akamba more than any other adversity, all Akamba can tell of seven famines, some many more, and it is certain that the population has been held in check by these disasters."

Ndeti (*) has dated five very serious droughts between 1836 and 1910, and Mbithi and Wisner (*, p.8) add 1913-18, 1925, 1936, 1946, 1954, 1961 and 1970.





Map 9B below shows the rainfall distribution suggested by the 'National Atlas of Kenya' (*G of K (9)). The rainfall is fairly equally divided between two seasons, October to December and March to May, with many rainfall stations recording no rain at all in January and February, and June to September.

Map 9B : Rainfall in Kitui District

Map 9C : Zones of different severity of drought



Key :

-  Over 40" (1015mm)
-  30" - 40" (760-1015mm)
-  20" - 30" (510-760mm)
-  Below 20" (510mm)

(See below for key to zones.)

A study was made of the available rainfall data for 1971-74 and this is reported in appendix VI. This appendix shows the extent of the rainfall shortage during the period :

- (i) Annual rainfall measurements at 14 rainfall stations were examined for the four years 1971-74 : out of the 46 annual totals (10 annual totals were not available), 43 were below the long-term average total for the respective station;
- (ii) During each of the four years, most rainfall stations recorded only between 40 and 50% of their long-term averages, although a number of very low figures were recorded;
- (iii) Some severe droughts were extremely localised : they occurred at different altitudes and in areas where the average rainfall is relatively high.

According to KNGO and government staff, the rainfall did not improve in 1975 or 1976.

In studying the severity of the drought, three different zones have been identified (see appendix VI). These are shown in map 9B (previous page), and the likely effects of the drought in them are :

- I The area around Kitui town which does not seem to have been too badly affected, although about 30% of the harvests would have had reduced yields;
- II Areas of higher ground to the north and south of Kitui town. Here a farmer growing local maize as his main crop would have had a satisfactory harvest in less than half the rainfall seasons. In about one season out of five (on average) he would have had near to no harvest at all.
- III The remainder of the district (excluding the far east for which no data is available). Farmers in these areas would, on average, have had only one fair harvest out of four.

Mbithi and Wisner (*, p.25) have found that most farmers usually have sufficient reserves to survive a single drought season, but the above figures suggest that many farmers in zones II and III will have needed to face two or more consecutive severe droughts. Moreover, the effects of the drought may have been even worse than the above deductions suggest, as crop production cannot be predicted from rainfall totals alone : if rains come in torrential storms, most of the water may be lost in run-off (and damage done to soil and crops), and if the rainfall arrives too early, followed by a short, dry period, germinated seeds may die before the main rains begin.

Livestock have also been seriously affected by the drought. In 1970-71 Wisner and Mbithi (*, pp.18,19) estimate that, in the north of the district :

- 20 - 33 per cent of cattle had died ;
- the death rate of calves rose from about 25 per cent to about 67 per cent.

In the west, the effect of the drought on livestock may be less important than on crops when considering the risk of famine. One might expect that in times of drought, the poorer farmers will be most at risk, and in Kitui, few of the poorer farmers own livestock. In the north (Katse), Wisner and Mbithi estimate that in 1970-71 only 53 per cent of farmers owned cattle, although many had recently sold their cattle because of the drought. A study in Embu District suggests that in places, the percentage may be lower (* Hunt (1)).

In the east of the district in 1976 it has been estimated that 80-90 per cent of livestock had died (**14). Many of the losses were, however, due to a disease (unidentified at the time of the study) which may or may not be related to the drought.

When farmers have sold their livestock to provide a cash income during the drought, the prices have been very low because of the poor condition of the animals and because of the number of animals being sold - only donkeys had gained in value (600shillings in 1976) because they are used for transporting water, and livestock dowries were often being considered unacceptable unless a donkey was included.

It is hardly surprising that these reductions in agricultural production had an effect on nutritional standards. Near the start of the period considered (in 1971 ?), Wisner and Mbithi (*, p.18) in the north of the district (zone III) found that 38% of a sample of children under three years old weighed less than 70% of the standard weights for their ages. They also found many people dependent on famine relief, that many men had migrated for work elsewhere, and that maize was being sold for more than twice its normal price. As the rainfall did not improve in the period 1971 - 76, it is possible that nutritional standards in the area became, if anything, worse. Other workers in late 1975 and early 1976 found that the number of young children under 80% of standard weight was between 15 and 30% in zone I, and between 20 and 50% in a southern part of zone III. 250,000 people in Kitui were considered to be seriously at risk, and an extensive famine relief operation was under way.

Some have suggested that a major climatic change is taking place in Kenya, linking the drought to droughts in the Sahel and in the south of Ethiopia, and others have suggested cycles in the annual rainfall (**15). Although such hypotheses have not been examined in this study, in view of Kitui's history of drought and famine, the low rainfall from 1970 to 1976 does not appear to be freak. In Kitui periods of low rainfall must be expected (**16) and development in the district must be seen in the light of how they help people to cope during such periods. It is possible that the 1970 - 76 drought has had a more serious effect than similar rain shortages in the past because of changes in farming methods (see chapter 10.) and increases in population.

As a postscript to this section, it should be added that it has been reported that in 1977/78 Kitui's main problem was floods (**17).

9.4 Migration from Kitui

This section deals with a second major problem which is partly a consequence of drought, namely the large movement of people out of Kitui in search of work. This problem is not as 'obvious' as drought,

and different people would define it in different ways : to government planners it may be just a part of the general migration to the towns, the problem being the effect on places like Nairobi rather than on Kitui ; to farmers in the more prosperous highlands, it may not be a problem in that it gives them a plentiful supply of labour ; to young men in Kitui it is the lack of employment opportunities ; and for all in Kitui, it means the break-up of households for much of each year.

Rural to urban migration is a phenomenon common to most, if not all under-developed countries, and it has been the subject of much study. In Kenya, migrants travel from all districts to the towns, particularly Nairobi, Mombasa or Kisumu, and to the extent that Nairobi's population is growing at over 10 per cent per annum (*ILO (1) p.49).

Migration from Kitui takes several different forms. Young people with secondary education move to the towns in the hope of finding salaried employment, and if they are successful, their moves will be permanent (although they are likely to maintain close contact with, and some financial responsibility for their relations in their home area). Secondly, others, often without adequate education to make themselves competitive in the job market, will go to Nairobi or Mombasa in hope of finding casual work in the "informal" sector of small businesses, but often such migration will only be temporary - anything from a harvest season to several years - and aimed at generating extra cash income for a rural-based household. Thirdly, rural-to-rural migration on a seasonal basis is important in Kitui. When rains fail, farmers travel to look for wage employment on farms in the highland districts around Mount Kenya.

Appendix VII contains some estimates of the numbers of people migrating each year. The number will, no doubt, vary according to rainfall in Kitui, as well as to longer-term changes in employment prospects in Kitui and elsewhere, but the statistics of Appendix VII

indicate that a high proportion, perhaps even a majority, of young men migrate at some time in their youths.

There are, no doubt, many reasons why migration takes place, but Todaro, Elkan and others (*Gerhart, p.1) have postulated that an individual's decision to migrate is based largely on two factors : the gap between urban and rural real incomes and the probability of finding a job. A study of migrants in Kenyan towns found that : "...the desire for a job and the inability to find work in the rural areas is the most common reason given for migration. A felt lack of social amenities and even of schools is not of much importance."

(*ILO (1), p.45)

In a study in Meru (which borders northern Kitui) Almy (*, p.90) found that

"Given a hypothetical choice between residence in Nairobi, a town, or their own village, with a good job in each, 87% of the 461 who responded to the question picked their homes, 8% a town, and only 5% Nairobi."

For a migrant from Kitui, employment in Nairobi or Mombasa is difficult to find. An ILO report (*ILO (1), pp.51-64) quotes a survey estimating the unemployment rate for male household heads in 1968-69 in Nairobi as 10.3 per cent and in Mombasa as 14.4 per cent. Another survey shows that amongst young men in Nairobi in 1970, 30 per cent of the 16-19 age group were looking for jobs.

However, for those who are successful in finding wage employment, the rewards are high. For example, data for 1968-70 suggested that while a poor small-holder or pastoralist in a semi-arid zone may earn less than K£20 per annum, an unskilled employee in the formal, non-agricultural sector may earn from K£60 to K£200 per annum, and even employees in the informal sector may earn K£20 to K£120 (*ILO (1), p.74).

Thus there can be little doubt that the large migration from Kitui indicates a serious shortage of profitable employment opportunities in the district. But the problem may be more serious than just the

inconvenience, hardship and social disruption created - migration may also decrease the possibilities for development and increase the risk of malnutrition :

- (i) To improve the chances of a good harvest in Kitui, a farmer should plant immediately after the rains begin (or "dry plant" before the rains) so that the crops benefit from as much of the rainfall as possible. The start of the rains is, therefore, a critical period which requires as much labour as a household has available. For dry-planting, much labour is needed to break the hard, dry ground (see Section 1.2.1 (2)).

Mbithi and Wisner (*, p.25) have found in their studies that if there is a long or late rain season in the central highlands, then the temporary migrants may not have time to return to their own fields before the rains begin there, and a low rainfall season may not just reduce the harvest for that season, but it may restrict a household's ability to recover in the following season. Permanent migration will, of course, reduce the workforce at this critical time every rainfall season.

Migration may also reduce Kitui's self-help potential. With many of the young men, particularly those of initiative who otherwise might have made a great input to self-help in Kitui, in Nairobi, it is likely that Kitui will have lost some of its opportunities for self-help development.

- (ii) In a survey in Mbere Division which borders Kitui (and which has many similarities with Kitui, Hunt (* (1)) found that one third of all household heads were women. Often women were never free from housework as up to 10 hours per day had to be spent fetching water, and lack of water for food preparation resulted in some families going for days without eating. Consequently, young girls were often used for tending infants. Where the women must additionally cultivate the household farms, it can be assumed that the time available for attending to infants will be minimal, and the food production is likely to be unsatisfactory. Although cash

remittances may be received from migrants, it cannot be assumed that these are totally converted into food.

Bennett and Stansfield (*) list among characteristics associated with malnutrition in Uganda : geographically split and separated families, lack of continuity in child care, lack of support of the family by the husband, and working mothers.

Consequently, it can be assumed that migration in Kitui is contributing to nutritional problems.

9.5. Underdevelopment in Kitui

In Section 9.2, it was noted that in the pre-colonial era, Kitui had a nearly closed economy : the Kamba people of Kitui and Machakos were "self-reliant" in that their way of life did not depend on factors outside the districts (except in matters of defence). The arrival of western technology, the pacification of the country and formation of national institutions should have brought solutions to Kitui's problems of food production and greater prosperity through expanding markets, but the Kamba did not gain much. Munro (*, p.249) has argued instead that under colonial rule, the Kamba were "underdeveloped" in the sense of Section 2.3 (3) :

"Their enforced subservience to the needs and the interests of the administration and of the European settler-planter economy presented the Kamba with new opportunities : but they also faced new constraints. Kamba society may well have modernised in the sense that it acquired "characteristics common to more developed societies", but it also acquired some of the characteristics of "underdeveloped" societies, including political dependency, economic satellite status and poverty. The regime's mobilisation of their resources - for re-allocation either to the European-managed economy or to projects to preserve the "complementarity" of reserve and settled area - brought immiseration to the majority of Kamba".

It is possible that this situation has not changed much since independence. During this study, it has not been possible to quantify Kitui's dependence on the rest of Kenya, its net contribution

to the national economy, or its relative deprivation within Kenya. However, it appears that little has been done to correct the bias in favour of the urban centres and high-potential farming areas which was introduced during the colonial period. For example :

- (i) A visit to Kitui gives an immediate impression of the unequal development of the country. Nairobi is a town of supermarkets, modern shops and office blocks, and a wide range of industries. The main route from Nairobi to Kitui town starts with 20 miles of dual carriageway to Thika (a road leading to the main agricultural areas of the central highlands), then about 10 miles of well-surfaced road, but after passing the last pineapple estate, 90 miles of untarred road begins. Kitui town, although not unattractive, is a fairly typical African market town.
- (ii) Kitui depends on remittances from migrant workers in towns and other rural areas. While at one stage the Kamba were resistant to wage employment (see section 9.2). Kitui is now a main supplier of labour to the more productive and more wealthy areas of Kenya.
- (iii) Munro has found evidence to suggest that the colonial administration took more out of Kitui in tax than it gave back in services (see section 9.2). It has not been possible to quantify the relationship which exists at present, but it is likely that Kitui still suffers from its peripheral position in Kenya's economy : Kitui produces little for export and probably only makes a small contribution to the GDP, and it is therefore unlikely that Kitui will receive a share in Kenya's growth-orientated investments which is proportional to Kitui's relative needs. It has been noted that agricultural research has been concentrated on the cash crops of the high-potential areas, and the growth in employment-providing industry has been confined to the major urban centres where existing transport facilities give easier access to markets.

- (iv) In the past, most foreign aid has gone to the central areas of the country. This has been partly for political reasons, the aid being used to transfer land from expatriates to African farmers, but nevertheless, given the volume of aid which Kenya has received from donors which express 'basic-needs' policies, the relative neglect of Kitui appears surprising. It is no doubt in part a consequence of the way in which Kenya has presented its needs to donor governments with little emphasis being put on the marginal areas.

Thus Kitui fits with Cockcroft et al.'s model of underdevelopment : the development of Nairobi and the rich farming areas of Kenya as the economic centre of the country (even if as a centre which is largely subservient to Western interests) has put Kitui into a peripheral economic position.

However, the model of "constellations of developing metropolises and underdeveloping satellites" (see Section 2.3 (3)) may be equally applicable when the situation within Kitui is examined. It has been noted in section 9.2 that the pre-independence pattern of government services had the effect of concentrating economic power in Kitui town and the wetter hills, poorer farmers being forced into the more arid lands. The cost of the technologies introduced, and even destocking which enabled local entrepreneurs to buy cattle at very low prices, accentuated the economic differentiation within the district.

It appears that policies since independence may be continuing this process in Kitui. For example, a planning paper for Eastern Province in 1970 (* G of K (10), p. III.1) proposed an allocation of development resources in Kitui as follows :

"One more factor deserves mention, and that is the political pressure which may be exerted on the government to develop the arid areas which hitherto have not received full attention...Although socially desirable, a policy that concentrated on these marginal lands may not be economically viable, and could easily lead to a squandering of scarce capital resources.

...the high potential areas of the region...must continue to receive priority in development planning, because capital invested there will be seen to give quick results."

Thus the planned policy was one of economic growth applied at district level, and the chances of significant benefits from such an approach trickling out to the drier areas seemed slight. Indeed, even without such a policy the lack of resources available to government services made it difficult for them to reach out to eastern Kitui, and a conscious decision to favour the more remote areas would have been necessary to correct the bias towards the high potential areas. The longer that this unequal development continues, the more difficult it will eventually be for the richer and poorer parts of the district to co-exist as partners in the same economic system, and some already fear that the land registration programme is merely opening the way for land speculators from the centre of the district to subordinate the more marginal areas to their own economic interests.

Finally, the experience of one small project in the east of the district appeared to illustrate well the nature of the underdevelopment. An NGO had established a small sewing workshop to give training and employment to local women. The project's main business was in producing uniforms under a contract with a local school. However, when a new M.P. joined the school's board, the contract was transferred to a tailor in Kitui town who happened to be an acquaintance of the M.P. As a result, the project is less able to offer employment in eastern Kitui, and school uniforms cost more.

This analysis of Kitui as an underdeveloped area raises a number of issues for NGOs. If basic-needs criteria are used, there is a clear case for NGO involvement in the district, but the nature of the involvement may depend on whether or not the analysis of underdevelopment is accepted. If it is, then the effectiveness of any aid may be measured by the extent to which it affects Kitui's relationship with the rest of Kenya (or people's relationships with the centre of Kitui) rather than by any immediate economic benefits. A basic-needs approach may suggest that an NGO supports the government's relief and development services, but can self-reliance - "not something done for the periphery; (but) something done by the periphery" (*Galtung, p.23) - be effectively promoted if NGOs limit themselves to working through government or other official channels? These questions are considered in chapter 12.

Footnotes to 9

1. Comparison of the 1962 and 1969 censuses (*G of K (2)) indicates a growth rate of about 3 per cent p.a. The estimated population for 1978 is on the assumption that this growth has continued.
A growth rate of 3 per cent p.a. would suggest that Kitui's population is growing at less than the national average, although this growth rate will be influenced by the number of migrants leaving Kitui. The growth rate in Kitui is very much less than that of some other parts of Eastern Province where there is a high inward migration from more arid areas, leading, in the view of Wisner and Mbithi (*,p.13) to a high "famine potential".
2. The description of agriculture in the district has been compiled from Ndeti (*), Ominde(*), Hunt (* (1)), government statistics (*G of K (4), (6) and (10)) and conversations with government and KNGO staff in Kitui.
3. Figures supplied by fieldworkers. See Appendix II for notes on standard weights.
4. Munro's study concentrates mainly on the Kamba in Machakos, but as Machakos and Kitui are jointly the tribal territory of the Kamba, and as in the first decades of colonialism they were parts of Ukamba Province, many of his observations are likely to reflect the situation in Kitui.
5. By contrast, in Machakos the Kamba may have benefited from the arrival of Arab and Swahili merchants. In Kitui, Arabs and Swahilis took over the trade which was a main economic activity of the Kamba but in Machakos, the merchants created trading outlets and economic opportunities which had not hitherto existed (*Munro,pp.24-26).
6. For example, in Tabora Region of Tanzania in the first half of the nineteenth century, not only did Arab (and Indian) merchants take over the Africans' trade with the coast, but they also gained political control of some tribes through the chiefs. Before their arrival, chiefship had been a ritual role, but through the Arabs' influence it was transformed into a more economic role, and chiefs became wealthy as a result. In many respects, the underdevelopment of Tabora Region began long before the arrival of the Europeans (*Abrahams,pp.25-26).
7. Munro (*,pp.95-96) attributes the low number of Kamba who were employed by settlers, not to the Kamba character, and not only to the obvious fact that Kitui was less attractive to European settlement, but also because of the pastoral element in the Kamba economy. Herds, he argues, were a form of saving which could be converted into cash, and the Kamba could better resist the pull of wage employment as a result.
8. For example, Munro (*,p.93) has found that revenue raised by taxation from the Kamba greatly exceeded the expenditure of the District Commissioner's office in 1921 by as much as 92 per cent, and that expenditure "gave the European managed economy priority in the provision of transport and administrative/technical facilities." (See also Section 6.2).

9. Only 11,000 ha were being used for cotton in 1969 out of a total of 139,000 ha under cultivation (*G of K (6),p.126).
10. Munro (*,p.167) reports that the first agricultural officer in Machakos
 "...began to work by organising communal maize plots, completely alien to Kamba farming practices and highly unpopular. When the maize plots failed, the D.C. put him to dam-building, but six of these burst as soon as the October rains came."
 Munro gives other examples of "advice" which was not always in the interests of the farmers, e.g. :
 "Kamba farmers permitted grain stalks to lie on the ground after harvest, and the decaying stalks performed the triple function of protecting the young crops from the sun, preserving the soil moisture, and adding to the humus content of the soil. In 1932, the Agricultural Officer decided that this practice encouraged stalk-borer pests and compelled all the inhabitants of the Iveti to burn the old stalks. Next year, he changed his mind and decided that the advantages of mulching with old stalks far outweighed the disadvantages of stalk-borer damage. Finally, another officer decided in 1935, that the old stalks should be removed from the fields to decompose in compost pits."
 (Ibid.,p.179).
11. Discussed in a draft paper by Mutiso, Department of Government, University of Nairobi.
12. While in Burma, Kamba soldiers formed an organisation which could make political and economic demands. But
 "As long as there was a war, their grievances were listened to by the coloniser but at the end of the war, some informants argue, they were rapidly demobilised so as to make sure they would not continue to agitate within the army. The consequence of this lightning demobilisation was to deny the former soldiers an organisational base as well as a rallying point round which to focus demands."
 (*Mutiso,p.220)
13. The party, the Akamba People's Party (APP), grew out of the Akamba Association. This association was formed in 1954 with encouragement from the colonial government which wanted to keep the Kamba out of Mau Mau. Although this association was mainly of urban Kamba and chiefs, and described by Mutiso (*,p.237) as "a dummy tribal association which failed to penetrate the rural communal labour groups since its leadership was colonial chiefs", a number of Nairobi-based Kamba managed to use the association as a political base in creating the APP.
14. Estimated by Fr. O'Leary, an anthropologist based at Nuu in eastern Kitui. Unfortunately, the full results of his surveys were not available during this study.

15. For example, some have suggested 10-year cycles, and Masaya (*) has identified cycles of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ years (e.g. Machakos having a dominant cycle of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years and a less dominant cycle of $2\frac{1}{2}$ years).
16. For example, Wisner and Mbithi (*,pp.11-12) classify droughts and estimate their expected frequency in Kenya as follows :
 - (i) National droughts which affect the production of more than 10 per cent of the population of Kenya and at least two or more growing seasons. Such droughts seem to occur about once every decade.
 - (ii) Regional droughts affecting less than 10 per cent of the population and lasting one or two growing seasons. These are usually confined to the medium and low potential areas and can be expected to occur every three to four years.
 - (iii) Local droughts, perhaps confined to a single sub-location during a growing season, can be expected to occur every year in some part of the country.
17. From personal correspondence.

CHANGE, AND THE CONSTRAINTS TO CHANGE, IN KITUI

To be able to plan, or evaluate, the work of an NGO in a rural area one must have an understanding of how change occurs, or of why change does not occur. Chapter 5 contained some general remarks on the nature of rural change : this chapter uses some of the ideas from chapter 5 in an examination of change and the constraints to it in Kitui.

The chapter begins by looking at some of the changes which have already taken place, and reaches some general observations about the factors governing change.

The previous chapter has described the background to the present situation in Kitui, and the problems with which the district's population, the Kenyan Government, and possibly NGOs, must contend. The second and major section of this chapter examines some of the 'solutions' which government staff, in many cases with NGO help, are trying to implement. Each proposed solution has a corresponding set of constraints : the problem for NGOs is which solutions to promote, and how to overcome the associated constraints.

The final section of the chapter analyses the changes considered and reaches some conclusions about the nature of the constraints.

Contents :

- 10.1 Four changes which have taken place
- 10.2 Some proposals for change, and present constraints
 - 10.2.1 Changes in crop production
 - 10.2.2 Changes in livestock farming
 - 10.2.3 The development of water supplies
- 10.3 An analysis of change in Kitui

Related appendices :

- VIII Problems in the introduction of Katumani maize to Kitui District
- IX Some notes on group ranches in Kitui District

10. CHANGE, AND THE CONSTRAINTS TO CHANGE, IN KITUI

10.1. Four Changes Which Have Taken Place

This section brings together four changes which have already been described in Chapter 9.

(i) The move from pastoralism and shifting farming to settled agriculture

The Kamba, when they entered Kitui, were pastoralists, and cultivation began as shifting farming in the western hills. Land was then plentiful, and farmers could migrate with their herds to where water was available.

The change from pastoralism and shifting farming to settled agriculture has only taken place completely in the higher and wetter parts of the district. In the dry east it is unlikely that pastoralism can be replaced as the principal economic activity, and although shifting farming is still practiced in some areas, it is likely that the land registration programme will force farmers to settle wherever possible. Land registration, however, has only very recently been introduced to Kitui, and the move to settled agriculture has, in the main, been made without directives from the government or advice from other agencies. Under the influence of factors such as land scarcity due to an increasing population, and an appreciation of the economic opportunities in agriculture, settled agriculture has come as an evolutionary change in Kitui. It has not necessarily been a voluntary change in that environmental and economic needs have brought it about. It is

also likely that a social structure based primarily on pastoralism has been replaced by a form of social organisation and methods of co-operation appropriate for settled agriculture. (**1).

(ii) The change from millet to maize

One of the major changes which has taken place this century has been the move from millet to maize. The Kamba were the first inland Kenya tribe to adopt maize as their staple food crop (* Allan) following its introduction to the Kenyan coast by Portuguese traders (*Acland, p.124). That maize growing quickly spread was probably due to the following factors :

- it appeared to give a better yield than millet (**2) in years of average rainfall (at the time of its introduction agriculture would have been more concentrated in the relatively wetter areas) ;
- labour requirements are low compared with some other indigenous crops (*Acland, p.124) ;
- the crop is less susceptible to bird damage than millet ;
- the taste of maize is preferred to that of millet, although whether that has always been the case is uncertain.

Moreover, the crop has no special husbandry requirements (**3) and its adoption required no major costs.

Maize, however, requires more rainfall than millet, and the larger surpluses which maize can give in a good year cannot be stored for as long as millet. It has been claimed by some NGO staff that millet can be stored for up to 15 years in a traditionally constructed grain store, while maize may rot within a year. Thus, the change from millet to maize leaves the population much more vulnerable to drought - a smaller drop in rainfall is needed to create drought conditions, and it is more difficult to hold food reserves for times when drought will inevitably arise.

It is not completely clear why farmers should have made the change to maize when it may not appear to be in their interests. However, farmers do not have the advantage of knowing how crops will perform under different rainfall conditions, and it would therefore take many years before farmers could find the optimum agricultural strategy. On the evidence of a few good maize harvests it is understandable that farmers would make the change. Moreover, the agricultural alternatives are now changing rapidly with the introduction of new varieties of crops and new marketing opportunities, and it is, perhaps, now unreasonable to expect that a farming community could reach an optimum strategy on its own through trial and error. The promotion of maize by extension staff and the market demand will also have influenced farmers' decisions. Furthermore, the opening of new opportunities will mean that a farmer's strategy will not now depend on agricultural considerations alone : the attraction of a cash income and the perceived benefits of education for one's children will need to be balanced against the reliability of the household's food production.

Thus, the change took place in response to new economic needs and opportunities, and at the time of its introduction, maize did not appear to present any major economic or social costs. Originally the change took place without any external promotion, although subsequent government policies in extension, marketing and research will have influenced farmers' decisions in favour of maize.

(iii) Migration for wage employment

In the first decades of colonial rule, the Kamba showed little interest in wage employment (see 9.2). Now, in a greater number of households, members migrate, either seasonally or permanently, for work in other parts of Kenya (see 9.4). Rather than being directed, this change has taken place in opposition to the wishes of the government : whilst the colonial regime

wanted to mobilise the Kamba men for work in its (or settlers') service, the government now wishes to stem the movement of people to the towns. As with (i) above, however, the change cannot properly be described as "voluntary" : Section 12.3 shows that migration occurs because people can see no other realistic options in Kitui - in the early colonial period when land scarcity was not such a problem, it is possible that people had other alternatives. The social disruption caused by a high level of migration may be great, but society must adjust when its survival is at stake.

(vi) The demand for schooling

Here, again, there has been a significant change from the early colonial period to the present time. The first mission schools had difficulty in finding students (see 11), but now education is regarded as almost a necessity, not so much because of the direct usefulness of what is taught, but as a way of gaining entrance to Kenya's modern sector. The economic rewards of wage employment compared with subsistence agriculture are such that farmers are willing to make great sacrifices to enable their sons and daughters to attend self-help secondary schools. According to Munro (see 9.2) early opposition to schooling was more social and cultural than economic. However, nowadays, education is seen as a good economic investment (even if only in comparison with other possible investments), and social institutions have changed as leadership based on "modern values" has gained ascendancy, and as economic and political access to the centre which education can give has become recognised (e.g. the traditional clan organisations now collect money for school and university fees (*Mutiso, p.257)).

Some observations

Only four changes which have been noted during the study have been described above, and it would not be justifiable to move from these

four to generalisations. Nevertheless, there are similarities in the changes which suggest hypotheses.

1. All four changes took place as the population's response to changes in its (primarily economic) circumstances. Millet to maize (ii) took place because of the arrival of a new productive opportunity ; (iii) (migration) took place as a response to a worsening economic situation in Kitui, both in absolute terms in times of drought, and in relation to the rest of Kenya ; and (i) and (iv), although they are changes with positive aspects, have been in response to changing economic circumstances.
2. None of the four changes were the result of directives of governing authorities or on the advice of external change agents. In fact, (iii) and (iv) have taken place partly in opposition to the views of authorities.
3. Of the four, only millet and maize (ii) occurred as a free choice of farmers (although initially taxation may have played a part, and there are now many factors which influence the choice in favour of maize). The other three changes, although "voluntary" in the sense that they have not been imposed by legislation, have been forced on people in Kitui by wider economic changes (and resulting social changes).

Before attempting to draw conclusions, some changes which at present, have been proposed, or are being implemented, are examined.

10.2. Some Proposals for Change, and Present Constraints

This section looks at some changes which government staff, and in some cases, NGOs are trying to implement in Kitui. The section has been divided into three subsections dealing with crop production, livestock farming and water development. Each subsection includes a resume of the problems to be tackled, and examination of the proposed changes and an analysis of the potential constraints. An attempt has been made to classify constraints according to the list

compiled in Section 5.3 - for brevity, C.1a is used to refer to constraints of type 1a in Section 5.3, etc.

10.2.1. Changes in crop production

Problems in crop production

As was shown in Chapter 9 , it is difficult to talk about "traditional" farming in Kitui as agriculture in the district has constantly been changing since the district was inhabited. It is clear that agricultural output is now insufficient to give adequate income to the people of Kitui. The problem is one of production : as the poor rely on subsistence farming, increases in market prices of crops would not be a realistic answer, and a major shift from agriculture to other economic activities is not possible except in the very long term.

Chapter 9 shows that the main problem lies in the unreliability of the rainfall. It would be a mistake, however, to regard the shortage of rainfall as Kitui's only agricultural problem. There is also a problem in that much of the rain that does fall is lost through run-off, often carrying much soil with it. Through erosion, much of the topsoil can be lost, the area which can be cultivated reduced, and dams become silted up. Erosion is largely the result of more intensive methods of cultivation than have been used in the past, and the clearing of bushes for fuel, both of which have exposed the soil.

Plans for change in crop production

All government and NGO staff encountered during the study fully appreciated the need to make agriculture in Kitui more drought-resistant. The approaches being used are : (1) a change to crops which require less water ; changes in cultivation methods, including (2) early planting and (3) greater use of ox-ploughs ; and (4) soil conservation measures which will help prevent rapid run-off of the existing rainfall, as well as preventing further loss of land through erosion.

(1) Drought-resistant crops

One of the main changes being promoted by extension staff in Kitui is the introduction of 'Katumani' maize, a composite variety ("bred by growing a number of varieties of diverse genetic composition together and allowing them to inter-pollinate freely" (*Acland, p.127)). Local varieties of maize require about 300 mm of rain in a rainfall season for a normal harvest, but Katumani maize needs only 180 mm, and thus, while a farmer using local maize would regard 240 mm of rain as a drought season, a farmer with Katumani maize would not.

A popular food crop requiring very much less rainfall than the local variety of maize could greatly reduce Kitui farmers' vulnerability to drought. However, there are a number of difficulties associated with the introduction of Katumani maize : these are examined in Appendix VI, from which the main constraints appear to be :

- (i) Katumani maize may not be perfectly suited to Kitui's soil and climatic conditions, and consequently, on occasions it does not even perform as well as local maize varieties (C.2a).
- (ii) Katumani seeds must be bought at least every other year in order to maintain their purity. Moreover, a fertilizer is needed to grow Katumani maize in most parts of Kitui. But farmers may not have resources to buy such inputs, especially at the end of drought seasons (C.1a).

For many, however, it might be argued that a cash shortage is only a relative concept, and that money could be found if Katumani maize was dependable, and if it gave significantly higher yields than local maize. There is, therefore, an unwillingness to take risks (C.1b), especially when local experience suggests that the investment might not be particularly attractive (C.1c, although this is a consequence of C.2a).

- (iii) However, even if farmers in the remoter parts of Kitui wanted and had cash to buy Katumani seeds, it is unlikely that they would all be able to obtain seeds in time for planting. An

innovation like Katumani maize which necessitates inputs being supplied from outside the district requires efficient channels for distribution to farmers. These do not exist in Kitui at present, and if a farmer were to rely on Katumani maize he would often find himself planting very late because of supply problems. Constraint C.2b therefore affects Katumani maize.

Thus the constraints to the adoption of Katumani maize are economic and technical. There is no reason to suspect that many farmers are unaware of Katumani maize (awareness is only of secondary importance, of course, because of other constraints), and there are no social obstacles, although Mbithi has found (not necessarily in Kitui) mistrust of extension officers who recommend the crop to be a factor (*Mbithi (2), p.11). Where such mistrust exists, the government's promotion of Katumani maize is not likely to be effective (C.4e).

Katumani maize may increase the surpluses of the more wealthy farmers who have better land and who can afford the inputs (and it may therefore contribute to national economic growth), but given its present pricing and the infra structure for its distribution, Katumani maize is unlikely to be of much help to the poorer farmers. Those who do make the change to Katumani maize may leave themselves more dependent on purchased inputs whose availability cannot always be guaranteed.

The potential of a crop which can increase yields under drought conditions should not, however, be ignored. Nevertheless, the problem of how poorer farmers might benefit from Katumani maize lies more in the economic structure of the country than in the technical merits of the seeds.

(2) Early planting

The objective here is to enable crops to get as much benefit as possible from the rain.

The main recommendation made by extension staff is that farmers should plant early - either before, or immediately after the rains begin. This allows the crops to get the full advantage of the rainfall season, and studies in western Kenya (*Allan) have shown that for each week of delay in planting, the yield may decrease by 8 per cent, and that some farmers who plant late only get 60 per cent of the yields of those who planted early. As with Katumani maize, the recommendation is strongly supported by the technical data, but there are difficulties for the small farmer implementing it. The district crop officer in Kitui has reported (**4) that over 70 per cent of farmers in the district plant late, and some even plant after the rains have finished.

The problems are :

1. If a farmer dry plants (i.e. before the rains), then he risks losing his seed to predators, and he must have labour available from dawn to dusk to guard the seed.
2. An early shower may precede the proper start of the rains. This may germinate the seeds, only to have them die in the ensuing dry spell.
3. As was noted in 9.4, temporary migration may take workers away from the district when they should be planting.
4. Much more work is needed to break the soil before the rains begin.

Hunt (* (2), p.13) identifies two underlying constraints to early planting :

- farmers do not have the reserves to be able to risk a possible loss in seed through early planting (C.1b) ;
- farmers do not have the resources (available labour or the resources to hire labour) for early planting (a mixture of C.1a and C.5a).

Dry planting is, therefore, an option generally only open to those who can afford to risk a loss of seeds, and who, through their not needing to migrate for wage employment or their ability to hire labour, have labour available. At present, dry planting is therefore not a practice of which the poorest farmers can take advantage.

(3) The use of ox-ploughs

Ox-ploughing could help reduce the labour constraint at planting time, enabling a higher proportion of crops to be planted early.

The district crop officer in Kitui sees the problem as the lack of ploughs. He estimated in 1975 (as **4) that in Kitui, with the ploughs available, it would take over 60 days to plough all the cultivated land, and that for many farmers, late planting is therefore inevitable (assuming they use ploughs). Farmers are not generally, however, able to afford ploughs.

Efficiently supplying ox-ploughs to poorer farmers, or more generally creating conditions in which ploughs would be used, would have difficulties. The district crop officer in 1975 (as **4) proposed that two ploughs be given to each of 300 self-help groups, each having, on average, 20 farmers. This would assist about 6,000 farmers out of a district population of 450,000, and therefore probably only about 10 per cent of households growing crops. The questions which then arise are :

- (i) How would the groups be chosen to ensure that the most needy farmers benefit ?
- (ii) Even if the groups had ploughs, can it be assumed that they would be used ?
- (iii) How would the ploughs be shared within the groups ?

Question (i) arises with most types of aid projects. Registered self-help groups are, no doubt, convenient institutions through which aid can be channelled, but it is possible that in the poorest areas, many traditional communal work groups are not registered as "self-help" groups (see Chapter 8, Section 8.2). Unfortunately, it has not been possible during this study to investigate the extent to which these traditional institutions in Kitui have registered themselves.

In considering (ii), it may be relevant to ask why so few farmers

in the district own ploughs (only 4 per cent in 1975 (estimated from **4)) when Kamba farmers started using them in the 1930's (see Chapter 9). If farmers have not adopted an innovation which would apparently be to their benefit, then there must be a reason for their decision (see Chapter 5). In Kitui in 1975, it is conceivable that lack of cash to buy ox-ploughs after a sequence of drought seasons may have been a constraint, but it does not explain why more ploughs were not used in periods of good harvests. Possible explanations are that after a dry season in Kitui many animals are not strong enough to pull ploughs (this was reported by several people to be a problem during the study) and that ownership of cattle in the main cultivated areas of the district is not widespread (**5).

While the reason for the small number of ox-ploughs in use is not clear, it would seem wise for a government or NGO to examine the possible constraints and extra inputs which may be needed to allow farmers to benefit from ox-ploughing. At the time of this study NCKK were, in fact, using a Peace Corps volunteer to monitor the effects of ox-ploughs which NCKK had provided, but at the time of this study no results were available.

On question (iii), attention would also need to be given to the arrangements by which ploughs would be shared, or there could be a danger that poorer group members, particularly those without draught animals, may receive little benefit (a problem studied by Curtis (*) in Botswana). Self-help groups may or may not have sufficient organisational structures to ensure that farmers might have access to ploughs according to their needs.

The constraints to greater use of ox-ploughs, therefore, appear to be economic : farmers neither have the resources to buy ploughs (C.1a) nor animals strong enough to pull them (C.1a and C.2a). Whether the Kamba have forms of social organisation which would allow ploughs to be fully used if they were available is not certain, but while constraints C.1a and C.2a are operative, other constraints are likely to be only of secondary importance.

(4) Soil conservation

With increasing population pressure and bush clearance, soil erosion is becoming a serious problem and a main concern of the district agricultural staff.

In the past, small farmers have been blamed for destroying their environment through bush clearance and over-grazing. The "solution" of the colonial government was legislation, and so resistance to the proposed changes became an expression of political feelings. Such opposition is understandable as farmers have real needs for land and wood for fuel, and any soil conservation measures must therefore be part of a wider agricultural strategy aimed at meeting these needs.

Terracing and grass strips to control run-off are quite common in the highland areas, but the district agricultural staff consider it to be inadequate and want to encourage farmers to do much more work of this type. Clearly, conserving the soil will benefit the district's farmers, but whether individual farmers can reasonably be expected to take action is not so clear.

Firstly, it is possible that many do not see the effort required in conservation work to be sufficiently rewarding (C.1c), and in their precarious economic circumstances they no doubt prefer activities which will bring more immediate benefits. A resource constraint is clear if major work requiring, say, a tractor, is needed, but a simple labour constraint would seem unlikely in an area where a main problem is unemployment, and when terracing can be done at slack seasons in the year. This need not mean, however, that a lack of resources is not a constraint : the low level of agricultural incomes may force people to look for more profitable employment elsewhere, rather than investing in their own land.

Secondly, the main sources of erosion may be roads, school playgrounds, and buildings. The district crop officer in 1975 recognised this problem as a government responsibility, and outside the control of individual households.

Thirdly, particular instances of erosion may not be confined to individual farms and therefore concerted action may be needed by all farmers in an area. There is nothing, however, to suggest that this would be a problem in Kitui, as communal work has been a traditional part of Kamba society (and there has been co-operative action to oppose conservation measures), and by 1975 some self-help groups had already collected contributions for soil conservation work.

Although the district agricultural staff were concerned about erosion and were sympathetic to the farmers' problems, what they could achieve was limited by the resources at their disposal. Their projects in afforestation and in the construction of weirs in river-beds were only likely to have limited impact because of their scale, and plans for a programme in which farmers would be employed on conservation work during the dry season was held up through lack of funds (C.6b).

Some questions remain over the likely response of farmers to the district staff's efforts in promoting conservation measures. During the study it was claimed in Migwani (**6) that the government, as an incentive to terracing, had offered farmers the help of tractors to plough all terraced land, but after much work being done by farmers, no tractors were sent. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to verify the details of this case, but because the government is perceived to have failed in its promise, it has been claimed that some farmers will be reluctant to respond to future propositions (C.4e). On the other hand, that some self-help groups are organising themselves around conservation activities, have set up "working committees" and have started to collect money for the purpose suggests that in places the response may be much more positive.

10.2.2. Changes in livestock farming

Current Problems

Although most people in Kitui now depend for their livelihoods on crop cultivation, the Kamba were originally pastoralists (**7). As was noted in Chapter 9, the Kamba moved into Kitui for extra grazing

land. Conditions were always difficult, but pastoralists could move their herds in search of better pastures and water. While herds would be kept in the eastern plains during the wet season, they could be moved for dry season grazing in the hills. Land tenure and population pressure have now "frozen people in ecological zones" : now most pastoralists must survive in the harsh environment of the lower plains for all of the year, and consequently there is greater pressure on available grazing and water (**8).

This sub-section is concerned with the problems of the areas in which pastoralism is still the main economic activity. The problems are inter-related - lack of water, poor pastures, over-grazing and poor quality animals. As has been noted in Section 9.3, the drought at the time of the study had made these problems particularly acute, and additionally, many animals were affected by disease. Access to markets also presents obstacles to development. To sell cattle, they must often be driven to other parts of Kenya, and their condition is likely to deteriorate during the journey, especially if they have been weakened by the drought before setting out.

A further difficulty in planning livestock development lies in the distribution of livestock ownership. A researcher estimated that in 1976 at Nuu in eastern Kitui, 30-40 per cent of people own no livestock at all while others have over 100 cattle (**9). At Katse in northern Kitui, another study (*Wisner and Mbithi) showed 53 per cent of farmers owning cattle, although some had just sold their cattle because of drought problems. Studies from neighbouring districts show a similar pattern (*Almy and *Hunt (1)). Mutiso believes the ownership of cattle to more widespread in Kitui, but did not have figures at the time of this study (as **8). In traditional pastoral societies those without livestock benefit through employment as herders, etc., but the effect on their situation of any proposed change needs to be carefully considered.

Cattle in Kitui are mostly of the Boran variety, a dual-purpose, milk and beef animal well-suited to drought conditions. However, livestock in Kitui includes goats and sheep as well as cattle. Indeed,

many parts of the district are considered better suited to goats than to cattle rearing, and at least one ranch has sold all its cattle to concentrate on goats (*G of K (10)). It is also possible that by concentrating attention on cattle, planners have underestimated the carrying capacity of the land, and a researcher in Kitui has suggested that by using a mix of goats, sheep and cattle, a threefold increase in carrying capacity might be achieved : goats help clear the bush, making cattle herding possible, and after the cattle have used the longer grasses, sheep can feed on the short grass (as **8).

Plans for change

(1) Livestock development in general

Here, the general measures needed to improve livestock farming are considered as a group. These include the provision of water supplies, disease prevention, improvements to herds and pastures, and marketing.

The parts of Kitui which are dependent on livestock farming are the drier, and hence the poorer areas. There the economic infrastructure is weak - roads are poor, water sources are few and far between, herds must be driven long distances to markets, and there is little in the way of supporting training and extension programmes. In this study it has not been possible to pin-point precise improvements needed to stimulate livestock farming, but the lack of investment and positive government action in these areas appear to be major constraints to change (C.2b and C.6b).

As was noted in Section 9.5, the livestock farming areas have not been a priority in government planning (**10). The Ministry of Agriculture's report on Eastern Province (*G of K (10)) for 1974 hints at the lack of resources for livestock extension work, and during the study, one got the impression that very few pastoralists ever have contact with extension staff (**11). No farmers' or staff training courses were held in animal husbandry that year, one reason

being that no training centres had buses, creating problems in transporting farmers (this seems weak in view of the number of private bus companies operating in the district). On animal health, "the situation could still be improved if the management of dips was properly organised". Dips, of course, present particular problems in drier areas, especially in times of drought.

It has been suggested that the improvement of pastures through the sowing of fast-growing grasses would be economically possible in the drier areas (as **8), but instead, the above report states that in Kitui much emphasis was put on demonstration plots of hybrid sorghum in the highland areas. These plots are in an area in which the poorer farmers rely on crop cultivation, and they are unlikely to be of much help in the east where the main livestock problems are to be found.

Although most farmers in the livestock areas are poor, even by the standards of the district, it is difficult to see their poverty as an immediate constraint to change as there are no obvious investments which farmers could make as individuals. It might be argued that what farmers most need is a strong advocate of their interests in government circles. However, it may be misleading to regard "limits to a community's ability to organise" (C.5c) as a key constraint, as pastoralists are, in this respect, comparatively disadvantaged in the area's remoteness from Nairobi, poorer educational facilities (which give access to the centre) and low incomes giving little surplus for self-help activities.

Because pastoralism involves resources - pastures and water - which farmers use communally, certain types of change may require changes in the forms of social organisation. This would be the case, for example, if efforts were made to improve pasture without extra controls on grazing (ranching is considered separately below). But while some institutional constraints may exist (C.5a and C.5b), it would not seem sensible to attach too much weight to them when so little has been done to test how flexible social structures might

be in the face of any changes of clear benefit to the farmers (following the discussion of Section 5.1, it is possible that such institutional constraints help select which changes are of real advantage to the community).

Finally, although many have seen the problems of livestock development in terms of the "cattle complex", believing that the progress of pastoral peoples is retarded by an irrational desire to own cattle for their own sake (views described by Livingstone (*)), it should not be assumed that the decisions of farmers are irrational. The traditional use of cattle as a measurement of wealth was no doubt based on the importance of cattle numbers in the economy, and to the individual farmer numbers remain important, although the cash value of cattle may be well understood. In a survey in Kitui, even the older men described the most important feature of cattle as "sales value" (**12). Attitudes (C.4b) should not therefore be regarded as a constraint.

Because of the number of different improvement measures needed, what may be required is, as described by Joy (* (1), p.179), "not a sequence of step-by-step adjustments but a "package deal" revolution". Group ranching is, in some respects, such a package deal, and this is considered below.

(2) Group ranches

The idea in group ranching is to form groups of pastoralists into economic units. Land can be registered in the name of the group, and on this land the group can then plan the improvement of their farming. It is not in the interests of the individual farmer to try, for example, to improve pastures if the grazing area is communal and others can take the benefits, but in a group ranch controlled grazing and other forms of herd and pasture management become possible. Through the provision of credit to the group, the group can invest in water supplies, new stock, fencing, etc., and the group can be a unit through which extension services operate. Group ranching, therefore, appears to offer good possibilities for development, but in establishing ranches there are likely to be many problems.

Group ranches were to be introduced to Kitui during the 1974-78 Plan (**13), although they had been established in other parts of Kenya several years earlier. The problems which can arise in the formation of group ranches, and which can be anticipated in Kitui, are examined in greater detail in Appendix VII. These problems are summarised below.

- (i) Group ranches required changes in land tenure. When a ranch is formed it is given a title deed to an area of land. This area should be the land which has been used by, and used exclusively by the members of the group, but because of the traditional organisation of pastoral societies, the necessity to move herds in search of water, arrangements whereby pastoralists keep their herds in more than one place to lessen the effects of local droughts, etc., it is difficult to subdivide the society into discrete economic units. Constraint C.5a is therefore operative.
- (ii) Group ranches may split existing social units, impose other social structures, and may introduce new forms of authority. A management committee for the ranch may need to be formed, and in Masai-land ranches this has brought conflict between the traditional leadership and a new economic leadership, often of younger men who have some education. C.5b is, therefore, a potential constraint (but, as was noted in Section 5.1, such constraints arising from an existing form of social organisation may have the positive effect of safeguarding society).
- (iii) Who will benefit from group ranches will very much depend on how the income is divided. This may be according to stock ownership, in which case, the inequalities may be exacerbated, or more weight may be given to the fact that the land is owned by everyone, in which case conflict can be expected between those with and those without large herds (C.5a). This is, however, a form of conflict with which any form of development may need to contend.

- (iv) Even if ranches are formed, they will not bring many changes unless they are accompanied by much government support in the form of extension services, credit facilities, improved water supplies and marketing outlets. In the past, the government has not been willing to give much help to the pastoralists, and there is little reason to expect a major shift in policy (see Section 6.4). Because the group ranch programme in Kitui had not started in 1974, and because plans during 1974-78 would not affect many people, it seems valid to regard the government's lack of investment in this work as a constraint (C.6b, and to some extent, C.6a).
- (v) Controls on grazing through which some pastures can be protected for use in the dry season are not strictly measures which require extra resources. Again, the existing socio-economic structure is a constraint to communities implementing such controls, and it is also possible that communities lack institutions through which such controls could be enforced (C.5c), although it should be expected that, in the long-term, communities would be able to create the institutions needed to protect their economies : there may, therefore, be a lack of appreciation of the benefits of pasture management among the pastoralists (C.3b), although no evidence to confirm these hypotheses has been found during the study.
- (vi) The tying of government help to land registration has also been criticised as unnecessary (see Appendix IX). Moreover, it is possible that land registration will increase the risk of land in pastoral areas being bought by outsiders for more commercial forms of ranching at the possible expense of the pastoralists.

Summarising, although group ranches appear to have much potential in the development of the poorer areas of Kitui, their formation is not likely to be without problems as they require changes in the existing economic and social systems. These need not be regarded as reasons for abandoning plans for group ranches, but they call for a

carefully-researched approach. There also remains the question of whether the present form of group ranch, coupled with land registration, is the best model for development in the pastoral areas of Kitui. Finally, it must be noted that the general problems of livestock development raised in (1) of this sub-section are also relevant in group ranching.

10.2.3. The development of water supplies

Problems of water supply

In 9.3 the acute water shortage and its effects on agriculture and the population were noted. Water supply must therefore be a main factor in any plan for the development of the district. The general situation is that only in Kitui town (and possibly other towns) do any buildings have individual water connections, and then only for public buildings and the homes and premises of the more wealthy ; small towns may have communal water taps ; in the rural areas, people (usually the women) need to walk to communal taps, to small dams, or often to water holes dug in river beds. Consequently the water is often of poor quality, and in places many people suffer from intestinal diseases .

Improved supplies would undoubtedly bring benefits. In many places the collection of water from distant sources means physical hardship for the women, and it reduces the labour available for agricultural work and child care. Although irrigation may not be possible on any large scale, irrigated gardens could improve diets. More, and purer water for domestic use could also lead to improvements in health (although experiences from other parts of Kenya (*Carruthers, p.45) indicate that while improved water supplies may be a prerequisite of better health, they are not on their own enough to ensure improvements).

Possible developments

The options in developing water supplies are limited by the climate and the fact that the only two perennial rivers in the district run

along its north-west and south-west boundaries. Large-scale dams and irrigation schemes are not therefore possible in the foreseeable future, except perhaps at these edges of the district.

Other than traditional sources (rivers during the wet season, water holes in river beds, and some springs at the foot of the hills) both small reservoirs and boreholes have been tried in Kitui, but both have their disadvantages :

(a) Small reservoirs :

These soon become silted up (problem linked to soil erosion), outlet pipes become blocked by algae growth, the sides of reservoirs get eroded by animals, both wild and domestic, and there is a high evaporation rate. Some, however, believe that there is a lot of scope for small reservoirs (as **6), while others see their main advantage in reducing run-off and raising the water table to make boreholes more productive (as **8). (Nevertheless, it has been claimed that district staff are under strong pressure to build dams from construction companies who would profit from any contracts).

(b) Boreholes :

These are expensive, and according to local people they supply saline water, although a geologist working in the area thinks this need not be a problem if boreholes are properly sited. There is also the problem of raising the water. Motor pumps break down frequently, and it is difficult to find spare parts and people with the mechanical skills to repair and maintain them (**14). A donkey treadmill is being successfully used in one town to raise water to a head tank, and Nairobi University is doing some work on simple windmill design (**15).

Kitui's natural environment is, therefore, a constraint to the provision of water supplies, and as a corollary of this situation there are a number of technical difficulties (C.2a). To overcome these problems, more money may be needed for research and construction work than local people are able to raise at present, and so the extent to which the government is willing to invest in water supplies in

Kitui must be seen as a constraint (C.6b) (**16).

That the cost of water supplies is a critical factor was demonstrated during a visit to Migwani where many of the villagers walk to a reservoir to collect water because of the cost of piped supplies (as **6). The price of donkeys which are used for carrying water had greatly increased during the drought, and "debes" (4-gallon oil tins) and large gourds which are used as water vessels were selling at up to 20 shillings each. (Interim solutions to Kitui's water problems may lie in easing the difficulties of water transportation).

10.3 An analysis of change in Kitui

Section 10.1 looked at the nature of four changes which have taken place in Kitui, and Section 10.2 has examined seven proposed changes, or areas in which changes have been proposed. These are :

1. the introduction of Katumani maize
2. dry/early planting
3. the use of ox-ploughs
4. soil conservation measures
5. general measures to improve livestock farming
6. group ranching
7. the provision of water supplies.

The constraints to change identified in Section 10.2 are summarised in Table 10. The constraints have been subdivided into :

- major constraints : factors which, on their own or together with other factors, prevent the adoption of a new innovation or impede progress in a particular field ;
- other constraints : factors which may make change difficult but which, on their own, could not be described as obstacles, or constraints whose existence has been suspected but for which no clear evidence has been identified.

The classification into "major" and "other" constraints is not, of course, precise, and it can neither be claimed that the list of changes considered is near complete (although it includes what appeared to be the major issues in Kitui during the study), nor that all constraints to the listed changes have been identified. Nevertheless, from Table 10, certain features emerge :

1. Output and incomes :

The low incomes, and consequently the low level of resources available to farmers, appears to some extent as a constraint to all changes. A main problem seems to be the lack of resources to implement change, i.e. to be able to afford the new inputs required, or to change farming techniques, and that this is a constraint is most evident with changes which require action by farmers on an individual basis. In the fields of soil conservation, livestock (including ranching) and water development, the poverty of farmers is only considered less important because the magnitude of the changes needed requires government action.

With Katumani maize and early/dry planting, the lack of resources may take the form that farmers do not have sufficient resources to enable them to take risks. The risk with Katumani maize may be a high one as it may not even be a good investment for the better-off farmers. These considerations, the risking of scarce resources and the economic attractiveness of investments, no doubt play some part in all of the listed changes, but, as shown in Table 13, they featured more prominently in some than in others.

2. Conditions of production :

In parts of Kitui the harsh, natural environment is one of the principal problems, and arguably the most important. Changes are needed to adapt the economy to these conditions, but three of the listed changes do not appear to do that successfully. Katumani maize, ox-ploughs, and forms of water supply are being introduced to the district, supposedly as measures designed to suit local conditions, but Katumani maize, boreholes and small reservoirs have technical problems to be overcome, and it is not certain that ox-ploughing is a realistic possibility given the availability of draught animals.

TABLE 10 : SUMMARY OF LIKELY CONSTRAINTS TO CHANGE IN KITUI

	1 Output and incomes			2 Conditions of production		3 Levels of living		4 Attitudes to life and work					5 Institutions			6 Policies		
	a	b	c	a	b	a	b	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	a	b	
Katamani maize	X	X	/	X	X							/						
Early/dry planting	X	X											X					
Ox-ploughing	X		/	/										/				
Soil conservation measures	/		/									/						X
Livestock : general measures	/				X								/	/	/	/		X
Livestock : group ranching	/				X		/						X	X	/	/		X
Water supplies	/			X														X

X = "Major" constraint / = "Other" constraint

Three of the changes also appear to require much more in the way of economic infrastructure than exists at present. Katumani maize needs distribution channels, and livestock developments need marketing facilities, and probably government services for disease control, etc.

3. Levels of living :

Although levels of living are low, no clear evidence has been found to suggest that they are a constraint. If people do little work it is probably due to the underemployment situation and not to malnourishment. Similarly, awareness of possible changes does not appear to be a constraint, and in other districts farmers have soon been able to acquire new technical skills when the adoption of new ideas has been to their advantage (e.g. coffee-growing in Kenya and Tanzania, and grade cattle in Uganda (*Joy (1), p.180) were both easily adopted by African farmers in spite of European apprehensions). It is possible that pastoralists are not familiar with the management practices needed in ranching, but this is unlikely to be a major constraint. (More generally, however, it might be argued that low levels of living have contributed to Kitui's peripheral position in Kenya's economy, e.g. in low educational standards, etc.).

4. Attitudes to work and life :

There is nothing to suggest that attitudes in Kitui are at odds with the desire to develop. The only possible negative factor is a natural distrust of the proponents of Katumani maize and of conservation measures based on past experience.

5. Institutional constraints :

These are more prominent when considering changes which affect communities rather than individual farmers. Thus major problems must be anticipated when forming group ranches, and even with other projects with pastoralists, the fact that social and economic relationships are so closely linked in pastoral societies, and that there may be a high level of economic differentiation in communities, may make change more difficult.

Economic organisation is also a constraint to early/dry planting, a proposal which does not take full account of the farmers' economic predicament.

6. Policies :

All of the listed changes are parts of government plans, and there is, therefore, no question of government hostility. However, it is clear that some of the changes have been given a low priority in any planning, as indicated by the lack of resources made available. Although in Table 10 only the changes in the pastoral areas have been marked as constraints of type C.6a, this assessment has only been made relative to the rest of the district.

Four of the changes considered require resources well beyond the means of individual farmers, and the fact that the government has not given greater support must be seen as a main constraining factor.

Again, it must be noted that the changes considered are not a complete set of all changes taking place in Kitui, and that it has not been possible to make a rigorous study of the changes and constraints. However, it appears possible to tentatively draw some conclusions :

- (i) To all proposed changes there is at least one major constraint.
- (ii) All proposed changes face a major economic constraint. In the cases in which farmers are required to act individually, the constraint is the present poverty of the farmers, and in other cases, the constraint can be regarded as the lack of government investment
- (iii) From (ii) above, it seems useful to divide proposed changes into those requiring individual action and those requiring action by a community, usually with government help. In Part IV of the thesis, this division will be seen to have implications for NGO's : with a basic-needs approach, it may

be easier for an NGO to raise incomes through changes with which individuals' poverty is the only constraint and for which no other wider changes or resources are needed, but where community organisation and government action is required there may be better prospects for structural change. This is discussed further in Section 12.4.

- (iv) Non-economic constraints do not appear very relevant, except with group ranching, a proposed change of which the effects on communities are yet uncertain.

Taking the above tentative conclusions together with the observations made at the end of Section 10.1 the economic environment appears as the dominant factor determining whether or not change will occur. The past changes examined in Section 10.1 took place as a result of economic circumstances and not of government promotion : the proposed changes examined in Section 10.2 are being promoted by government staff but are constrained by economic circumstances.

This raises questions about the relevance of change agents - including both government staff and NGOs. Although the past changes considered did not take place as an immediate result of promotion, external agents, either consciously or unconsciously, made available the opportunities for change (e.g. missionaries brought schools, and representatives of the settler economy brought the chance of wage employment). At present perhaps more effort is being made than ever before to induce changes in Kitui. Moreover, these changes are ostensibly for the benefit of Kitui's farmers (unlike some past changes - e.g. wage employment). However, it appears that the impact of the work of those promoting change will be limited by the prevailing economic conditions in the district.

This has implications for NGOs in their choice of strategy. As change agents at the micro level, assisting small projects, trying to raise living standards within the wider economic environment, they will, no doubt, give some benefits to some people, but the above discussion suggests that their efforts will be limited. From the above discussion,

however, an NGO may choose to conclude that the support of projects in Kitui is irrelevant given Kitui's situation in the political economy of Kenya. A middle course may be to recognise the wider problem, but to look for projects with some potential for structural change, even if such projects may be considered less efficient within a basic-needs strategy. These considerations are discussed further in Part IV.

Footnotes

1. A study in Igunga District of Tanzania showed pastoralists unwilling to settle, even when services are concentrated in "development villages". This indicates that it has been economic conditions rather than the provision of schools and hospitals, etc. which have caused settlement in Kitui. Indeed, settlement largely occurred before the benefits of schools, hospitals and other services were perceived.
2. Hunt (* (2), pp.37-38) in a survey in Mberere Division of Embu District (which is similar to parts of Kitui) found the comparative yields to be as follows :

Maize	1,725 kg/ha
Millet	740 kg/ha

However, in that area millet was a popular element in the diet, and millet prices on local markets were 34 per cent above those of maize. Moreover, Hunt points out that maize has had the advantage of research and production of improved varieties which millet has not had.

3. Muller (*, p.55), in arguing for the use of land for food crops rather than tobacco, notes the view of a Tobacco Board of Zambia official :
"...maize is so routine...If (farmers) miss doing something to tobacco on the day they're supposed to, they get a dramatic drop in return. With maize, they can go away for two weeks."
4. In a letter to NCCK, January 1975, requesting assistance.
5. A comparison with the study conducted in Igunga District in Tanzania is interesting. Although there are many similarities with Kitui, almost all farmers use ox-ploughs in Igunga, and a high proportion own them. Ox-ploughs were introduced by farmers who saw them being used during war service in India and Burma (1939-45) and their use spread in the Sukamaland area of Tanzania (the plains area south of Lake Victoria) in spite of some official opposition because of the risk of erosion. The Kamba saw ploughs being used on European farms in conditions much closer to their own plots well before the war, and they also had the same wartime experiences as the Sukama, yet ox-ploughs have not been adopted in Kitui to the same extent. Unfortunately, it was not possible during the study to fully examine this difference between the two districts.

6. In discussion with a local chief and with the VSO headmaster of a local harambee school.
7. Ominde (*,p.45) still describes Kitui as "essentially a pastoral district", but this is only true in the sense of Mutiso (see **8 below) who believes that ecologically, Kitui is much better suited to pastoralism. According to Ndeti (*,p.16) :

"The Akamba are primarily an agricultural people. They once kept large herds of cattle. But due to a scarcity of grazing land, this way of life has diminished considerably, although occasionally one comes across large herds of cattle, goats and sheep. Nowadays, the Akamba practice mixed farming."
8. From discussion with Mutiso, Department of Government Studies, Nairobi University, who was leading a research project on problems in Kitui, but unfortunately, at the time of this study his results were not available.
9. From a discussion with Fr. O'Leary, an anthropologist based at Nuu in eastern Kitui, although at the time of this study he was only beginning his investigations.
10. As was reported in Section 9.5, a government view in 1970 was that "a policy that concentrated on these marginal lands may not be economically viable, and could easily lead to a squandering of scarce capital resources". Davis (*) however, notes the view that "a policy of maximising the nation's economic growth requires that the pastoral rangelands be brought into commercial production." Some suggest that the position of eastern Kitui will change with the land shortage in central parts of the district, and a growing realisation of the potential of Eastern Kitui for livestock production. But there is a danger that it may only be the more wealthy entrepreneurs of the towns who will be able to afford the initial investment required, and that subsequent "development" may therefore be of little benefit to the local population.
11. One incident reported during the study illustrates some of the difficulties facing both extension staff and pastoralists in the east. Farmers had lost many goats through disease and a research team from Nairobi had taken away a goat for analysis. But farmers had received no report back on what the problem was and on what they should do about it, and consequently, there was ill-feeling towards the extension staff. However, it was claimed that the extension staff could not immediately report back because their petrol allowances limited the number of visits they were able to make to the area.
12. The view from Kitui was reported in discussion with Mutiso (see **8 above). Almy (*,p.53) found in neighbouring Meru District, that "Although the traditional standard of wealth, livestock, was still adhered to by many elders, they also balanced it against the cash standard. I met no middle-aged or younger men who preferred several relatively unproductive cows to one productive one."

Attitudes, however, may be different in other parts of Kenya. Livingstone (*,p.11) reports on a meeting with farmers in West Pokot District :

"We asked if they would not prefer two or three beautiful wives to a large number of unattractive ones. The answer was yes, but this applied only to wives, not animals."

13. It has not been possible to determine how much progress was made during the 1974/78 Plan period. See Appendix IX for planned acreages, etc.
14. At a mission school in the wettest part of Kitui, a teacher claimed (no doubt with some exaggeration) that he had not had 14 consecutive days with running water during his five-year stay, because of pump failures. In contrast, a mission school in the drier lowlands had a more satisfactory piped supply which was gravity fed from a spring at the foot of the hills.
15. Although a number of windmill designs could be seen outside the Institute of Development Studies at Nairobi University, this writer never saw any windmills in use in the rural areas.
16. Of an estimated Kf2.89 million available for water development in the 1971-2 financial year, Kf1.30 million was available to Nairobi City Council and Kf0.13 million to other municipalities (Carruthers in Discussion Paper 195, IDS, Nairobi, p.3). Thus, at least 50 per cent of water development resources were allocated to urban areas which, in 1971, had only about 10 per cent of the populations. Towns do have special needs as traditional sources are not available, but it would be surprising if the figures were not partly due to an urban bias in government planning.

PART III C

Chapter 11

NGOs IN KENYA

This part of the thesis (a single chapter) looks at the work of some NGOs in Kenya.

Against the social, economic and political aspects of Kenyan reality which have been described in Parts IIIA and IIIB, the policies and projects supported by five British NGOs are examined in 11.2, the major section of this chapter. Section 11.3 makes observations about Kenyan NGOs with which British and other NGOs often work in partnership. A final section summarises the main points which emerge from the descriptions of individual NGOs.

Contents :

- 11.1 Introduction*
- 11.2 The work of some NGOs in Kenya*
 - A. Action in Distress*
 - B. Christian Aid*
 - C. Oxfam*
 - D. Save the Children Fund*
 - E. Voluntary Service Overseas*
- 11.3 The work of Kenyan NGOs*
- 11.4 Some general remarks on NGOs in Kenya*

Related appendices

- I Sketches of some British NGOs*
- X Kenyan non-government organisations*
- XI Brief notes on two projects in Kenya*

11. NGOS IN KENYA

11.1. Introduction

During this study no full study was made of all the NGOs working in Kenya, not even of all the British NGOs. Nevertheless, discussions were held with many NGO staff, both Kenyan and expatriate, and from these conversations, and from reports from the NGOs themselves, certain features of NGO aid in Kenya emerge, and these illustrate some of the issues considered in this thesis.

Kenya has long been a popular country for British NGO aid : as was suggested in Chapter 6, this is no doubt due to the close links established between the two countries in the colonial era, and to the relative freedom of action which Kenya gives to NGOs. In 1981 Kenya still retains this favoured position, receiving more aid than would be its share if aid were allocated either on the basis of the relative wealth of the different countries, or on the attractiveness of countries' development philosophies to donors. Both these factors are important considerations for donors, and a number of European countries and NGOs claim to be transferring their priorities to countries such as Tanzania and Guinea Bissau, but as far as the British NGOs are concerned, any diminution in the programmes of Oxfam and Christian Aid have been more than off-set by increased aid from Save the Children, and the arrival of Action in Distress in Kenya. Other factors which enable Kenya to retain its attractiveness to NGOs probably include the relatively well-developed infrastructure and the emergence of many local "harambee" projects looking for local support, which combine to make Kenya a country in which NGOs can operate with relative ease (**1).

A feature of NGO aid in Kenya is the growth of Kenyan NGOs (KNGOs). These organisations, generally based in Nairobi, attempt to raise money both inside and outside Kenya for small development projects in Kenya. Their fund-raising base in Kenya, however, is so small that a large part of the money they handle comes from expatriate NGOs

(including for example, Christian Aid and Oxfam), and in many respects they act as middlemen between NGOs which have funds to use and small projects seeking finance. The nature of the work supported by the NGOs will therefore be in part determined by the priorities and objectives of the KNGOs.

In this chapter NGOs (taken to mean expatriate NGOs) and KNGOs are examined separately and some general observations are made in section 11.4.

The suitability of Kenya as a country for a case study of NGOs, and the extent to which their roles in Kenya may be typical of their roles elsewhere is discussed later in section 12.5.

11.2 The work of some NGOs in Kenya

This section describes the work of Action in Distress, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children Fund and Voluntary Service Overseas in Kenya. Firstly, however, a framework for the descriptions is outlined below.

It has been found useful to consider the work of each NGO under the following headings :

- (1) The size of the NGO's programme in Kenya.
- (2) The NGO's global objectives. Rather than working with wide objectives such as "to alleviate poverty", NGOs often set themselves more specific objectives, often defined in terms of the target groups they wish to help (e.g. children, the sick, etc.) or in terms of the project types they prefer to support (as can be seen from the sketches of Appendix 1).
- (3) The NGO's view of the problems in Kenya. This may determine how an NGO sees its relationship with the Kenyan Government, and how it interprets its own global objectives. Here the use of "nutritional status" and "self-reliance" in NGO's objectives is also considered.
- (4) The NGO's representation in Kenya. This will affect the choice of projects open to the NGO. For example, an NGO willing to bring staff to Kenya may be able to initiate and run projects (whether or not this is considered desirable), but without even a field officer an NGO will have difficulty in making direct links with local community groups. In the latter case, an NGO

will probably need to work through a KNGO or through its own individual contacts (often expatriates), and these intermediaries are likely to influence the NGO's views of problems and projects.

(5) The projects supported by the NGO, because ultimately this will determine the nature of an NGO's contribution to Kenya.

An overall view of the global programmes and policies of each of the NGOs considered is given in Appendix I.

A. Action in Distress (AID) in Kenya

A (1) Size of programme

According to their 1978 Annual Report, AID were "sponsoring" more than 6,500 children in Kenya. Figures from the same report suggest that their aid to Kenya was probably of the order of £250,000 p.a. in financial terms.

A (2) AID's global objectives

AID's general approach is to "sponsor" individual children by paying for the costs of their education. Usually this means formal education, although vocational training is also supported, as are health and agricultural projects.

A (3) AID's view of problems in Kenya

Although an AID information sheet has noted the world-wide need for "some fairly drastic changes in trade terms and political attitudes", AID makes no criticisms of the present situation in Kenya other than to point out the need for education, job opportunities, an end to the drift to the towns, etc. That AID does not directly criticise the Kenyan Government is not surprising because NGOs normally avoid statements which could lead to repercussions on their work. However, it appears that AID does not even wish to criticise Kenyan policies : according to the information given to "sponsors" (donors) in Britain,

"Since the turbulent days of pre-independence, Kenya has become one of the most successful multi-racial societies in Africa. Racial and tribal conflict has, on the whole, been avoided. The country's founder and first President, Jomo Kenyatta, provided the dominant unifying philosophy : "All of us are one tribe, and that tribe is Kenya". Kenya's national motto is "Harambee" which means "Pull together."

At a meeting in 1978 (**2) a member of AID's staff claimed that being a charity and not a political organisation, it was not AID's role to make political judgements. AID's involvement in Kenya was then defended on the grounds that AID had been invited to work in Kenya by Kenyatta himself (this claim has not been checked) : identification with Kenyatta was seen as a positive factor, while others may have regarded such contact as an embarrassment. Furthermore, in 1979 AID claimed (in their magazine "Action News" no. 16) that they were undertaking new work in Kenya in response to a directive from the President, and supporting the article was a photograph of Arap Moi with the Queen. In the same article, AID's executive director stated : "The Government of Kenya has made a brave step in making primary school education free to all school-age children. Action in Distress, supported by our sponsors, will do all it can to help the government make this goal a reality."

That AID has chosen Kenya as one of the few countries in which it is working is in itself significant.

"Nutrition" and "self-reliance" are both concepts which are referred to in AID literature. In Kenya AID's main areas of work are areas which have recently suffered from drought and have required famine relief. Although not specifically aimed at food production, AID's support for the agricultural training of children may help as a long-term measure. A more questionable form of assistance is the provision of school meals for sponsored school children.

"Most of the time the children arrive at their school hungry, having eaten nothing. At school, as a direct result of your sponsorship, they get a good, nourishing, mid-day meal, a proper diet helping them to grow healthy and self-sufficient."

(1978 Annual Report)

The above style of writing is clearly intended as an appeal to potential donors, but nevertheless, how school-feeding and the school-pupil sponsorship programme in general lead to self-sufficiency in Kenya's socio-economy (see appendix V (iii)) remains unanswered. "Self-reliance" is used by AID as an attribute of the individual, education creating a more self-reliant person. This concept of self-reliance clearly differs from that of self-reliance as an attribute of communities (Chapter 4) - it is, however, in keeping with AID's style of assistance to individuals, and perhaps also in keeping with Kenya's free-enterprise, competitive society.

A (4) AID's representation in Kenya

AID has several expatriate staff in Kenya, and a number of Kenyan assistants. Much of AID's work, especially in the educational field, carried out in close co-operation with government departments. In other projects AID co-operates with KNGOs, but does not usually work through them.

A (5) AID's work in Kenya

Most of AID's work is in the sponsorship of school pupils in poor areas - principally Isiolo and Kitui Districts, and up until 1979 when primary school fees were abolished, most work was in primary schools. Sponsored children, in 1978 6,500 in Kenya, receive fees, books, uniforms, and mid-day meals. Needy children are identified and the scheme administered through locally employed field officers who also must arrange letters for sponsors (see Appendix I (A5)). With the end of primary school fees, AID announced that it would give equivalent support to schools through grants to Parents' Associations for school equipment. The sponsorship scheme for secondary school pupils, of course, continues.

In view of the criticisms of education in Kenya made in appendix V, (iii), it would be difficult to argue that this aspect of AID's work is an important priority for development in Kenya - by any definition of development. There is no shortage of primary school graduates to limit economic growth ; the AID programme does not

directly satisfy the basic needs of food, health and employment ; and aid given to individual pupils is unlikely to be effective in strengthening community organisation or in changing a community's position in the economic structure.

However, no doubt conscious of the limitations of formal schooling, AID has started a "Training and Employment Programme" aimed at training school leavers for life in their rural areas. This programme includes assisting "4-K" clubs (a nation-wide programme of clubs for young people which aims to interest children in agriculture and give practical training), village polytechnics, and other projects such as the Kyeni Kya Athi Young Farmers' Centre in southern Kitui District which is described below.

- Kyeni Kya Athi Young Farmers' Centre :

According to the 1978 Annual Report,

"A 50-acre plot was donated by the people of the area and Kyeni Kya Athi was registered as a Village Polytechnic in late 1976. Soil conservation work was completed in early 1977 and later in the year a petrol driven water pump was bought and a small irrigation project started. The sale of irrigated vegetables for export has now reached approximately K.Shs.4,000/= per month from 3 acres. The pump has a capacity to irrigate 5-6 acres. In addition to the area presently irrigated there is about 15 acres on which sunflower, cotton and maize are grown."

That the land was donated by the people, that a village polytechnic was registered, and that soil conservation work was carried out appear to be positive features of the project (i.e. assuming that donations were made and work carried out without compulsion and without diverting resources from other essential tasks - see Section 9.2). However, the above description, and other information supplied by AID raise a number of questions about the appropriateness of the project.

Firstly, in a drought-prone area which periodically suffers from serious food shortages, it is planned that most of the irrigated area will be used to grow vegetables for export rather than the local market. Moreover, the use of a petrol-engine pump and overhead sprinklers would not appear to be training students for a form of peasant agriculture which many in the district can afford.

Secondly, in the dry-land areas it is planned to give emphasis to cash crops. Sorghum and millet were planned to be grown only as poultry food, whereas Section 10.1 (2) and Appendix VI argue a case for promoting such crops as staple foods. And although an AID report notes "the difficulty experienced in hiring oxen" as a reason for the poor utilisation of the land in the area, the project will do little to overcome the problem.

Thirdly, even with sponsorship, fees of K£25 p.a. were to be charged. Estimates for 1968-70 indicate that more than half of the households in Kenya had annual incomes of less than K£60 (*ILO (1), p.74), and in some cases much less. The education which the centre offers may therefore only be available to the sons of the more prosperous farmers. AID's assistance of up to K£50 p.a. per student is therefore to be given to those who are not among the poorest in Kenya. By contrast, the Centre planned to pay only K£108 p.a. to its labourers.

Fourthly, in the second half of 1979 it was reported that a VSO who was to act as a training manager had withdrawn from the project, that management meetings had been poorly attended, and that morale was low as a result of the long delays in getting the training programme started.

Other AID projects include ox-training, bee-keeping, fish farming and the production of agricultural tools appropriate for local needs. These appear to be, in general, relevant to the needs of rural areas although the claim in the 1977 Annual Report that in Kitui District, "...our agricultural programme has been instrumental in bringing a more drought-resistant variety of maize into the district." needs to be appraised in the light of the discussion on Katumani maize in Section 10.2.1 and Appendix VIII. Although the arguments of that section do not add up to a case against Katumani maize as such, no information has been available during this study on whether AID has found a way round the problems of cost, distribution of seed, and the technical suitability of the variety. This project may be compared with an Oxfam-supported project (see C(5) below) in Kitui which is supporting millet cultivation as an alternative to reliance on maize.

B. Christian Aid in Kenya

B (1) Size of programme

In each of its financial years 1977/78 and 1978/79, Christian Aid sent between £50-60,000 for development work in Kenya (excluding aid for refugees). In each of these years the main component of the aid was a block grant of £50,000 to the National Christian Council of Kenya (NCCCK - see Appendix X).

A Christian Aid staff member (**3) has pointed out that although Kenya has been a country "of particular concern because of the strong missionary and colonial links", aid to Kenya has decreased as a percentage of Christian Aid's global programme. In 1975 Christian Aid received a recommendation that 75 per cent of its aid should go to countries which have per capita GNP's below US\$240. Consequently, some emphasis has been switched from Kenya to the poor countries of West Africa.

B (2) The global objectives of Christian Aid

Christian Aid has described its viewpoint as "comprehensive", and it is involved in support for a wide range of project types in many different countries. Where possible (i.e. unless there are strong reasons for not doing so) aid is channelled through local Christian institutions. Combatting malnutrition and promoting self-reliance are common themes in Christian Aid's publicity.

B (3) Christian Aid and problems in Kenya

Christian Aid in Kenya works almost entirely through NCCCK : this is in accordance with Christian Aid's general policies, and it suggests that Christian Aid has some confidence in the competence of NCCCK. Christian Aid's policy in Kenya is therefore effectively that of NCCCK (see Appendix X), because although Christian Aid itself has project selection criteria, it tries "to relate...project criteria... to the priorities of the local churches as far as this is possible" (as ** 3).

A consequence may be that Christian Aid takes a less critical view of development in Kenya than would be the case if it had its own field staff, independent of the Kenyan establishment, or a more militant partner organisation such as it has in many Latin American countries. For example, a Christian Aid publication ("Grassroots") in 1978 described an NCKK project in a squatter area of Nairobi: under the title "What the tourists miss", one of the problems is described as follows :

"Urban settlers in Nairobi face an additional dimension of insecurity. The Mathare Valley area presents an eyesore in a city which prides itself on its tourist attractions. Its residents are frequently being moved on.

The city council employ teams of "Askaris" who arrive in trucks, bulldoze the squatters' makeshift homes and transport them to the outskirts of the city where they have to start life again with even less chance of finding work."

Yet there is no direct criticism of government policy as there is in the same magazine in articles on Chile, Honduras and Haiti.

B (4) Christian Aid's representation in Kenya

As already stated, Christian Aid works through NCKK, having no field staff of its own.

B (5) Projects supported

Again, Christian Aid's work cannot be seen separately from that of NCKK, described in Appendix X.

It is interesting, however, to note the small number of grants made in addition to the NCKK block grant. Between 1975/76 and 1978/79 aid was given to Limuru Boys' Centre, the Samburu Rural Development Centre, and the Starehe Boys' Centre. The first two of these projects are briefly described in Appendix XI and the third is discussed in the sub-section on Save the Children Fund below. None of these projects could be considered ideal development projects by any definition of development considered in this thesis, but they all have expatriate leadership which is able to visit Britain on fund-raising tours.

Thus support for these projects by Christian Aid is probably more a consequence of the marketing of the projects by their leaders than of the application of strict project selection criteria (although this may be less true in the case of the Samburu Rural Development Centre). This may illustrate that when an NGO has no field staff or equivalent representative, there is a danger that the projects supported will tend to be those which can gain access to the NGO rather than those which best fit with the NGO's objectives.

C. Oxfam in Kenya

C (1) Size of programme

Even if Kenya is not regarded as a priority in Africa, Oxfam still retains one of its largest programmes there (the fifth largest Oxfam programme in Africa in 1978/79). The totals of aid grants in recent years have been :

1976/77	£157,476
1977/78	£ 72,976
1978/79	£128,918

(The variations in the annual totals are more due to the numbers of large grants (over, say, £10,000) made than to the number of projects supported each year).

C (2) Oxfam's global objectives

Oxfam's primary objective is "to relieve poverty, distress and suffering in any part of the world" : its approach is based on concepts such as "partnership", "self-determination", "self-reliance", "non-sectarianism" and "peace". Like Christian Aid, Oxfam supports a wide variety of project types in many different parts of the world.

C (3) Oxfam's view of Kenyan problems

Oxfam's programme in Kenya appears to be aimed at some of the poorer sections of the population, but in none of the Oxfam leaflets and project reports studied is there any indication that the causes of

problems may lie in Kenya's policies and past development as well as in the environment. Some project descriptions almost appear supportive of the government, e.g. "The economy of Kenya depends heavily on agriculture, and President Kenyatta has continually stressed the need for people to return to the land" (in a report on Limuru Boys' Centre, 1976) rather than a reference to the rural/urban imbalance ; and on the problems of urban unemployment among young people, "Kenya is attacking part of this problem with a programme of Village Polytechnics" (in a report on village polytechnics in 1974) perhaps implying that government policy is a positive rather than a negative influence on unemployment problems.

Oxfam aid is allocated according to geographic priorities : in October 1976 (according to the Oxfam Field Directors' Handbook) the NE Province and the Rift Valley areas of Kenya were classed as priorities, while other areas of Kenya were rated as being of a lower priority. Thus at that time when Kitui District had been suffering from several years of drought and famine, Kitui District was not grouped among Oxfam's main priorities. However, these priorities do not seem to have been retained since 1976, and in 1978/79 more than 30 per cent of Oxfam's grants went to Eastern Province.

Oxfam claims that its objectives in Kenya are not more specific than "to help the poorest" (**4). A concern for malnutrition is shown in projects aimed at improving food production in famine-prone areas, but in the project descriptions examined in this study, surprisingly little reference is made to the self-help movement in Kenya (the only exception being in agricultural projects in Kitui and Machakos Districts).

C (4) Oxfam's representation in Kenya

During the field visits made as part of this study, Oxfam did not have a field officer in Kenya, although a field office in Nairobi with two expatriate staff was re-established soon afterwards. This field office, however, is also responsible for Oxfam's work in Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Madagascar, the Comoros, Mauritius and the Seychelles (although Oxfam is not active in all these countries).

In the past, Oxfam has worked closely with KNGOs, particularly KFFHC (between 1965 and 1972, K£369,000 in grants were made through KFFHC - see Appendix X), but now that Oxfam has its own field office in Kenya it works more directly with the organisations which are administering projects. The links with churches, however, have become very strong : in 1978/79 more than 80 per cent of Oxfam's aid went to churches and missions, and a further 8 per cent was channelled through NCKK (see Appendix X).

C (5) Oxfam's projects in Kenya

Oxfam does not initiate or administer projects, but instead gives support to the projects of other organisations.

Table 11A below shows a classification of Oxfam's aid to Kenya for the years 1976/77 to 1978/79 :

Table 11A : Oxfam's Aid to Kenya

Sector	Total grants in K£'000's		
	1976/77	1977/78	1978/79
Health	116	40	27
Agriculture	23	20	67
Social Development	4	4	30
Humanitarian	2	5	4
Emergency	14	2	-
"Sponsorships"	-	1	0.3
Total	157	73	129

(Columns may not add to totals due to rounding)

The above classification (taken from Oxfam's lists of grants) is not very precise, e.g. £8,500 for the purchase of seeds for drought victims in Kitui District in 1976/77 is regarded as an "emergency" rather than an "agricultural" grant, while £349 in food for drought areas is classed under "health", but the table nevertheless shows a changing pattern over the three years. It would need data from other years, however, to tell if there was actually a trend in Oxfam's aid-giving.

The total in 1976/77 is influenced by several large grants, including a total of £55,573 to the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), an international organisation raising money in Europe and North America for a variety of health schemes, including "flying doctor" services. £38,671 of Oxfam's contribution was for a research programme into a disease caused by tapeworm.

A large part of the increase in agricultural aid in 1978/79 went to Eastern Province, and included ploughs and support for a soil conservation programme in Kitui District. The increase in "social development" work includes several training projects and industrial co-operatives, and £11,250 as "further salary of accountant" for a rural training centre (!).

The projects being supported by Oxfam in Kitui District provide an interesting comparison with the work of Action in Distress (see A (5) in this section). Oxfam is supporting a programme aimed at promoting "traditional" drought resistant crops rather than maize. As described by an Oxfam Information Sheet (dated March 1977) :

"Maize has become the major food crop in recent times, but it does poorly in drought conditions. The more traditional and more drought-resistant crops like sorghum and millet have been neglected and were in danger of being forgotten. Consequently seed is scarce and no commercial retail firms have supplies.

To meet this creeping disaster the Kenyan Government has begun to organise research and seed multiplication efforts in both legumes (peas and beans) and coarse grains. In the late summer of 1976 a number of church groups decided that they must do something to help, especially among local people. The National Christian Council of Kenya, the Kenya Catholic Secretariat and the Salvation Army came together and drew up a programme - "a complementary voluntary agency effort to mobilise non-government facilities in close co-operation with all concerned in government offices".

Their work started in the autumn of 1976 for the short winter rains on two fronts. First, a number of agricultural plots were selected for producing seed in bulk for the following spring season. Most of these are church or church school lands. Second, individuals and groups were encouraged to offer demonstration plots of about an acre each which they would be willing to cultivate with drought-resistant crops to spread the ideas and methods through the locality".

This work appears to be based on a better understanding of the district's problems than AID's efforts in training centres and new

maize varieties (see Section 10.1 (2) and Appendix X). In 1976 the Catholic Secretariat had a "development co-ordinator" in Kitui who appeared well aware of the agricultural problems (as well as the socio-political ones) and the district's increasing vulnerability to drought. The district was also fortunate in having a district crop officer who appreciated the need to promote "traditional" drought-resistant crops, and this has no doubt made close co-operation with the government possible.

Two aspects of the above project which appear to be common features of Oxfam's work in Kenya are

- much co-operation with Christian groups such as NCKK, local churches, missions, etc. : as noted above nearly 90 per cent of Oxfam's aid in 1978/79 went to Christian organisations ;
- liaison with government officials, and a positive role attributed to the government although little direct support is given to government projects.

In 1978/79 Oxfam was still supporting Limuru Boys' Centre and the Samburu Rural Development Centre, two projects described in Appendix VIII, both of which have expatriate leadership. During this study a KNGO staff member described the practice of supporting expatriate-controlled projects as the "Oxfam approach" : it is not possible to tell from this study if that criticism is fair, but that Oxfam's work has been perceived in that way should be a matter of concern for Oxfam.

D. Save the Children Fund (SCF) in Kenya

D (1) Size of programme

In 1978/79 SCF's expenditure in Kenya was £145,464, and much of its efforts were concentrated on a child rescue centre and a secondary school for needy children in Nairobi.

D (2) SCF's global objectives

As the name suggests, SCF is concerned with the care of children, and it supports health and educational projects in many different countries.

D (3) SCF's view of problems in Kenya

SCF works mainly with destitute children in Nairobi, many of them migrants from rural areas, and hence most SCF literature portrays Kenya's main problem as being that of rapid urbanisation. A set of notes on Kenya for teachers, to accompany a schools' mailing analyses the problem as follows :

"Like many developing countries, Kenya suffers from an influx of people from the countryside into the towns...Why is there such a move towards the capital when Kenya's strength ultimately is in agriculture ?

Prior to independence in 1963, there were a great many large farming units. The government's policy since then has been to split them up into smaller farms. These, however, have taken a long time to become economically viable and many subsistence farmers have moved to the towns and cities in search of more profitable employment. Sadly, this frequently ends in disappointment because there is already a large amount of urban unemployment. In addition, many young men, fresh from school with examination certificates, automatically move to Nairobi where they expect to find administrative work with good wages and career prospects. There are not enough jobs for all of them but they are reluctant to return to their villages because, having been educated, they feel that to return to their old life would be a retrograde step."

Thus the problem of urbanisation is blamed on the take-over of European farms and subsequent land re-distribution. This sort of distortion of the reality of Kenya's problems is of the type this writer has heard more often in Kenyan expatriate circles, and it is perhaps not coincidental that the SCF-supported Starehe Boys' Centre in Nairobi is held in high regard by many of Kenya's expatriate community.

In describing educational problems there is the same pre-occupation with urbanisation :

"The wealth of Kenya lies in forestry and agriculture. Technical and agricultural colleges have been established to train young people in this sphere and to encourage them to stay away from urban areas."

(Elsewhere the agricultural "wealth" is described entirely in terms of export crops).

Other problems in education include children who :

"...find that new ideas learned at school conflict with their tribal traditions ...Only about a tenth of those leaving primary school go on to secondary education. Most go straight to work or join the ranks of the unemployed. Of those who do continue in education, many are still at school in their early twenties."

A possible interpretation of this description would be that local culture is an obstacle to progress, and that Kenyans are slow learners (rather than that economic circumstances often make it necessary for students to start schooling at a later age, or to break their schooling during periods in which their families cannot afford the fees).

SCF in Kenya does not appear to have what might be called a policy on development, and indeed, its work would be better described as relief than as development. Malnutrition appears in SCF publications as an aspect of destitution, but self-reliance is not a concept which SCF uses in Kenya.

D (4) SCF's representation in Kenya

The director of Starehe Boys' Centre and School (an expatriate) is SCF's Honorary Field Director in Kenya. There is also an expatriate Director of Administration and SCF employs 50 local staff (1979 figure). Other than the Starehe Boys' Centre and School (to which SCF gives much support), SCF administers its own projects, and so does not need to work through KNGOs.

D (5) SCF projects in Kenya

SCF's work in Kenya consists of a "Rescue Centre" and "Place of Safety" for destitute boys in Nairobi, support for the Starehe Boys' School, and a sponsorship programme of secondary school pupils.

While the Rescue Centre offers food and shelter, the Place of Safety offers "full residential care" to those "willing to accept more help on a longer-term basis". Part of the work of the Place of Safety is aimed at re-settling boys in the rural areas from which they have come, and providing them with the costs of schooling.

The Starehe Boys' Centre and School is for boys "whose relatives are in no position to give them a home or schooling", and provides primary, secondary and technical education. It claims to be the only free secondary school in the country, and it accepts needy pupils from other parts of Kenya, but its entrance requirements are strict : "Priority goes to boys with both parents dead, then to boys whose fathers are dead...Good C.P.E. results must be obtained...we cannot accept boys with C's and D's " (**5).

Recently (since 1978 ?) SCF has started to support a programme for the sponsorship of individual pupils, particularly girls, in government secondary schools. In 1979, 300 students were being helped in this way.

Much of SCF's work must be seen as relief work rather than development work (although that is not to deny it some value) in that it does nothing to tackle the causes of child destitution in Nairobi. As for SCF's work in education, the same criticisms as were made of AID's sponsorship scheme and support for schools apply (see A (5) of this section).

E. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) in Kenya

E (1) Size of programme

VSO differs from the other NGOs considered in this section because it sends people rather than money. At the end of March 1978, VSO had 77 volunteers in Kenya, a drop from a peak of 145 in 1971. The cost to VSO in 1977/78 was probably of the order of £100,000 (**6) (this excludes the amount contributed by other organisations towards

the salaries of volunteers) of which the British Government would have contributed about £80,000. In spite of this high level of British Government support, VSO qualifies as an NGO according to the definition of 'NGO' used in this thesis (although the extent to which it relies on public support and to which it is independent of the British Government is examined in appendix I).

E (2) VSO's global policies

VSO sends people ('volunteers' in the sense described in appendix I) to work on two-year assignments with a variety of projects and programmes in many parts of the Third World. VSO aims to facilitate development through the transfer of knowledge and skills from volunteers to local people, working on the assumption that a shortage of skilled manpower is a constraint to development. It has been described as a "responding agency" in that, within the limits set by some fairly general project selection criteria, it allows the demands of overseas institutions, usually governments, to determine the types of projects which it supports. In some cases volunteers work in what might be described as 'development projects', and in others they fill gaps in on-going government (and sometimes non-government) services, particularly education and health services.

E (3) VSO's view of problems in Kenya

According to a VSO field officer in 1975, VSO had three main aims in Kenya :

"...to equip young people for the job market ; to rehabilitate the socially or physically handicapped ; and to assist in the maintenance of essential public services."

(**7)

From the analysis of Kenya made in Parts IIIA and IIIB of this thesis, these views appear to be a reflection of the views of those in Kenya who accept the existing structures without considering the possibilities of radical changes, and such a formulation of VSO's policy therefore seems to be in keeping with VSO's responding agency approach. However, as pointed out in appendix V (iii), there is no real job market in Kenya and many who even receive secondary education remain unemployed : equipping people for the job market without creating new employment

opportunities may only exacerbate the situation without solving the problem. Similarly, rehabilitation cannot be regarded as 'development' unless it brings about changes to reduce the numbers requiring rehabilitation. The third aim, "the maintenance of essential public services" with its implicit willingness to work with the government is again consistent with the responding agency approach : whether the aim could be described as developmental, by any definition, would depend on the services to be supported (**8).

Development by structural change is not VSO's policy if such change means pursuing policies which are radically different from those of the government. VSO would, however, like to believe that its approach is geared towards the basic needs of the poorest sectors of society, because serving the underprivileged is part of the ethic of volunteering. However, VSO's programme with its concentration on higher education has not always succeeded in following such an approach : in a study of VSO's programme in 1977 :

"The major problem for VSO in Kenya was seen to be that of an imprecise definition of the target community. As a result, the work of many volunteers was making an inadequate contribution in terms of promoting the interests of disadvantaged groups...The background of VSO in Kenya is that it has been an "easy" country in which to run a programme, in a general sense, with a large British aid programme and an active welcome for British volunteers. The tendency has consequently been to pay insufficient attention to basic developmental problems, in terms of seeking ways in which the massive imbalances of opportunity in Kenya can be ameliorated through volunteer action."

(* Baker et al., p.53)

"Nutrition" and "self-reliance" do not appear to be major issues for VSO in Kenya, although many of the projects, and general project criteria by which the acceptabilities of different requests are determined, recognise the role of nutrition in the approach of health projects, and the need to move towards manpower self-sufficiency in all fields.

E (4) VSO's representation in Kenya

Up until 1978, the VSO programme in Kenya was managed by the British Council, and this has introduced a number of limitations and biases into the VSO programme. Firstly, British Council is not itself primarily a development agency - its contacts are primarily in the cultural and

educational fields rather than in rural development, and consequently it does not recruit its staff on the basis of their overall understanding of development issues. Secondly, British Council's involvement in educational work has perhaps maintained a situation in which the majority of volunteers are in teaching positions. Finally, although not necessarily a result of VSO's British Council base, the administrative demands of a programme of up to 100 volunteers (in past years many more) have occupied much of the time of field staff (one full-time British Council staff member with the help of a volunteer who has completed his or her period of service, and some assistance from British Council staff in Kisumu and Mombasa) leaving little time for identifying new areas of work and for properly assessing requests which VSO receives.

In 1978, VSO appointed its own field officer in Kenya as a move towards independence from the British Council, but as a first step the field officer has been seconded to the British Council. The move, however, did not get immediate approval from some officials in ODA and the British High Commission in Nairobi, no doubt because it was seen as a lessening of government control over the VSO programme. This opposition perhaps illustrates VSO's difficult position in Kenya : it is highly dependent on ODA funding, and at the same time it is regarded by many officials, both British and Kenyan, as a not-fully-autonomous part of the official British aid programme. The extent to which the VSO programme will change with the establishment of an independent field officer will be limited by this real and perceived dependency, by VSO's historical role in Kenya, and by the administrative burden on the field office, but it will also depend on VSO's global approach, on the preferred policies of the field officer, and his or her determination to implement them.

E (5) VSO's programme in Kenya

VSO does not have projects of its own, but instead, places volunteers in the projects of other organisations : in some cases "projects" are merely the on-going work of the government's educational and health services.

In March 1977 VSO had 90 volunteers in Kenya and their jobs were classified as follows :

Table 11B : VSO volunteers in Kenya, March 1977

	Volunteers	%age
Education	52	58
Medical	13	14
Technical	14	16
Agricultural	3	3
Community Development	5	6
Business & professional	3	3
<hr/>		
Total	90	100
<hr/>		

These figures do not reflect development priorities. Of the 52 volunteers in education, 21 were teaching arts subjects and 18 science, compared with only 4 teaching agriculture. All of the medical volunteers were nurses of whom 12 were in rural posts which is, however, more in accordance with the country's needs. 11 of the "technical" volunteers were mechanical or civil engineers.

The bias towards educational projects is partly a result of the relative ease with which VSO can recruit people to teach in English, and in a secondary school system based on the English model. It is also, however, due to the large demand for teachers from the harambee schools, and in March 1977, 33 volunteers were working at such schools.

In the late 1960's it was this demand which enabled VSO to satisfy its desire to maintain a large programme in Kenya, and in March 1969, 80 out of 110 volunteers were harambee school teachers. However, these schools often needed much more than just volunteer assistance - many schools lacked accommodation, equipment and the staff to properly run the schools (**9). In other cases there appeared to be dangers of schools becoming dependent on the volunteer input, or even of volunteers being requested because of the prestige which expatriate teachers might bring (and possibly to enable the school to charge higher fees as a consequence !). As a result, a more critical approach has been taken to placements in harambee schools, although the

assessments of schools have probably been confined to their viability as educational enterprises (**10) and on their ability to support the work of volunteers - their evaluation in terms of local level politics (see Section 8.3. (3)) would not be consistent with VSO's policies. The problems of dependency remain, and are no doubt exacerbated by the "client" relationships developing between particular project heads and the field office whereby when one volunteer leaves, a replacement is automatically requested. VSO has, however, been adopting a more critical approach towards such situations.

Support for harambee schools is open to two general lines of criticism. Firstly, there are criticisms of the educational system in Kenya (see appendix V (iii)) : in this respect, many harambee schools are particularly bad examples - volunteers have reported difficulties in moving schools from examination-oriented curricula, which is not surprising if parents have paid fees to enable their children to gain access to urban rather than local employment (see Section 10.1 (4)). Heatley (*, p.4) writes of a "keen and idealistic" volunteer who

"ends up teaching more or less everything in a Harambee school in Kenya. He immerses himself in the project, feeling that this is what he came to the Third World for: the school is in a poor rural area, the children are poor and, above all, both children and the community in general really want education. The school is a self-help project, started by the community. But later, the volunteer begins to have doubts. What is the education for? He realises that it's to enable the students to leave the village and to get a salaried job in the city. The education he's providing is for the few who will succeed in this. It's of no relevance for the majority who fail and who will have to make their lives in the countryside. The curriculum contains nothing that will help them improve rural life. Agriculture is barely mentioned, although 95% of the students will have to make their living from it."

The effects of volunteers in secondary education, however, is a matter of some debate. Looking at Britain's official aid programme, Holtham and Hazlewood (*, p.253) conclude that :

"Britain's educational aid to Kenya is not, of course, above criticism ... but it would be absurd to believe that the responsibility for the major faults in the Kenya educational system and in the curricula can be laid at the door of British aid. ... what is certain in our judgement is that the absence of expatriate teachers would not have resulted in an educational system more relevant to Kenya's needs. It would not have been different and better, but the same, only worse."

Secondly, there are the general criticisms of self-help projects in Sections 8.2 and 8.3 (subsection (3)(b)). To evaluate the effects of VSO's support for harambee schools would necessitate a close look at the social and political roles of individual schools, and this may be more than VSO has the capacity or inclination to do. The effectiveness of VSO support for a school may ultimately depend much on the volunteer's critique of problems in Kenya and on his or her ability to influence the project in a positive way.

Other volunteers work in a variety of government and non-government posts, many of which share the same problems as harambee schools. As noted above (in A (5)), VSO collaborates with Action in Distress in some of AID's projects ; the VSO programme also receives financial support from Oxfam and Christian Aid, but VSO no longer supports the Starehe Boys' Centre (funded by Save the Children Fund - see D (5) above), reportedly on the grounds of the Centre's continuing over-dependence on aid.

Sending people to a project rather than money or equipment may present special problems. According to VSO policy statements, a main function of a volunteer is to transfer technical skills and knowledge to local people. But firstly, it may not always be the case that skills learnt in Britain will be appropriate in rural Kenya, e.g. agriculturalists will be faced with crops and conditions different from their experiences in Britain and they will need to work with farmers with very few resources, again unlike the British situation; health workers must treat diseases of which they have little experience and they may need to do so without reliance on the sophistication of Western medicine; and the problems of teachers

in schools whose curricula are inappropriate to the needs of rural communities has already been discussed. How a volunteer adapts his or her expertise to conditions in rural Kenya may depend on the volunteer's perceptiveness and sensitivity to local problems. Holtham and Hazlewood (*, p.252) in their study of Britain's official aid programme in Kenya, note that :

"The supply of personnel can be a powerful instrument for introducing the attitudes and techniques of the donor country into the different economic and social circumstances of the recipient, for which they are inappropriate. ... the quality of technical assistance personnel varies from the highly competent to the barely employable, and it would be surprising if technical assistance had always worked well."

As volunteers may have no previous African experience, may not have fluency in the local language, and may only have a limited understanding of local institutions and cultural norms, there is a risk that volunteers will not always appreciate the full nature of the problems to be tackled (particularly the social and political aspects). Hyden (*, p.210) writes of "the trained incapacity of Westerners" as advisers in Africa : "They have no personal experience of pre-capitalist economies. They cannot perceive their operating principles. They cannot experience the cultural constraints imposed on the actors by these economies." Reports of mistakes made by agricultural officers in colonial times (see section 9.2) and the dubious value of agricultural practices being promoted even by Kenyan extension workers (see section 10.2) provide warnings of some of the mistakes which can be made.

The argument here of course is not against passing on skills to local people, but against promoting inappropriate technical 'solutions'. Transmitting any skill, however, may be difficult for an expatriate volunteer. A volunteer normally spends only two years in the country, and during the first few months his or her contribution may be limited while he or she gains a better understanding of the language and adapts to the surroundings (*Moyes, pp. 35-39). It has not been possible to investigate whether two years is a sufficient period

for a volunteer (who may have received him- or herself up to 20 years of education) to pass on skills to local counterparts (**11). Here the volunteer may have the disadvantage of belonging to a different culture, and his or her 'solutions' may therefore be distrusted : Mbithi (*3), pp.43-50) has noted that factors such as the social position and educational background of extension agents may affect farmers' acceptance of their advice - the problems are likely to be greater with expatriates who are socially and culturally even more distant from the farmer.

This may be part of a more general problem of the volunteer's position as an expatriate and his or her resultant status. Adrian Adams (*, p.472) notes that "a European technician in Africa is not a simple technician; he is an expatriate technician ... There's another word for it, almost a portmanteau : 'expert'". VSO sends people to work in co-operation and partnership with local people, and as far as possible to integrate into the local society, but expatriate status may limit the extent to which this is possible. This may be a particular problem in government postings (during the study a Kenyan volunteer-organisation official criticised VSO, asking how VSO volunteers can expect the friendship and gratitude of a local community when they have been "imposed" on the community by the government) : in such cases the volunteer's role may be to promote government policies which are not entirely in the interests of the community which the volunteer thinks he or she is helping (**12). This, however, is a problem of project selection and is not particular to volunteering - other NGOs may promote policies inappropriate to their aims through the grants they provide, and problems arising from the position of the expatriate in Kenya are not confined to VSO but arise in other NGOs with expatriate project staff.

(War on Want, the sixth NGO which is described in Appendix I, no longer supports projects in Kenya. Its much smaller partner organisation, Scottish War on Want has, however, until more recently, been supporting the Limuru Boys' Centre and the Samburu Rural Development Centre, two projects described in Appendix XI. Following policy changes in Scottish War on Want, however, support for these projects has been ended).

11.3. The work of Kenyan non-government organisations (KNGOs)

In this thesis the term KNGO is taken to mean a Kenyan-based and controlled NGO which receives voluntary contributions and makes grants to welfare and development projects. Some of the KNGOs considered are involved in the initiation and management of projects, but all have wider concerns than single projects, and all operate in several areas of the country.

KNGOs are important in this study because they often act as intermediaries between small projects and expatriate funding agencies, the KNGOs often having better contacts in the rural areas and in government circles, and therefore being in a better position to receive requests for support and to initiate action. Some of the major KNGOs are described in Appendix X. These are :

- Kenya Freedom From Hunger Council (KFFHC)
- National Christian Council in Kenya (NCCK)
- Kenya Catholic Secretariat
- Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS)
- Kenya YMCA
- Kenya Voluntary Development Association (KVDA)
- Kenya Charity Sweepstake (not strictly a KNGO)

Before examining some characteristics of these organisations, their background is first considered. Below, it is argued that KNGOs must be seen as a post-colonial phenomenon, and be seen in the context of Kenya's socio-economic structure.

In pre-colonial Africa "charity" took place within communities, with extended families, clans and age-groups all helping to provide a security system through which assistance could be given to the poor, the disabled and the old. Such institutions helped both through providing labour for projects which would benefit the community as a whole, and by making grants and loans to those in need (* Mbithi (4), pp. 4, 5 ; and * Mutiso, pp.209-214). This form of intra-community help still exists today, and is the basis of much self-help activity.

Traditional "charity" was localised : it was given to friends and relatives, or at least to members of the same community from whom similar services could be expected should the need arise. In this study, no references have been found to inter-tribal charity (except where relationships have existed through marriage). As rural people, Africans were "more particularistic and less universalistic than urban people" (* Mbithi (4), p.6) in that

"...reality to the ordinary man is tangible and meaningful mainly within the confines of his immediate family, kinship, network or neighbourhood...The idea that one should volunteer to help people one has never heard of or seen is an innovation."

(ibid.)

This innovation was introduced by the European immigrants, principally the missionary societies. Settlers came from societies in which at least some people had sufficient money to make donations to "good causes", and in which charity had already become institutionalised. These same institutions were brought to Kenya, often with a link to a parent organisation (e.g. church) in Europe being retained. Thus KNGOs are not traditional African organisations - many are European creations which, like most other social institutions, have been Africanised, partly as a result of the political changes of the last 25 years.

However, KNGOs have developed on one side of the cleavage in Kenyan society between "traditional" and "western" values which was originally introduced by missionaries (see Section 6.2.). Moreover, the support base of KNGOs is small and lies mainly in the urban sector with its free enterprise, competitive ethic. Additionally, the Africans who have taken control of the KNGOs are, in many instances, people who

have proven their competence in government service or in commerce, and are thus often likely to be people who accept Kenya's development philosophy.

The links between present-day KNGOs and their parent or partner organisations are still strong and almost symbiotic - the KNGOs exist on the funds given to them by expatriate NGOs, while the expatriate NGOs often need the KNGOs as a vehicle through which their aid can be channelled. Thus, the relationships are :

<u>KNGO</u>	<u>Funding Agencies</u>
KFFHC	Freedom From Hunger Campaigns
NCKK	Protestant churches
Catholic Secretariat	Catholic churches
KRCS	Red Cross societies
Kenya YMCA	Other national YMCAs
KVDA	Work-camp/student exchange organisations.

The situation, however, is not quite so simple, as there are many secular NGOs quite happy to support KNGOs with particular characteristics, e.g. Oxfam formerly supported several projects through KFFHC (even if only to use KFFHC's status to avoid import duties !), and it now funds projects of both NCKK and the Catholic Secretariat. Moreover, there is considerable overlap between some of the KNGOs whereby KFFHC funds some projects which are run by NCKK, and NCKK and the Catholic Secretariat occasionally undertake joint projects, e.g. their work in Kitui district supported by Oxfam (see 11.2 C (5) above).

Of the KNGOs described in Appendix X, the most important are KFFHC and NCKK (and possibly the Kenya Catholic Secretariat) because of their size and because of their ranges of activities and of financial supporters. In section (ii) of Appendix X (on NCKK) there is a comparison of some characteristics of these two organisations. Considering all the KNGOs examined in Appendix X, the following features emerge :

(1) Overall objectives

All KNGOs claim to be concerned with the basic needs of the poor of Kenya. However, not all have been very successful in identifying target groups. Part of the difficulty may be the political constraints which make it necessary for national organisations to be seen to give benefits to as many areas of Kenya as possible (e.g. KFFHC and KRCS), but another part may be in many KNGOs not having a clear analysis of the situation. For example, NCKK has demonstrated its basic needs approach by its programme in northern Kenya and by its projects in Nairobi's shanty town (Mathare Valley), but even if it was politically necessary for KFFHC to support projects in Kiambu District, the high level of funding for Limuru Boys' Centre is surely poor use of resources (see Appendix XI).

(2) Liaison with the government

In their projects, all KNGOs work closely with government officers (KVDA being a possible exception). This is no doubt to be expected as no major organisation could operate in an area without having some sort of contact with the local authorities. However, in the case of KFFHC the local authorities are the representatives of the organisation while others merely co-operate (although generally enjoying good relationships), and KVDA only has the contact which protocol requires.

(3) Problem Analysis

The level of problem analysis and project appraisal varies among the KNGOs. KFFHC, NCKK and KRCS (and possibly others) from time to time use advisors from Nairobi University, although NCKK appeared to be more involved in planning their major projects within overall strategies for different areas than KFFHC which responds to requests for projects on a more ad hoc basis. Some individuals in different KNGOs are aware of the structural nature of many problems of poverty in Kenya, but it appeared that few would advocate radical changes in Kenyan policy.

(4) Links with the business community

At committee level, and in some cases at staff level, Kenya's business community is well represented. This makes it difficult for many KNGOs to be agents of radical change in Kenya, and it may also make it

difficult for them to be suitable as a partner organisation for some expatriate NGOs. There have also been a number of cases in which the activities of businessman-committee members have caused embarrassment for KNGOs.

(5) Fund-raising in Kenya

As may be expected, KNGOs fund-raising base in Kenya is weak, as only a small section of the Kenyan population is in an economic position to give substantial donations, and philanthropy is not a dominant ethic of that section. All KNGOs, however, do make substantial fund-raising efforts, but the YMCA and KVDA, both of which receive little help from outside Kenya, find it difficult to finance even small programmes. The Kenya Charity Sweepstake, which is not strictly a KNGO, is perhaps an exception here. The style of fund-raising of many KNGOs is consistent with Kenya's free enterprise system - raffles with high value prizes, Western fashion shows, etc. - and not always compatible with the redistribution of the country's wealth which some claim to be seeking.

(6) Co-operation between KNGOs

Most KNGOs are affiliated to the Kenya National Council of Social Service (KNCSS), again apparently following the British example (**12) of having such a Council. KNCSS aims to co-ordinate the work of KNOs although it does not appear to have any authority over them. It runs seminars, training courses for KNGO staff, and has a number of working committees on youth, the disabled, and other problem areas. The most important type of co-operation, however, is over project support. It has been noted above that KFFHC and NCKK are often involved in supporting a common project, and there is also co-operation between NCKK and the Catholic Secretariat. The other KNGOs considered in Appendix X probably have less contact with other KNGOs because of the specialised nature of their programmes.

(7) Expatriate influence

At the time of this study KFFHC, NCKK and the Catholic Secretariat all had expatriates on their staffs (although only a Dutch volunteer in the case of KFFHC) and expatriate representation on KNGO committees is strong. Of the six "working committees" described in the 1972/73 KNCSS annual report, four were being chaired by expatriates.

In summarising it is difficult to make many generalisations. For an NGO wishing to support projects through a KNGO, the main concerns may be the criteria used in assessing projects, the thoroughness with which assessments are made, the efficiency of the handling of the aid funds, the trustworthiness of the KNGO, and possibly its ideological stance. Although mistakes do occur, KNGOs perform reasonably well in most of these respects, and many NGOs would regard KNGOs as an effective part of Kenya's infrastructure for handling aid. However, should an NGO analyse Kenyan problems in terms of neo-colonial economic structures and the weakness of the political organisation of the peasantry, then KNGOs would not be ideal channels through which to work.

11.4 Some general remarks on NGOs in Kenya

This section summarises some of the detailed discussions of sections 11.2 and 11.3, and tries to identify a few of the key issues for NGOs in Kenya.

(a) The size of the NGO input

A first thing to note is the relatively large input of NGOs into Kenya, at least in terms of the resources at their disposal. In the most recent financial years for which figures are given, the amounts were :

Action in Distress	£ 250,000	(estimate)
Christian Aid	£ 55,000	(estimate)
Oxfam	£ 128,918	
Save the Children Fund	£ 145,464	
Voluntary Service Overseas	£ 100,000	(estimate)

Although the above figures do not all refer to the same year, they suggest an annual estimate of £680,000 for the total aid from these five organisations, and if the aid of other smaller NGOs could be included, Britain's non-government aid to Kenya would probably total more than three-quarters of a million pounds each year. However, this is not a large amount if thought of as 5p. per capita in Kenya, or when compared with Britain's official aid programme.

(b) NGO aid and official aid

As noted in appendix XII, Kenya is a popular country with official aid donors, and particularly with the British Government. Compared with an estimated £ 0.75 million p.a. contributed by (British) NGOs, the British Government was giving approximately £10 million p.a. at the same time, and that figure was expected to increase. Together with other national bilateral donors and international agencies such as the World Bank, Kenya received about £70 million in loans and grants in 1976/77 : aid provides between 12 and 13% of Kenya's development expenditure (*Arnold (2), p.147).

This raises the question of how NGO aid and official aid programmes relate. The answer appears to be that they do not. The reasons for their being little overlap in NGO and official programmes would seem to be :

- Most official aid is used for large-scale projects and programmes, e.g. road building, dams and irrigation schemes, which are beyond the resources of NGOs. Generally it is projects which require much foreign exchange which are proposed by the Kenya Government to official donors, while the Government would expect to finance projects of the size which NGOs favour from its own resources. Moreover, the Government would find it difficult to 'absorb' all the aid pledged to Kenya if it was to deal with small-scale projects, and on the donors side, political pressure to maintain the flow of aid may discriminate against the processing of small grants (**14).
- NGOs are usually reluctant to offer their own resources to a project if they feel that aid might be forthcoming from official sources. If, say, the World Bank was willing to fund a project, an NGO would not normally feel justified in supporting the same project given that the World Bank has vastly greater resources than itself.
- Official donors are constrained to working through the Government and its institutions, while NGOs often work outside Government structures.

Nevertheless, a few examples of overlap do occur. VSO, which is largely financed by ODA, has on some occasions sent volunteers to work with projects being supported by ODA or by UN agencies (**15), and a major part of the work of CARE, a U.S. NGO, is the distribution of American food aid. (And as a more unusual example reported to the writer since the conclusion of this study, a British NGO (not one of those considered in this thesis) has supported a 'conscientization' programme alerting people to, and preparing people for, the likely social consequences of a large UN-backed development project.)

(c) Comparison of NGOs' programmes

Although all five of the NGOs considered in this chapter make major commitments to Kenyan projects, they use their resources in very different ways.

Christian Aid and Oxfam have some similarities in that they support a wide range of projects in many different parts of the country. A main difference, however, is that while Oxfam manages its programme through its own field office, Christian Aid works through NCCCK (and so it is difficult to see Christian Aid's work as being distinct from NCCCK), but in practice, the two approaches seem to lead to similar portfolios of projects. Most of Oxfam's aid goes to projects of churches or mission organisations around the country, and some even goes to NCCCK. Oxfam may have more options in supporting projects as it is not tied to the protestant churches in the same way as Christian Aid, but Christian Aid's KNGO partner, NCCCK, has much greater resources than the Oxfam field office and is in a better position to initiate and administer projects of its own. Both Oxfam and Christian Aid/NCCCK have probably been quite successful in identifying appropriate target groups for their basic-needs approaches - the north, the marginal agricultural areas, the urban poor and the handicapped. Projects which do not seem consistent with basic-needs considerations may arise more from past connections with expatriates in Kenya than from present policies.

Action in Distress, Save the Children Fund and Voluntary Service Overseas all have in common a major involvement with education in

Kenya, although the nature of the involvement varies from agency to agency. AID have concentrated their efforts in two poor and drought-affected districts, Isiolo and Kitui, and they are trying to diversify their work into types of vocational training which they hope will be of greater relevance to these districts, although whether or not they are succeeding in this is questionable. SCF have chosen a very different target group - destitute boys in Nairobi, many of them migrants from rural areas. In this, their work is mainly relief rather than development, as is indicated by the names of two of their major projects - the "Rescue Centre", and the "Place of Safety". However, their educational work is mainly within the formal school system, and it is within secondary schools that their programme in Kenya is expanding. VSO is more restricted in the projects which it can support because of the only type of aid it can offer, namely volunteers, and secondary education has been a field in which it has been relatively easy to work. VSO has made some attempt to concentrate its help on the poorer areas of the country, but it has not had much success in re-orientating its assistance towards education more appropriate to the needs of the rural areas.

These three organisations have been criticised in Section 11.2 for the support they give to an educational system which is elitist, which is training people for job opportunities which do not exist, and which is doing little to alleviate poverty in the rural areas (these criticisms of the educational system in Kenya are contained in appendix V and 11.2). The argument here is not so much against education per se, but given the existing imbalance in Kenya's economy and society and the problems of rural poverty, the emphasis on education, at least of the type offered through the Kenyan school system seems misplaced. As put by Baker et al. (*, p.53) in their study of volunteering,

"...the central problems are perhaps those of the linkages between education, urban drift and unemployment which should form the basis of the country analysis of Kenya, and hence the policy on volunteering in education."

All three NGOs claim some awareness of these linkages, however, and AID and VSO are now making efforts to re-direct their work into vocational training, and AID's work in primary education is probably exempt from at least some of the above criticisms. But further

criticisms have been noted of the approaches of AID and SCF whereby help is given to individuals through sponsorship schemes rather than to community groups or institutions : this sort of aid may have few spin-offs in community or organisational development.

A part of VSO's programme, however, is outside the educational field, as is the case to a lesser extent with AID and SCF (AID is seeking more involvement in agriculture, but there are doubts surrounding the appropriateness of some of its policies). VSO's involvement in agriculture and other rural productive activities, however, is surprisingly small given the nature of the country's problems. This may be partly due to the past form of VSO's field representation (see 11.3, E(4)), and partly due to the constraints on the type of aid which VSO can offer. VSO may be able to find volunteers who can perform satisfactorily in formal teaching situations or in certain medical programmes, but finding people in Britain with the appropriate agricultural skills needed for helping peasant farmers in Kenya's marginal areas may be a more difficult matter. A further constraint may be that a volunteer needs a structure in which to work - a cash grant can be given to a small self-help group, but a volunteer needs an employing institution to make proper use of his or her skills. Between government services and traditional local groups, there may be few institutions in the poorer areas which are capable of fully using a volunteer's services.

(d) Field representation

All of the five NGOs considered in this chapter have different operating styles. At one extreme is Christian Aid which leaves its programme almost completely in the hands of NCKK, and at the other is SCF which has established its own projects in Nairobi and operates with apparently little contact with other organisations. AID is the only other NGO of those considered which runs its own 'projects', but in the case of AID, 'projects'

are generally sponsorship programmes for pupils in government schools, '4-K' clubs, etc. Oxfam and VSO both have expatriate field representatives who offer support, in one case money and in the other volunteers, to existing projects.

The nature of field representation is important as it determines the channels by which requests for aid reach NGOs and this is considered further in chapter 14. From the evidence of this chapter, however, the problem appears to be much wider than whether or not to have expatriate field staff. Although Oxfam and VSO are in some ways in a similar position with small field staffs identifying where their organisations can help, VSO's British Council base and the more administrative nature of the field office has led to quite a different range of projects to that of Oxfam (other factors, including the global policies of NGOs are, of course, also determining factors of programme types). With AID and SCF it may have been expected that a willingness to establish and administer projects should have given these NGOs more flexibility to tackle problems in an appropriate way : what appears to have happened is that these two organisations are tackling what they perceive to be Kenya's main problems in what they consider appropriate ways, but from the analysis of this thesis, neither have identified the major problems, nor are they making appropriate responses to them.

Christian Aid is the only one of the NGOs examined which has relied on a KNGO (although Oxfam and VSO also give support to KNGO projects). In section 11.3 it has been argued that KNGOs are not ideal channels for aid and they may introduce limitations into the range of work open to NGOs, especially for NGOs at the more radical end of the political spectrum. However, NCK's professionalism and its criteria for project analysis probably fit closely with the approach which Christian Aid would wish to follow, and therefore by using NCK, Christian Aid makes few compromises but gains access to much local knowledge and many contacts with small rural projects. It has also the satisfaction of supporting a Kenyan partner organisation.

Another role which field representatives might have been expected to have is in the monitoring of projects which are receiving NGO support : this may be necessary to give NGOs a means of judging the efficacy of their policies and of their project-selection criteria, and to check on whether project organisations can carry out their work with the resources they have been given. Little evidence was encountered during the study, however, to suggest that monitoring was receiving much priority. Where NGOs directly administer projects (as is the case with AID and SCF) or have people working in projects (as with VSO), they should be able to monitor the work done, but the extent to which they evaluate the work of projects against the NGO's wider objectives may be another matter. Oxfam asks for plans for project evaluation when it is considering applications for grants, but at the time of this study it had no field representative in Kenya. Christian Aid depended on NCKK, which considered its evaluation of projects to be inadequate, being more in terms of materials supplied than of economic or social changes promoted. KFFHC even admitted that they did not have the resources to monitor projects, and that they only checked on a project's progress when requested to do so by donor NGOs.

The dangers of having no field representation at all, i.e. neither having field staff nor working through a KNGO, are shown by the references to Scottish War on Want's past work in Kenya made in Appendix XI. If an NGO has no way of seeking out the types of projects which it wishes to support and of making its existence and services known to appropriate local organisations, its programme will be limited to the few projects which, often because of expatriate connections, can make contact with the NGO. However, irrespective of the ways in which NGOs are represented, projects with expatriate involvement are likely to get more

aid than they strictly merit because of their greater ability to market themselves. This is shown in the support given to the Limuru Boys' Centre, the Starehe Boys' Centre, and possibly the Samburu Development Centre, and the support for the Limuru Boys' Centre from KFFHC illustrates that this marketing is not just a matter of personal contacts between Europeans.

(e) NGOs as expatriate organisations

How responsive can NGOs, as expatriate organisations, be to different Kenyan needs and aspirations, and to what extent are they open to the criticism of being neo-colonialist? War on Want, even in countries in which it is supporting projects, does not usually have field representatives, partly to avoid what it regards as the 'neo-colonialism' of the expatriate, aid-administering bureaucracy. Christian Aid (according to an internal Christian Aid report) also

"...does not ... maintain a team of staff representatives overseas. It works with and through indigenous churches, organizations and groups. It tries to respect the identity and further the self-reliance of these bodies as its partners. It tries to act on the lesson which government and development agencies alike have learnt in the past 10 - 20 years - that it is not only immoral but also ineffective to impose Western solutions to third world problems."

As was argued in section 2.2, NGOs cannot evade decisions on which projects to support and which not to support, and responsibility for such decisions will generally lie with expatriates rather than with Kenyans. But whether NGOs are as a consequence likely to "impose Western solutions", or even to act in a 'neo-colonial' way, would appear to rest on how one might assess the answers to questions such as :

- (1) to what extent do NGOs contribute to an influential expatriate presence ?
- (2) to what extent do NGOs promote Western economic or political interests ?
- (3) what (and whose) values and views of problems guide NGOs in their work in Kenya ?

This study has not provided a basis for fully answering these questions, but nevertheless a few observations can be made :

- (1) It can be noted that with about 30,000 British citizens in Kenya (*Sharkansky and Dresang, p.216) - not to mention expatriates of other countries - NGOs do not significantly add to the size of the expatriate presence. In some of the poorer rural areas, however, the only expatriates may be NGO staff or staff (including volunteers) of NGO-supported projects, and these people will be in influential positions because of their leadership roles in projects and their access to resources. The nature of their influence may depend on their sensitivity to local society (see 11.2 E(5) above (on VSO), and (3) below). It can also be noted that although some NGOs employ local staff (e.g. SCF and AID), all senior NGO posts in Kenya are occupied by expatriates, thus following a pattern which the Kenyan Government has been trying to overturn in the public and commercial sectors.
- (2) No evidence has been found to suggest that NGOs consciously set out to promote Western economic or political interests, although it would be surprising if they did not do so to some extent. It is likely for example, that there will be some commercial benefits for British companies from the work of NGOs - where equipment is required for projects, this may often be ordered in Britain. It is no doubt also in Britain's political interests when British NGOs respond positively to needs expressed by the Kenyan Government, as VSO and AID often do. Some argue that VSO's volunteer teachers will tend to promote a better understanding of British culture and therefore closer ties between the two countries : whilst this may not be an objective of VSO, it is possible that it is an objective of

the British Government in the support it gives to the VSO programme. However, given the large amount of official aid which Kenya receives from Britain, it would be surprising if NGOs made any significant addition to any leverage which Britain may have on Kenyan policies.

- (3) The third question relates to an issue raised in section 2.2 : who do NGOs regard as the spokespeople of those they wish to help ? Clearly Christian Aid responds to the wishes of church groups (or at least the needs of church groups filtered through and articulated by NCKK), and Oxfam, from its choice of projects, would appear to often do the same. AID, on the other hand, seems to derive many of its views of problems from government officials, while VSO would appear to be influenced both by the Kenyan Government and the British Council. SCF in Kenya has links with the British expatriate community, but the extent to which this constitutes an influence is not certain.

What this study has not been able to adequately pursue, unfortunately, is the extent to which NGOs' views of problems in Kenya have been influenced by their contacts in Kenya, and the extent to which NGOs' contacts have been determined by the more general views on Third World poverty of the NGOs. One might expect, however, that there would be an iterative process, an NGO's general policies determining the initial contacts, the views of these contacts contributing to the NGO's views of Kenyan problems, these views pointing towards new contacts, and so on. NGOs with independent field representatives and which are able to be flexible in their responses to problems are no doubt better placed than others to go through this process : with a British Council base, VSO does not appear to have moved very far from a government view, while AID, from its starting point of student sponsorships in formal education, appears to be now diversifying its programme into new areas. In this respect it may be interesting to see what changes take place in the Oxfam programme following the re-establishment of an Oxfam field office in Nairobi.

Finally, it can be noted that while some NGOs have taken their analysis of Kenyan problems from government sources (although not always uncritically), none of the NGOs considered appears to have used either the trade union movement or more radical politicians as its principal contacts.

(f) NGOs' coverage of projects in Kenya

This chapter has not, of course, considered all NGOs working in Kenya, and not even all British NGOs : many groups in Britain, especially churches, raise funds for particular projects or organisations in Kenya. Many NGOs from Europe and North America are also represented in Kenya although their work has not been examined during this study. However, it raises the question of whether or not there are too many NGOs working in Kenya. Many NGOs are looking for the same types of non-government groups to support, and, under the present criteria for support which most NGOs use, the number of such groups must be limited. This thesis cannot give any definitive answer to that question, and the amount of aid which Kenya can absorb will depend on the policies of the NGOs. Two observations which may be relevant here are :

- (1) At the time of the study of Kitui District the district's population should have been a target group for many NGOs. Nevertheless there was very little NGO activity in Kitui, and of the major KNGOs, only the Catholic Secretariat had a major involvement there (although much of the Catholic input through schools and missions would be irrelevant to this discussion). Catholic Relief Services (CRS, an American NGO which uses American food aid) was the only NGO with a large programme, although this was confined to mother-and-child health clinics at which supplementary food rations were being distributed. The CRS director recognised the agricultural problems of the area, but maintained that "CRS is not a multi-purpose agency" and therefore had only one type of response to the situation (**16). Thus Kitui was a district with a great need for projects in food production, soil conservation, etc., a district rich in traditional self-help groups, and yet NGOs were making little contribution in those fields.

- (2) A director of an American consultancy for NGOs (particularly for small mission organisations) which has a large office in Nairobi claimed that many NGOs and other donors have a greater need to give money than many projects have to receive it (**17). During the study there were reports of an American priest who was being employed to try to match donors wishes and priorities with what small projects might be able to use. Thus small projects (generally around missions) were being encouraged to expand by taking advantage of any extra aid which they may have been able to attract, and donors were being enabled to spend more easily.

On the one hand, therefore, there is a good supply of NGO aid from NGOs which wish to spend money and maintain programmes in Kenya, but on the other, there are many poor rural communities receiving little or no NGO assistance. Thus there appears to be a problem in the linkages between donors and potential recipients : KNGOs do not always provide effective links with the poorest groups, and NGOs which have their own field staff have difficulty in working outside established institutions such as government and public services. Part of the problem, however, lies in the policies of the NGOs, in the types of projects they are willing to support, and in the nature of the local contacts which they seek.

Footnotes

1. At a schools' conference in Tunbridge Wells in October 1978 an ODM representative from ODM's Kenya Desk spoke of the Kenyan's efficiency in conceiving and executing projects as factors behind the British Government's relatively large aid programme in Kenya. See also appendix XII.
2. A claim made by an AID staff member at the conference referred to in '1' above when answering questions on the political dimension of poverty in Kenya.
3. In a letter to the writer from a Christian Aid Projects' Officer in September 1978.
4. In a letter from the Oxfam Information Department, August 1978.
5. From a letter dated 14th January 1976 from the Director of Starehe Boys' School to primary school headmasters inviting applications for places at the school.

6. This estimate is very approximate. VSO's expenditure on volunteers during 1977/78 was £1,245,460, and during the same year the number of volunteers moved from 1057 to 956. This suggests an average of £1,237 per volunteer. During the year the number of volunteers in Kenya moved from 93 to 77, giving an average of 85. A straight multiplication of 85 x £1,237 would give an estimate of £105,180. The cost per volunteer in Kenya, however, is probably less than VSO's overall average as the relatively large size of the Kenya programme will create economies of scale in training and overseas administration.
7. From a report on education in VSO's programme in Kenya by Baker, Cross and Cole (*). This report was part of a wider study of the British Volunteer Programme and was presented in two volumes, the second of which contained the detailed examination of VSO's programme in Kenya. Although this writer has had an opportunity to study this second volume, it remains confidential to the BVP, and therefore references are only made to information and views contained in the first (except for information freely available elsewhere). This writer would not, however, fully accept all the arguments used and conclusions reached in the second volume.
8. For example, Sharkansky and Dresang (*, p.218) have reported that Swedish aid officials find that in Kenya the principle of respecting and "responding" to the recipient's wishes conflicts with other objectives of aid : they consider that

"the principle of relying on the priorities of the developing country compromises the principle of a more equal distribution of wealth. They find that Kenya's formal plans for rural development do not actually guide government policy when it faces tempting options to develop the economies of Nairobi and other areas in Kikuyu-dominated Central Province."
9. Not all harambee schools, however, suffer from the same problems of equipment. A school visited by the writer in Kitui District during the study had recently received a grant of several thousand pounds from a German agency to equip a new science laboratory. According to the headmaster (a VSO volunteer) it was not possible to use all the money even when following the "extravagant" equipment recommendations made by the Ministry of Education, and much of the grant was, therefore, passed to the Catholic Church for equipment for other schools in Kitui.

That the Catholic Church had been involved in the establishment of the school had given it advantages in obtaining overseas aid. The original staff houses, for example, had been built with aid money, and to a better standard than most government schools could provide (in some respects too high - flush toilets are hardly needed when there is no running water!). However, the Catholic Church's involvement may lessen the self-help aspect of the school : most people apparently regarded the school as a more expensive alternative for pupils who had failed to gain places in government schools, and the school did not appear to be a project around which much local organisation was likely to take place.

10. For example, a booklet produced by VSO (*Woolridge, p.12) records the views of a volunteer teacher in a harambee school near Kitui town :

"The ('school-leavers') certificate is seen as a passport to a job and a salary that will help the whole family. At the end of the first year, when examination results were poor, (the volunteer) found himself dispirited about this process and V.S.O.'s involvement in it. He felt that ... volunteers would be better employed in government schools ... where the chances of academic success were higher. At the end of the second year, however, the examination results were better and most of the boys were able to get a job, despite the serious unemployment problem in Kenya. ... He therefore advocated that V.S.O. should continue to supply teachers to harambee schools if requested, particularly to those with a strong chance of attracting government support."

While this extract is not necessarily a statement of VSO's policy, it is noteworthy that VSO have chosen to record those views, without comment, in one of the organisation's publications.

11. Some volunteers extend their service to three or four years, and in some cases a volunteer will be replaced by another at the end of the period of service, although it has not been possible to investigate how often this occurs in Kenya. The NGO may need to seek a balance between having a volunteer serving long enough to pass on a skill, but not so long as to let the volunteer become a 'permanent' part of the project, and a part on which the project may become dependent.
12. Adrian Adams has noted in Senegal the way in which expatriates have uncritically promoted government policies which run counter to farmers' interests : she comments that :

"It's not knowledge or skill alone that's wanted of the expert... What matters is the halo of impartial prestige his skills lend him, allowing him to neutralize conflict-laden encounters - between governments, between a government and its governed - and disguise political issues, for a time, as technical ones." (*Adams A, p.474).

On the basis of this brief study, however, it would not be possible to make such a generalisation about VSO volunteers in Kenya - not even about those in government posts.

13. In Britain the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) was renamed the National Council of Voluntary Organisations in 1979. It acts as an advisory body to NGOs, principally those working in Britain.

14. According to an ODM report (*ODM (1), p.5) :

"since our experience, and that of other donors who are trying to direct more aid towards the poor, suggests that there is a risk that at least initially rates of disbursement may fall, we will need to continue to finance other projects which are economically sound and to which developing countries attach priority if we are to disburse the UK aid programme as fully and effectively as possible."

Thus the desire to maintain the total amount of aid appears to be in conflict with the wish to support the type of small-scale rural projects preferred by NGOs.

15. VSO is an official recruiting agency for United Nations Volunteers (UNV), a section of UNDP which recruits volunteers internationally for volunteer posts with programmes of UN agencies. The number of volunteers which VSO recruits for UNV, is, however, small - around 5 per year. Part of the reason is that volunteers have often been critical of UNV assignments: UNV volunteers may find themselves working with teams of international aid personnel rather than in close contact with the local society; they may need to work alongside UN 'experts' earning many times more than the volunteers, but sometimes not differing much from volunteers in their qualifications and experience; and volunteer status in a UN project may give a volunteer only a junior role in the team. (Similar problems have occurred when volunteers have been placed alongside technical co-operation officers (TCOs) working for ODA.) Moreover, when there is a shortage of suitable applicants for volunteer vacancies, NGOs are likely to give preference to their own bilaterally-arranged posts rather than to those of an international organisation.
16. From a conversation with the CRS director for Kenya, March 1976.
17. From a conversation with the associate director for research of Daystar Communications.

Chapter 12

SOME OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS FROM THE CASE STUDY

This chapter forms the final part of the case study: it pulls together the main observations from the previous chapters and examines the role of NGOs in relation to the analysis of Kenya made in Parts IIIA and IIIB. The sections of the chapter follow the main themes of the thesis - development, malnutrition, self-reliance, and the nature of rural change.

On development it is argued that changes are needed in Kenya's socio-economic structure in order to solve the problems of poverty, but that NGOs working there (and considered in this thesis) appear content to support projects aimed at assisting people within the existing system. Malnutrition is seen as just a symptom, albeit an important one, of Kenya's structural underdevelopment. The self-help movement is seen as having potential as a challenge to the structure, but it is concluded that the work of NGOs shows little understanding of the nature of 'harambee' and it is therefore possible that opportunities for supporting projects aimed at changing the distribution of political power in Kenya may be being lost. Following the analysis of change in Kitui District in chapter 10, it is concluded that project support can only have limited effectiveness as a means of bringing about rural development.

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12. SOME OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS FROM THE CASE STUDY

12.1. Development and NGOs in Kenya

Chapter 6 outlined the process of what some, from one standpoint would call development in Kenya, and some from another standpoint would call Kenya's underdevelopment. Few would deny that there are both positive and negative features of the process - infant mortality has been reduced, medical help has been provided for many, and higher literacy rates open the possibilities for new forms of technical, cultural and organisational progress. But many who would, in the past, have been independent small producers, albeit at a meagre subsistence level, are now landless and dependent on wage employment which may be difficult to find, and others who remain as peasant farmers in the marginal lands find it difficult to produce sufficient food for their households, far less to meet the demands for cash which modernisation brings.

This process of development/underdevelopment went hand-in-hand with the colonial development of the country, and it has continued under the dynamic of the institutions and structures created during the colonial period. The key features of the structure which have emerged are :

- I : A modern sector, concentrated in the towns and particularly in Nairobi and Mombasa, in which African and international capitalist enterprises have achieved fast growth rates : this sector remains small as a proportion of the population, but has the major influence on government policy ;

- II: A commercial farming sector which has strong ties with the modern sector and which also has an important influence on policy, particularly agricultural policy ;

III : A class of wage labourers in the modern sector and of the urban unemployed, many of them landless migrants from the rural areas ;

IV : Small-scale peasant farmers and pastoralists : this group comprises the majority of the population, but is most lacking in institutions which can give it a voice in policy-making.

Both pre- and post-independence policy in Kenya has been to encourage economic growth, and in this Kenya has been successful - per capita GNP grew by an average of 2.6 per cent p.a. during the period 1960-76, in spite of a high population growth rate (* World Bank (2) p. 76). This growth has been achieved by policies which favour groups I and II above, the justification being that the benefits will trickle down to groups III and IV, thereby improving the lot of everyone in the country.

However, the efficacy of this approach must be judged by the objective evidence. It is difficult to tell how the real incomes of peasant farmers may have moved over the past 15 years, as in many cases the weather has been the main source of income variations. Some who have obtained titles to land in high potential areas may have gained, while others have been pushed out of the agricultural sector through landlessness. In the marginal areas, the study of Kitui District demonstrates that in the 1970's the farmers were just as vulnerable to drought as they had been in the 1960's. In the urban areas, the growth in the modern sector has not created employment opportunities as rapidly as the increase in the number of migrants seeking work. Throughout the country, however, education and health services have expanded and in several areas, water supplies and communications have been improved (many of these infrastructural improvements, however, have come about in spite of rather than as part of government planning).

Thus economic growth in Kenya has had only little impact as a strategy for providing basic needs for all. A few people may have moved from group III to group I above, or from group IV to group II, but for the poorer sectors the main effects of government policies have been the

rising numbers of unemployed people in major towns, and the increasing marginalisation of the poorer peasants and pastoralists. The hypothesis that Kenya is going through a transitory period in which inequality is high before wealth can trickle throughout the population is also difficult to support : a future period of redistribution appears as unlikely, as that would require a major change in the pattern of land distribution and a change from the export orientation of the largely foreign-owned modern sector businesses.

In terms of views of development described in Chapter 2, Kenya shows economic growth with little trickle down to the poor, and it shows the pattern of underdevelopment described by Frank - a developing centre based on foreign capital, and an underdeveloping periphery. Progress towards basic needs has not been great, and if Seers' criteria of less poverty, less unemployment and less inequality are used (see Section 2.3 (2)), then change in Kenya cannot be described as 'development'.

How do NGOs view this process of development/underdevelopment in Kenya ? It is difficult to tell directly from their statements on Kenya, as an NGO cannot be openly critical of the government and expect to be allowed to stay in the country, but their patterns of project support give some idea of their analysis of problems.

All five of the NGOs described in Chapter 11 see their objectives in terms of basic needs, and they all have gone some way towards identifying target groups even if not all projects will reach the very poorest. They differ, however, in the priorities they give to different sectors in their work, and in the extent to which they see their work as co-operation with, as compensation for, or as a counteraction to government policies.

AID goes furthest of the five in identifying itself with the government - it both co-operates in government programmes and openly and uncritically affirms its support for the country's leaders.

VSO also aligns itself with the government because of its "responding" approach, and although statements for or against governments are not part of VSO's style, many of its volunteers work in public services. That is not to say that AID and VSO do not recognise the inequalities created by Kenya's economic system, but they appear to have confidence in the direction of development in Kenya as something which will eventually solve Kenyan problems. This view of AID and VSO is perhaps strengthened by the emphasis they give to education : education is not something which will directly lead to the satisfaction of primary basic needs, and the reinforcement of an educated sector in hope that it will produce benefits for all of the country is perhaps close to an economic growth philosophy. However, AID's increasing involvement with vocational training and VSO's attempts to find more placements for volunteers outside the educational sector indicate that both organisations are aware of the consequences of Kenya's policies. Their work may therefore be part co-operation with and part compensation for government policies.

SCF in its work with destitute boys is putting a very strong emphasis on basic needs, but what it is doing is difficult to describe as development as it produces very little in the way of permanent change : a small number of boys may be helped from group III to groups I or II (see above), but many will merely be transferred back to group IV.

In their basic needs approach, both Christian Aid and Oxfam have much less contact with the government than AID or VSO. Christian Aid works through NCKK, a large KNGO which must necessarily maintain close links with the government, but the bulk of Oxfam's and Christian aid's money probably goes to non-government groups. Projects such as the agricultural work in Kitui described in Section 11.2, C(5), show that Oxfam is willing to work with the government if its projects fit Oxfam's criteria. Christian Aid, not being so directly involved in Kenya, is more able to make criticisms of Kenyan policy, but there is only very little evidence to show that it would wish to do so.

The element of co-operation with the government policy is therefore not so strong in the case of these agencies, but compensation appears to be a dominant theme. For example, Oxfam's emphasis on health work, particularly in 1976/77 shows Oxfam providing services which should normally be expected from the government. Similarly, Christian Aid's work in northern Kenya (through NCCCK - see Appendix X) shows the NGO trying to compensate for the government's relative neglect of the area.

The remaining question to consider is to what extent NGOs try to counter government policy. This they could do in either of two ways : they could work in such a way as to directly influence government policy, or they could give their support to groups which are likely to form the opposition to government policy.

There is nothing to suggest that NGOs set out with influencing government policy as an objective, although they all no doubt hope that they will have some influence, and there may be cases in which they actually do. For example, the creation of village polytechnics by NCCCK, Christian Aid's partner organisation, led to village polytechnics becoming a main programme in the government's vocational training plans, and it is possible that NCCCK's work in northern Kenya may have drawn more of the government's attention to problems there (**1). However, NGOs (and KNGOs) appear to assess projects on the basis of their direct impact on communities, and any wider influences which their programmes may have appear to be unplanned.

Moreover, there is nothing to suggest that NGOs have considered supporting groups opposed to the whole ideology of the Kenyan government as a possible strategy. This is nearly tantamount to saying that NGOs do not consider radical structural change to be a main objective in Kenya. This, however, leads to an examination of the obstacles to NGOs acting as agents of structural change.

NGOs operate in a post-colonial situation in Kenya. Their presence, in many instances, has arisen out of the links which existed in colonial times, and the KNGOs with which they co-operate are part of the new Kenyan establishment. In many cases, for an NGO to

criticise this establishment would mean it criticising the society to which most of the organisations with which it is working belong. Munro (see section 9.2) has noted that the missionaries and the colonial administration, although they may not always have seen eye to eye, were on the same side of the cleavage in society which colonisation brought : similarly, the aid channels now used by tend to be on one side of a division between those who have benefited from Kenya's policies, and even if it reaches the poorest, it may only be a compensation for this division.

What role would there be in Kenya for an NGO wanting to promote structural change ? In terms of analysis of Kenyan society presented at the start of this section, the problem is to give groups III and IV a stronger political voice.

Firstly, considering the rural areas (group IV), it has been noted that in the past the peasantry has been mobilised for political action on a number of issues (see Sections 6.2, 8.3 and 9.2) and that in many areas, traditional institutions may be strong. There may be a case for NGOs trying to give organisational support to these traditional sources of political power and giving them the resources to form an effective political lobby. One NGO encountered during the study was, in fact, engaged in a programme of what amounted to political education, helping to make people aware of the nature of the inequalities in their society - such "conscientisation" work may be much cheaper, and in the long-term, more effective than many other forms of aid. There may be difficulties in using traditional, and therefore tribal institutions as ways of bringing about progressive change in a multi-tribal state, but if political pressure for change is to come from the rural areas in the foreseeable future, it is unlikely to be other than on a tribal basis : feelings amongst the Luo, for example, against the influence of the ruling hegemony are strong, but there are few institutional links between the Luo and other tribes.

Through the support of "self-help" projects some NGOs may already be unwittingly involved in local politics (see Section 8.3). There may be a case for assessing such projects on the political influence they give local communities rather than on their direct tangible benefits. Another way in which rural communities are represented at the centre of the country is through migrants. No NGO appears to have supported organisations for migrant workers in the way which they have done in some countries in Latin America, but no obvious organisations exist, and given the low demand for their labour, the position of the migrants is very weak.

However, while the peasantry lacks unifying organisations and the position of agricultural wage earners is weak (*Leitner), the extent to which action in the rural areas can lead to significant structural changes is debatable. This is examined as a general question in section 13.4, but in the Kenyan context some may follow a more conventional Marxist approach and see the main hope for pressure for change lying in group III. In the colonial period, the main challenge to the authorities was through the unions and other predominantly urban-based organisations (even Mau-Mau had its beginnings in Nairobi). During the period since independence the unions have been weakened and the large numbers of unemployed migrants may further weaken the position of those who actually are employed. However, the rising number of urban poor and the growing inequalities make political conflict in the urban areas a possible source of radical change.

In their work in the cities, NGOs have concentrated their attention on the destitute, often seeing the situation as merely a need for relief work. If the above scenario were accepted, NGOs may need to conclude that they could best use their resources by supporting trades unions and other militant organisations of the urban poor. It may not represent a basic needs approach in the sense that aid would always go to the poorest of the poor, but it may arguably be the quickest way towards alleviating poverty in Kenya.

But that NGOs will not pursue such a course of action lies in their own nature - revolution is not their business. NGOs operate as part of Kenyan society, and they have their roots in a similar society in

Britain : they wish change, but to them, in the words of Leys (*, p.23),

"The probable social cost of revolution ... is held to be higher than that of underdevelopment".

But, as Leys continues,

"This, however, is a matter of judgement, and it is easy for people who are secure and affluent to judge wrongly."

Summarising, Kenya portrays a combination of economic-growth policies and structural underdevelopment. By taking a basic-needs approach, NGOs are working to assist the victims of this underdevelopment, but they may be doing only little to change the structure of the economy and society.

12.2 NGOs and malnutrition in Kenya

Chapter 7 demonstrated that malnutrition is widespread in Kenya. In times of drought in the marginal areas the situation may even approach famine, but even in years of average rainfall there are always many who are malnourished. The areas in which malnutrition is most serious, however, are the areas of general poverty, both in the poorer more marginal and often more remote rural areas, and in the poorer suburbs of the cities. The situation in Kenya is probably well-described by the following quotation from FAO's 1974 report (quoted by Heinrichs (*, pp.388,389)) :

"The causes of inadequate nutrition are many and closely interrelated, including ecological, sanitary and cultural constraints, but the principal cause is poverty. This, in turn, results from socioeconomic development patterns which in most of the poorer countries have been characterized by a high degree of concentration of power, wealth and incomes in the hands of relatively small elites or national and foreign individuals or groups."

Although all NGOs considered have the removal of malnutrition as a general objective for their work, none of them seem to emphasise nutritional problems as a particular reason for their working in Kenya. The only two which appear to use nutrition in their literature on Kenya are SCF which talks of the problems of "destitute" children (with the implication of lack of food) and AID whose notes for sponsors of Kenyan children begin :

"For children in rural Kenya, being poor often means being hungry - maybe only one meal of maize and beans a day;...".

It has been noted that the NGOs follow a basic-needs approach in Kenya, and, as the target groups which an NGO would select using general basic-needs criteria would not differ much from those which would be selected using nutritional measurements, it is probable that all NGOs are assisting malnourished people. But comparing the forms of assistance with the approaches described in section 3.2 shows some differences between the NGOs:

(1) Food aid :

None of the NGOs considered are involved in Kenya in large food-aid programmes, unlike NGOs such as the American CRS (Catholic Relief Services) which runs major food-supplement distribution programmes. AID and SCF are in the business, however, of giving meals to children, AID through school meals for sponsored children, and SCF in its 'Rescue Centre' in Nairobi. Oxfam and Christian Aid (as NCKK) only appear to have been involved in food distribution in cases of emergency (serious famine, refugee work, etc.). VSO, being confined to sending volunteers, does not of course provide food aid.

(2) Increasing local food production :

A major part of Oxfam's work is in agricultural projects aimed at increasing the production of food crops, through agricultural training, supplying ploughs, soil conservation measures, etc., and the same is true of NCKK which receives the bulk of Christian Aid's aid to Kenya. In this way both of these NGOs could reasonably claim to be tackling problems of malnutrition. They both also support rural health programmes which involve nutrition education, but there will be a limit to what such programmes can achieve unless they are linked to programmes aimed at increasing the resources available to rural households. AID also supports some agricultural projects, but those described in section 11.2 A (5) which promoted new seed varieties rather than traditional drought-resistant crops and gave training in export-crop production may well have a detrimental effect on local nutritional

standards, YSO's involvement in agriculture and nutrition education is only a small part of its programme.

(3) Tackling the economic structures which cause malnutrition :

As argued in section 3.2, this approach is equivalent to taking action based on a structural view of underdevelopment, and as noted in section 12.1 above, none of the NGOs considered in Chapter 11 appear to use such an analysis. It is possible that some NGOs, through their support for the government, through their support for an educational system which is likely to maintain Kenya's economic structure, and through their support for projects promoting export crops, are actually perpetuating the political economy which makes many vulnerable to malnutrition in Kenya. It is also possible that NGOs' support for small self-help groups will in some cases encourage these groups in their demands for structural change, but the analysis of the self-help movement in chapter 8 shows the difficulty in making generalisations. War on Want, the only one of the NGOs examined in this thesis which does not have a programme in Kenya, may be doing more than the others to tackle the economic structures causing malnutrition - in its reports on the tobacco industry (*Muller) and on the promotion of baby foods (*Chetley), the NGO uses examples from Kenya to show how transnational companies can persuade people to spend money on their products rather than food, and at the same time cause considerable health risks.

Thus all NGOs considered are in some ways trying to tackle malnutrition, but the extent to which their work is likely to raise nutritional standards and their approaches vary considerably - from SCF's relief work with destitute children to War on Want's more indirect approach through attacks on international factors which contribute to malnutrition. Much of the work of NGOs, however, is likely to have little effect on nutritional standards, and for none nutritional improvement appears the central reason for their involvement in Kenya.

12.3. NGOs and "Harambee" in Kenya

Chapter 8 has shown the "harambee" or self-help movement in Kenya to be a very complex phenomenon, and it may be dangerous to make too many generalisations. However, it is clear that harambee is not a government policy towards national self-reliance : it is partly controlled and promoted by the government, but perhaps, in a larger part, something which happens as a compensation for government policy. It is a mobilising force, although it is not clear that it is always a popular movement and one which benefits the poorest of the peasantry. A harambee project may be an attempt by a community to assert itself politically, but it may be an attempt by a politician or an administrator to enhance his or her status. A project may be a community's attempt to compete in the national free-enterprise economy rather than an attempt to seek an alternative, and rather than self-help leading to self-reliance, many harambee projects may lead to increased dependency. Support for harambee projects must therefore be given selectively.

Given the importance of harambee as a community activity in Kenya, it is surprising that NGOs show so little involvement in it. To AID and SCF, self-reliance is an attribute of an individual rather than of a community - through education, the individual is better able to help him or herself in Kenya's competitive society. No evidence has been found of either of these agencies giving support to projects which could properly be classed as harambee.

Self-help probably plays a much greater part in the projects supported by Christian Aid/NCKK and Oxfam. Aid is given to projects of local organisations, often church groups, and in many cases the projects will have been started and will be being run by local groups using local resources, and will just require outside help to make their operation more effective. Many of these projects may also lead to

communities becoming more self-reliant, even if only in terms of being less frequently dependent on famine relief. However, although during this study there has not been an opportunity to examine the projects being supported in detail, there may be some questions about the extent to which church groups are the most appropriate institutions for harambee activity. Where the church groups exist as a central institution of a community there is unlikely to be a problem, but many church and mission projects may take the form of services run for, rather than by local communities. The planning of the work may be at diocese level (and there is often expatriate involvement). Such projects may, of course, increase self-reliance and involve self-help contributions, but there is a danger that the self-planning and politicising aspects of harambee may be lost, and that dependence on government services may be replaced by dependence on church support. These, however, have only been identified as possible problems which would need to be considered and evaluated on a project-by-project basis.

Of the five NGOs examined, VSO is the exception in that a relatively high proportion of its aid goes to projects described as "harambee". However, this support appears to have been given mainly in the context of VSO's support for educational work (and in some cases, health or social welfare) rather than of support for harambee. Thus appraisal of harambee school posts has centred on the curriculum, on the school's organisational structure and financial viability rather than on the school's overall impact on the local community, on the school's likely effect on the self-reliance and dependency of the community, or on the school as a manifestation of political action in the community. Instead, self-help has probably been seen as parents' willingness to pay fees in the "divisional sweepstakes" for a "middle-or-upper-class income and status" (Almy, quoted in appendix V (iii)), and self-reliance as the individual characteristic which students may achieve.

Thus it appears that the NGOs considered here lack an adequate analysis of the harambee movement in Kenya (although the evidence is less conclusive in the case of Oxfam and Christian Aid). While all NGOs use the term "self-reliance" to describe their work, none seem to interpret this in terms of the nature of the dependency of rural communities, and to some NGOs "promoting self-help" appears to mean putting some individuals in a more competitive position within the existing system, rather than of communities' attempts to change the system. With its close connections with local political actions and aspirations, it may have been expected that the harambee movement would offer NGOs possibilities for supporting movements aimed at structural change in Kenya, but it appears that this area of work remains largely unexplored.

12.4. The role of NGOs in rural change in Kenya

Part IIIB of this thesis was devoted to an examination of one particular rural district in Kenya. The main conclusion reached in section 10.3 was that the principal constraints to change are economic, and that farmers will normally take the opportunities open to them if these opportunities appear to be good investments and without unacceptable risks attached. This conclusion is consistent with the more general remarks on peasant farming made in section 5.1. The constraints on change imposed by social conventions reported by Firth and Rogers (see Section 5.1) do not, however, appear to be of great importance in Kitui District, particularly in the western parts of the district which is more closely tied to the national economy. The remoter eastern parts of the district may contain more closed societies, and their traditional institutions may influence farmers' choices on economic matters. But generally (in terms of the framework suggested in Section 5.2) it is output and incomes, conditions of production, and the effect of government policy on them which determine the pace and nature of rural change.

In this situation, the first thing which can be said about the role of NGOs in rural areas is that it is probably slight. To implement change, the rural areas need greater resources, either collectively

through infrastructural or community resources or through the incomes of individual farmers - education in new techniques does not appear to be a major constraint. In Section 11.4 it was noted that aid from all British NGOs to Kenya is probably only around 5 pence per person per annum. Even if all this aid were concentrated on Kitui District, it would only amount to £2 per person. The small input from NGOs can also be seen from Table 8A (in Section 8.1) in which the combined input from NGOs and international agencies only amounted to 5 per cent of the value of self-help projects in 1972, while the people involved in the projects contributed 87 per cent.

It can therefore be concluded that it is the farmers themselves who have the dominant role in rural change, and that the input of NGOs is perhaps only of marginal importance. Although this conclusion may hardly be surprising, it differs from the picture presented by the publicity of some NGOs: for example, AID's "Without funds, these children face a bleak future,..", and even Christian Aid's and Oxfam's claims of "partnership" seem far-fetched. This is not to deny, however, that NGOs can have influence in greater proportion to their financial contributions if their aid has a catalytic effect, giving the little extra support which opens up new possibilities for farmers, thereby influencing the ways in which farmers use their own resources.

A further reason, however, for doubting the effectiveness of NGOs' efforts also comes from Section 10.3. There, it was noted with reference to some past changes, that promotion by government staff or NGOs will not be successful unless the changes are economically attractive to the farmers, and that if the changes are attractive, then little promotion of them will be needed. The overall economic environment is, therefore, the key factor in determining what changes will or will not take place.

Section 10.3 also noted that different changes are constrained by shortages of resources at different levels. Thus new crop varieties were not being adopted because of the existing low incomes of farmers, ox-ploughs required resources at the communal work-group level, and group ranches required a whole package of inputs which only the government or an external agency could provide. This raises policy issues for NGOs.

- Aid may be given to remove the resource constraint on individuals enabling them to adopt new methods. Seed distribution to farmers, credit schemes and the payment of school fees come into this category. From a short-term basic-needs viewpoint, the approach is probably effective : the target group can (at least theoretically) be precisely pinpointed and those assisted can immediately adopt the new practice.

- Aid may be given at a community level (e.g. ox-ploughs to self-help groups, or water supplies for group ranches) in which case it may be difficult to ensure that the benefits will be distributed to all who need them. Organisational problems also may be more difficult. However, it may call for the strengthening of, or even the creation of a community institution which could become a vehicle for further action by the community. Larger scale projects may give a community management experience, experience of dealing with the bureaucracy, and the project itself may act as a demonstration for future government action.

AID and SCF in their educational work appear to favour the first approach, while most of Oxfam's and Christian Aid's work appears to be nearer the second. There may be doubts, however, about the extent to which some religious groups supported by the latter two agencies really put the management of aid inputs in the hands of the community - the church groups themselves may not necessarily be the best institutions to strengthen.

NGOs' action in project support in the rural areas will be determined by their analyses of the sub-systems in which their projects are located (see Section 5.2), as well as by their general strategies for changes in Kenya. It appears that some NGOs' analyses are not always adequate (e.g AID's promotion of drought resistant maize and of cash crops), but the type of analysis undertaken and what are regarded as the key factors will depend on the general strategy. Here it may be noted that all NGOs considered, with the exception of SCF are giving priority in their work to the poorest and most

economically marginal areas ; these are the areas in which basic needs are most lacking, but they are also the areas from which political pressure for more radical changes is most unlikely to come. The shortage of resources may be the reason why farmers do not adopt certain innovations, but the more fundamental question is why that shortage of resources exists, and it is at that point that an NGO may need to look beyond the localities of its projects to the economic structure of the country.

12.5 Some notes on generalisations from the case study

It would be beyond the scope of this study to fully explore the extent to which conclusions from Kenya might also be valid in other countries. However, this section contains a few notes on areas in which generalisations may be possible.

Firstly, it is clear that Kenya is not unique in its poverty. According to the World Bank (* (2), p.76) it is only the 32nd poorest country (of those with populations over one million), and of those which are poorer there are many in Asia as well as in Africa, and also Haiti in Latin America. There are therefore countries in which the lack of provision of basic needs is likely to be much more serious than in Kenya. More important differences may arise when the style of development and formation of the social structure is considered. In making a comparison with Tanzania, for example, it can be noted that Tanzania (as Tanganyika) did not have nearly such a large, cohesive, and politically powerful settler community in its pre-independence period, and this, together with its UN Trusteeship status, let it move more smoothly to independence. Another important difference is that in having relatively small industrial and commercial farming sectors, Tanzania did not have such a large and well-developed bourgeoisie, and this enabled Tanzania to follow a socialist path without too much internal opposition.

Hyden (*, p.194) regards Kenya as a special case because of the settler influence, favourable climatic and soil conditions (no doubt referring to the highland areas) and "unusually strong capitalist penetration". He concludes that :

"it is wrong to conceive of Kenya as necessarily presenting a pattern of development that will be followed elsewhere on the continent. The main reason is that in most of Africa capitalism has only had a marginal impact."

Hyden's remarks, however, concern small farmers who "have proved that the modernization of peasant agriculture is possible", and may not therefore be helpful in comparing a marginal area like Kitui with other parts of Africa. Moreover, several other African countries had modern and commercial farming sectors which were, and in some cases still are, controlled by colonisers or colonial powers. Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast and Senegal all have economic structures which have developed in ways roughly similar to Kenya (**2), and it may be interesting to see how Zimbabwe deals with similar problems. Moreover, even in much poorer African countries, external interests have played a major part in shaping the economic and social structure.

Kenya's economic and social structure as outlined in section 12.1, the extent to which its economy is controlled by foreign interests, and its economic-growth orientated policies, coupled with the relative neglect of the urban and rural poor, makes Kenya's situation very similar to that of many countries of Latin America. However, Latin American countries have gone through a much longer process of class formation, and it is possible that their experiences have lessons for Kenya rather than the other way about.

Malnutrition in Kenya probably illustrates an almost universal law, namely that malnutrition and poverty go together. In many other Third World countries, both poorer and more wealthy than Kenya (in per capita GNP terms), including countries largely dependent on agriculture, the poorer sectors of the population have relatively low nutrient intakes (*World Bank (1), pp.82,83, and *Sukhatme, pp.12-14). The use of much of the productive land for the growing of export crops is common in many Third World countries.

Kenyan self-help, however, is perhaps a more unusual phenomenon. It differs from the concept of self-help in Tanzania which is a national policy aimed at greater national self-reliance, but there may be some generalisations to Tanzania on the dangers of self-help becoming an additional tax on the poor, and on the weakness of self-help as a policy for redistributing wealth. Although in a shorter study of Tanzania no evidence was found to suggest that self-help was "a re-affirmation of the periphery's alienation" (see section 8.3), it is possible that Tanzanian peasants only make minimal contributions to 'self-help' ventures to preserve their independence from government control (*Hyden, chapter 5). It is, however, also possible that while in Kenya "Harambee has remained the level at which local level politics finds its organisational base rather than in the institution of the party" (see section 8.3), in Tanzania the party may on occasions be the main forum for local politics. The study of Kenya therefore raises many issues about the nature of self-help activity, and it would therefore seem unwise to accept the claims of other self-help movements without detailed study.

In the district case study a whole set of problems was identified - a marginal agricultural area of uncertain rainfall, over-cultivation leading to soil erosion, a low level of government services, inappropriate extension advice, new drought-resistant varieties being introduced but being of little benefit to poorer farmers, the need for seasonal and even permanent migration for employment. This whole syndrome appears to be a common one in the Third World, and this writer has encountered examples in Bolivia, Upper Volta (*Hammond) and Jordan (*Antoun). The problems in introducing new, fast-growing varieties in India have been well-reported (e.g. *Bhagavan et al.).

For a study of NGO involvement, Kenya is a rather special case because of the number of NGOs operating in Kenya. For British NGOs this is partly a consequence of the close links which have existed between the two countries since colonial times, and Kenya is the only African country in which 5 out of the 6 NGOs studied had major

programmes (see section 14.1). However, Kenya is also popular with NGOs from other countries : a survey of 40 NGOs for the period 1972-74 (*ECA, pp.5,6) showed that in Africa only Ethiopia, Niger, Tanzania and Upper Volta received more NGO aid than Kenya (a period during which Ethiopia, Niger and Upper Volta benefited from emergency programmes to combat the effects of drought).

The relative freedom which Kenya gives to NGOs no doubt contributes to the large number of NGOs working there. In Tanzania, for example, there is much tighter control on the activities on NGOs and this may have been a factor behind AID's and SCF's preferences for Kenya. More generally, it might be expected that countries with strong left-wing national ideologies and countries with internal political unrest will be less willing to allow Western NGOs freedom to operate as they choose, but it has not been possible to examine this hypothesis in this study.

Another feature of Kenya which favours NGO activity is the number of Kenyan organisations, both KNGOs and local groups, operating development projects which can make use of NGO support. Most African countries have the equivalent of KNGOs, and as with Kenya, most of them are organisations which began in colonial times, often as a result of missionary activities. According to a study of African NGOs by White (*, p.11) :

"The variety of missionary inspired organizations which were established were the forerunners of the host of NGOs which now exist in every African country. One additional historical observation ... is that many groups now apparently still active were founded during the colonial era. This is true for both Francophone and Anglophone Africa."

However, it is likely that KNGOs are generally stronger than their counterparts in many other countries because of the relatively strong missionary and colonial influences in Kenya. For example, the Tanzania Freedom from Hunger Campaign and the Christian Council of Tanzania are both much smaller organisations than KFFHC and NCKK, the equivalent organisations in Kenya.

Even NGOs which do not operate through KNGOs may find in Kenya a relatively high level of development activity among local groups compared with the situation in other countries. The reasons for

this lie partly in the nature of Kenya's development and the rural population's response to it (see chapter 8 on the harambee movement), and compared with the situation in the Sahel area of West Africa (a major area of NGO concern), peasants in the central areas of Kenya may have more resources for development activities - from their own resources or from remittances from urban migrants - than farmers in the Sahel who have a weaker economic base and who have not had the same exposure to 'modernizing' influences (unfortunately it has not been possible to fully explore this comparison). Thus, whether working through KNGOs or directly with local groups, Kenya may offer NGOs a wider choice of possible projects to support than is the case in many other countries.

Finally it should be noted that for NGOs differences may exist between Kenya and countries in which NGOs choose to work because they wish to identify with and support the host government's policies (even if not in every detail). This group of countries includes Tanzania, the ex-Portuguese colonies in Africa, Zimbabwe, and in Central America, Nicaragua. Whereas in Tanzania there has always been NGO activity and the government has tried to encourage (**3) as well as control NGOs, other countries in this group have been more suspicious of Western NGOs, and government controls are greater. This narrows the choices open to NGOs, and although they may wish to support a government's broad aims, they may have reservations about many of the programmes for which the government seeks assistance, thereby presenting NGOs with difficult decisions (not to mention the need for a high degree of diplomacy). Moreover, NGOs may be reluctant to get involved in large-scale government programmes where their own contributions may seem of little significance when compared with those of national and international donor agencies. Nevertheless, some NGOs considered to be more 'radical' than most (**4) actively seek involvement in countries whose governments they believe to be pursuing 'progressive' policies, and in recent years some such governments have made efforts to enable sympathetic NGOs to assist them (**5). However, the position of NGOs in this group of countries is likely to differ in many respects from that of NGOs in Kenya,

where there is the choice of supporting governmental or non-governmental projects, and where support for the former is not likely to be on the grounds of support for Kenya's general policies. Further work would be required to judge how different a picture may have emerged if, say, Mozambique, had been chosen for the case study rather than Kenya.

Footnotes

1. NCKK's long-serving businessman-General Secretary is quoted as saying :

"We did not set out to influence Government as such. We set out to create an awareness of what could be done, by trial and error, and hoped that it would 'catch on'".
(*Mc Creary, p.53)

Bethuel Kiplagat, a widely respected deputy general secretary of NCKK, talking of unemployed boys in Nairobi has claimed :

"We told the authorities "You cannot drive these boys off the streets as if they were rubbish. They are not wild. They are human and tender. What they need is kindness and care." (ibid. p.59).

And also according to Kiplagat :

"We don't issue many statements, we try to work at the political level to change structures from within ... We can continue to provide charity and pragmatism, but at the same time raising the basic human issues which strike a chord with people everywhere." (ibid. p.61).

2. Ake (*, pp.63,64) divides African countries into two groups on the basis of whether "colonial policies and/or the development of the forces of production made possible the existence of a small African bourgeoisie". He identifies Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Morocco and Senegal as countries where this was possible.
3. For example, through the Community Development Trust Fund of Tanzania which acts as an intermediary between NGOs and projects, in much the same way as KNGOs in Kenya.
4. For example, War on Want, the smaller BVP societies (CIIR, IVS and UNAIS) as well as some other European and Canadian NGOs.
5. The possibilities for NGO activity in Mozambique and Guinea Bissau are expanding. The Institute of Solidarity in Cape Verde Islands actively tries to attract assistance from sympathetic NGOs for small-scale projects, and the government in Nicaragua has sought NGO support for its programmes.

PART IV

GENERAL COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Part II has reached some conclusions about development and the role of NGOs in Kenya. This final part of the thesis tries to move towards a wider picture of the work of NGOs and their place in social, economic and political change. Some suggestions are made on the directions in which NGOs might move in their policies if they are in the future to have relevance to the problems of world development which they claim to be tackling. In places this has meant looking at the positions of NGOs as institutions in their own societies, i.e. in Britain.

Contents :

- 13. NGOs : Their policies and practices*
- 14. Some issues for NGOs*
- 15. Postscript*

Chapter 13

NGOs : THEIR POLICIES AND PRACTICES

This chapter follows the structure of Part II of the thesis. From the study of NGOs in Kenya and from more general observations on their work, where do NGOs stand in their views of the development process; how do they use the concepts of hunger and self-reliance; and how effective are they likely to be as agents of rural change ? These questions are examined in the first four sections of this chapter, and a final section looks briefly at some of the factors which may have led NGOs to the particular policies which they have adopted.

Contents :

- 13.1 NGOs' approaches to development*
- 13.2 NGOs and malnutrition*
- 13.3 NGOs, self-help and self-reliance*
- 13.4 NGOs in rural change*
- 13.5 Some comments on NGOs' policies and practices*

Related appendix :

- I Sketches of some British NGOs*

13. NGO'S : THEIR POLICIES AND PRACTICES

13.1 NGOs' approaches to development

This chapter uses the case study of Kenya and the sketches of NGOs in appendix I to try to obtain a wider view of NGOs' policies and practices.

All NGOs considered in this thesis began in response to conditions in other countries in which people were without their 'basic needs' (although other motivations may have been involved, particularly in the case of VSO), and the provision of basic needs is still a central concern of all NGOs. However, there are considerable differences between how different NGOs interpret needs and what they see as the most efficacious way of changing conditions in the Third World. Comparing the approaches of NGOs with the three categories described in section 2.3, all seem to follow a basic-needs approach, although some show a desire for structural change in political and economic systems while others seem to have some faith in economic-growth policies.

(1) Economic-growth approach

None of the NGOs considered has economic growth as an objective, but it remains to be asked whether NGOs see economic growth and 'trickle down' as an effective strategy for assisting the Third World poor. From their policy statements the answer would appear to be that they do not. Whilst AID tells its supporters that "Economic growth is an indispensable part of development", it rejects the use of economic growth alone as an

objective. According to a General Secretary of War on Want,

"The assumption that economic growth will lead to wider welfare is only true if there are redistribution measures that lead to balanced growth regionally and divert growth benefits to the neediest sectors. Otherwise, growth may actually impoverish large numbers of people and benefit small groups." (*Lacey)

Although no explicit rejections of trickle down have been found in the literature of other NGOs examined, their statements on the need to ensure that their aid gets directly to the poorest sectors suggest that they have no confidence in trickle down, at least as a policy to be used in their own work. The only exception may be VSO which makes fewer pronouncements on policy matters, but which "recognises the diversity of Third World countries and respects the varying demands which their communities choose to make" (although it usually is governments which make demands on VSO).

In examining the actual programmes of some NGOs, however, their rejection of economic growth as an objective and of trickle down does not appear so clearly. Their willingness to play a social-welfare role in countries in which economic growth is the dominant policy might be taken to suggest a belief that trickle down will eventually solve the problems of acute poverty, and until that happens they must try to alleviate the hardships endured by the poor. Whether or not NGOs consciously see their roles in these terms cannot be answered from the evidence gathered in this study, but the programmes of AID, SCF and VSO are not inconsistent with an acceptance of growth as an appropriate primary objective for Third World governments (as seen, for example, in the choices these NGOs make of the countries in which they work (see section 14.1) and their willingness to support the Kenyan Government). Their support for secondary education in Kenya also suggests a belief that the benefits received by those who receive secondary schooling will somehow trickle back to the poorer communities.

(2) Basic-needs approach

It is not surprising that all NGOs stress their concern for basic needs in their publicity. As noted above, providing basic needs to those who lack them is the *raison d'être* of NGOs, even if there is a diversity of views amongst NGOs on what constitutes basic needs and on how to set about providing them.

Oxfam's work (**1) has an "emphasis on helping the poorest of the poor ... to achieve basic needs : food, health, shelter, work", AID claims to have "continued to provide some of the basic necessities of life to meet immediate needs", and Christian Aid considers that "A good project is one whose benefits reach to the "poorest of the poor" and are not confined to increasing the privileges of an elite". The concern with basic needs also appears in NGOs' fundraising materials - the plight of those in abject poverty or suffering from malnutrition is often featured in advertisements, and the public is invited to respond in order that this suffering might be alleviated. That the provision of basic needs offers the best possibilities for fundraising is no doubt an advantage to NGOs , but there does not seem to be evidence to suggest that the NGOs' concern for basic needs is a consequence of fundraising considerations (the way in which different NGOs portray and explain the lack of basic needs is examined in section 14.3).

In section 2.3 (2) two forms of basic-needs approaches were identified :

- social welfare/relief programmes aimed at transferring goods and services from Britain to the poor overseas,
- and
- a 'developmental' approach through which the poor are given the means for increasing their own production of goods and services.

Most NGOs use both approaches, claiming to be 'developmental' in the above sense while recognising the need for social welfare/relief work :

"Oxfam's main priority is development work. Prevention is obviously better than cure. But the demands on immediate aid for relief and welfare are still of great importance."

Christian Aid's money

"In areas of poverty ... is spent on agricultural training, equipment, livestock, seeds and fertilizer, well-digging ...

In areas of emergency ... is spent on medicines and supplies for use by local doctors and nurses; food and blankets for distribution by local relief workers; ...".

The grants lists of both these NGOs show both 'developmental' projects aimed at increasing local production, and relief projects. War on Want is less active in welfare programmes, except in refugee situations arising from liberation wars (e.g. in Eritrea and Zimbabwe), and although many of the projects it supports are concerned with agricultural production, its publicity talks more about helping the poor to organise rather than helping them to produce. AID claims that the emphasis in its work "has now been firmly placed on long-term improvement", but while some of AID's work and much of that of VSO is to do with increasing production, it is not always clear that all of the work of these two NGOs can be classed as 'basic needs', e.g. their support for secondary education in Kenya (nevertheless, much of the work of these NGOs is in the poorer areas of the Third World). SCF's concentration on children means that it is primarily a welfare organisation, and although it claims that much of its work is aimed at creating health programmes which will continue after SCF's involvement comes to an end, the short study of SCF in appendix I raises some doubts over this claim.

(3) Structural-change approach

This approach, like (2) above, covers a broad range of policies but its main characteristic is concern for the relationship between rich and poor, both between Third World countries and the 'developed' world and within Third World countries themselves. Although the concern is still for basic needs, the problems of poverty are seen in a wider perspective, and basic needs defined in a relativistic way assume greater importance.

All NGOs examined in this thesis (with the possible exception of VSO) give some consideration to structural change, but there are large differences in the emphases and arguments used. Only one SCF pamphlet was found during the study which referred to the international economic order as a cause of poverty, although no attempt was made to portray SCF as an agency concerned about changing this order. In recent years AID has given more attention to international issues and is "committed to the creation of a fairer world order", although what it advocates is more official aid and better terms of trade for Third World countries rather than anything more radical, and the underdevelopment of the Third World by Western capitalism is certainly not how problems are described. When the programmes of AID, SCF and VSO are examined, with their support for governments such as that of Kenya, the social-welfare orientation of SCF and the pupil-sponsorship schemes of AID and SCF (further discussed in section 14.3), none of these NGOs appear to be working for radical structural change.

Oxfam, while recognising that problems "may be rooted ... in the ... complex areas of economics, politics and social conditions", is very cautious in any of its statements on what its role may be in removing the causes of problems. Christian Aid notes that "economic change on the scale required for the well-being of the wider community is often impossible without prior political change" and that self-help projects

"can eventually lead to internal reforms demanded by the poor themselves", and has generally been a little more outspoken than Oxfam, particularly on human rights issues. Nevertheless, their overseas programmes have many similarities : in Latin America both are supporting organisations involved in helping peasant communities to organise and to defend their economic interests, while in Africa both appear to regard their work in a less political way. During the military conflict in Zimbabwe both NGOs gave small grants for humanitarian assistance for refugee work, but neither gave this aid much publicity. Thus while neither of these two NGOs presents a particularly radical critique of Third World poverty in their policy statements, it appears that in some situations their programmes are consistent with a structural-change approach (although at the same time consistent with a basic-needs approach) while in others they are not (**2).

Of the NGOs examined, War on Want goes by far the furthest in offering explanations of Third World poverty in terms of political and economic structures, relationships of dependency, and exploitation by Western capitalism : "We see poverty in the Third World as a result of the colonialist looting in the past and neo-colonialist exploitation in the present". Not only does War on Want offer a more radical view of underdevelopment than Oxfam and Christian Aid, it goes further by suggesting that assisting the struggle against oppression and exploitation is actually the objective of its programme :

"We are moving away from aiding projects which, although they operate democratically within themselves, remain isolated from the wider economic and political situation ...

Thus we are increasingly coming to support these movements which are attempting to bring about just and equitable relationships in society...".

However, there does not seem to be too great a difference between War on Want on one hand and Christian Aid and Oxfam on the other when the NGOs' overseas programmes are compared. Much of War on Want's work could be described as 'developmental', the nature of War on Want's Latin American work is similar to much of that of Oxfam and Christian Aid, and all three NGOs have given medical supplies etc. to help the victims of liberation struggles in Africa. However, because of War on Want's more open support of liberation movements, its attacks on transnational companies, etc., its work is much more consistent with a structural-change approach.

Thus although the approaches of NGOs are essentially in the basic-needs category, they cover quite a range - from the 'relief' side of basic needs, often supplied in partnership with governments whose policies emphasise economic growth, to the provision of aid to poor communities which are seeking structural change, coupled with attacks in Britain on institutions which may be causing problems in the Third World. However, in looking at individual NGOs it is difficult to make a single classification of their policies as many inconsistencies appear, both between their policy statements and their programmes, and between different parts of their programmes. For example :

- AID talks of the importance of "influencing public opinion" on the need for changes in the relationships between the Third World and 'developed' countries, and yet it uses an advertising style which gives a highly distorted view : it talks of helping people to "create their own organisations" and of "community development" and yet much of its aid is given to individuals.
- Christian Aid states that development requires political change, but that its own work does not have political objectives. It speaks out against repressive regimes in Latin America, but it has been much more reluctant to take a stand on events in southern Africa. Its overseas

programmes are influenced by the views of Christian organisations in different countries, and therefore vary from support for groups with strong left-wing ideologies in Latin America to much more conservative organisations in parts of Africa.

- Oxfam also believes that Third World poverty may have its roots in political systems, but in spite of having a 'Public Affairs Unit' it appears even more reluctant than Christian Aid to enter the main political debates. Like Christian Aid there appears to be differences in the analyses of problems and in the approaches it uses in Africa and Latin America.

- In spite of SCF's claims to be concerned with long-term development, much of its work is of a social welfare/relief nature. The contradictions in its policies and practices regarding self-help are discussed in section 13.3 below.

- VSO claims that it wants to avoid a neo-colonial approach by respecting the wishes of Third World governments and organisations (with the safeguard that it does not wish to support elite groups), but as a consequence it supports projects of regimes which might be described as neo-colonial. It claims to have a basic-needs approach, but it is difficult to see the connection between basic needs and many of the projects it is supporting.

- Of the NGOs examined, War on Want seems to have achieved greatest consistency in its policy statements. The overseas work of War on Want, however, could not be examined as part of the case study, and questions may remain as to what extent War on Want's programmes are consistent with its policies. Adrian Adams (*, p.475), referring to War on Want's past work in Senegal, points to "the contradiction involved in the notion of a radically-inclined charity" : an analysis of problems in terms of dependency may suggest that a Western-based NGO should concentrate on action against the sources of dependency in the West (action which War on Want takes),

but the desire for direct involvement overseas may have a "Trojan-Horse effect" in exposing communities to dependency on, and control by, government agencies and aid donors. While the project examined by Adams may not be typical of War on Want's work, it shows a problem in analyses of underdevelopment pointed out by Leys (*, p.21) - they provide an explanation of the causes of problems, but they are less helpful in suggesting the types of programmes which might provide solutions.

Inconsistencies within NGOs are perhaps not surprising : the policy-forming body of an NGO will rarely be able to reach a consensus view of the causes of poverty and the means for its removal (as noted in section 2.1), and therefore field staff, specialist staff in Britain or specialist committees of NGOs may have some latitude in deciding what approaches NGOs should follow in different parts of the world.

Although NGOs seldom precisely define their policies, the above discussion does show considerable variation between the approaches used by different NGOs. (Why these differences exist is considered in section 13.5.) Within NGOs the differences between them are keenly felt, and although a substantial amount of inter-NGO co-operation takes place, tensions, if not conflicts, sometimes arise at inter-NGO meetings (**3).

Alan Taylor (*, p.3), looking at the range of NGO work and policy, summarises the situation described in this section :

"...aid organisations appear to operate while using several different interpretations of what the problem is to which they address themselves ... There are various explanations available for the causes of poverty in the face of affluence and a vastly great range of alternative or complementary courses of action recommended for remedying this state of affairs. The range of activities which many relief and development agencies are presently engaged in and the methods adopted in their application do, to some extent, reflect a fundamental confusion as to which explanations are relevant and which courses of action are necessary."

13.2 NGOs and malnutrition

As was argued in chapter 3, the need for food is the most basic of needs, and it is therefore hardly surprising that all NGOs include improving nutritional standards among their objectives. Malnutrition as a principal concern may have the added advantage of being a useful fund-raising tool, and AID, Oxfam and SCF have all used child malnutrition in emotive advertising in recent years. For example, an Oxfam fundraising letter in June 1979 began :

"As you read these words, five children are dying. It's just as awful for me to write that as it is for you to read it. They are not yet five years old...

....They are dying for two reasons

- they are hungry...technically, we call it malnutrition
- there is virtually no medical help within reach."

No explanation is given of why this malnutrition should exist, other than "the grim environment of poverty" and remoteness of children in an area of "real jungle country" in India.

Oxfam spends about 20% of its available income on agricultural projects, which may seem a small proportion if food production and food shortages are seen as a key problem. However, it is much more than is being done by AID and SCF : although these NGOs use the evils of malnutrition in their brochures, they are doing relatively little to improve food supplies. In several countries SCF is engaged in nutrition education for mothers and in food aid for destitute children, but in situations in which poverty is the reason for malnutrition, SCF's work can only ameliorate the problem. AID also provides food aid for the school children it sponsors : according to the message of its 1978 Annual Report to its supporters :

"Most of the time, children arrive at their school hungry, having eaten nothing. At school, as a direct result of your sponsorship, they get a good, nourishing mid-day meal, a proper diet helping them to grow healthy and self-sufficient."

AID would no doubt claim that the main thrust of its work is aimed at making people less dependent on food hand-outs, but the case study of Kenya suggests that its main educational programme will do little towards raising nutritional standards. And although AID is also supporting agricultural work the case study discovered grounds to suspect that the methods it was using may not have been consistent with the aim of improving food supplies.

Christian Aid and War on Want, both giving higher proportions of their support to agricultural or other production-oriented projects are more likely to be making more effective direct contributions to improved nutrition. A War on Want "Education Sheet" on "Health" (1979) states that :

"People are hungry because they are poor...Poverty is the main cause of malnutrition, but why are so many people poor ? Poverty exists because the structures for the distribution of wealth are balanced in favour of the rich and powerful, both inside countries and between one country and another. The result is that the powerless are denied access to land on which to grow food, many are unable to find employment and those who do, find it almost impossible to make ends meet. Meanwhile, the rich continue to prosper."

Thus hunger is used in different ways by the NGOs. The appeal may range from the emotional "Give because children are dying of hunger", to the more analytical portrayal of hunger as a consequence of unjust structures. The type of appeal is not unexpectedly related to an NGO's general approach to development, welfare-orientated programmes concentrating on hunger as the main characteristic of the problem while NGOs more concerned with structural changes will see hunger as only a symptom of underlying problems.

The case study, however, shows no close link between the emphasis NGOs put on malnutrition in their publicity and the likely effectiveness of NGOs' programmes as cures for malnutrition.

13.3. NGOs, self-help and self-reliance

Chapter 4 of this thesis described some of the principal aspects of self-reliance : there it was seen as an alternative to dependency, whether considered at a national or community level. Self-help was seen as strategy for self-reliance, although it was noted that the motivational forces behind the local projects which arise within national self-help movements may be much more complex than a collective desire for national self-reliance.

In the study of Kenya this was certainly shown to be the case. There, the self-help movement was seen as the attempts of marginalised groups to compete in the free-enterprise economy, and of groups attempting to compensate for government neglect. It could also be

analysed as a process in which traditional institutions are trying to assert themselves in a new social environment, as well as in which politicians and administrators try to manipulate the peasantry for their own ends.

Thus, both in the general discussion and in the case study, self-reliance and self-help are seen as concepts which can only be interpreted in terms of social and economic structures - self-help is a response, positive or negative, to the impact of an economic and political system on a community, and self-reliance is the opposite end of the scale from complete dependence on, and control by, the system. Indeed, self-reliance is only meaningful as an alternative to dependency.

How do the NGOs use these related concepts - self-help, self-reliance and dependency ? All the NGOs considered in this thesis place considerable emphasis on self-reliance in their pamphlets (with the possible exception of VSO which makes fewer statements about its concerns). For example :

- according to AID,
"While there is no doubt that the children and communities we serve are in serious need, our work is long-term and seeks to make people self-reliant."

(Action News, No. 17, 1979) ;
- Oxfam's work "aims to help people to help themselves", a phrase also used by Christian Aid ;
- War on Want has described itself as
"a radical charity working with groups of the poor of the Third World trying to become self-reliant" ;
- and according to SCF :
"Whatever the level, self-help is of paramount importance, not only to make the fullest use of any aid that is forthcoming from abroad, but also to make sure that those concerned can take pride in the development of their country and not depend solely on the efforts and generosity of richer nations."

However, the above quotation from an SCF pamphlet entitled "The Importance of Self-Help in Developing Countries which Rely on Foreign Help" shows a common theme in NGO literature, namely that self-help is something that is needed to make aid more effective, and that the dependency which causes concern is the dependency on the donor country or agencies. Oxfam states that their "main task is to help set people in the direction of their own self-development...dependency on us would represent a failure", and War on Want has warned that "Aid carelessly given can not only fail to help development, but can actually hinder it...by increasing the burden of debt and dependency."

This is certainly an important warning as in many instances dependency by an individual, community or organisation on aid may be a very real danger. But by shifting the main attention from the dependency and powerlessness of a community in the economic and political system of which it is a part to the much narrower problem of a project's dependence on an NGO surely shifts attention away from the main issues : dependency and self reliance appear as indicators of an NGO's skill in giving aid, and self-help as a characteristic of a project which ensures that the need for aid will soon be overcome. Self-help as the strategy which communities adopt in trying to counteract economic marginalisation, self-help as the struggle of groups in a competitive system, or self-help as a "re-affirmation of the periphery's alienation" (see Chapter 4) are concepts which are seldom used explicitly by NGOs.

Why should this be the case ? Firstly, these concepts are based on a structural view of development problems, while NGOs usually take a "developmentalist" approach in which problems are seen to be primarily within communities rather than primarily external to them. Given this approach, dependency on anything other than the donor agency does not enter into the model used, and self-reliance is seen as a characteristic of the relationship between a community and donor NGOs rather than as of the much more important relationships between communities and the societies of which they are a part.

Secondly, self-help is no doubt an attractive message for fund-raisers, allaying the fear of supporters that the Third World is a "bottomless pit" in which their donations will have little effect. AID and SCF make much use of self-help and self-reliance in their pamphlets, although the evidence considered in this study suggests that their work will do very little to make communities more independent. Oxfam talks about itself as being a "small-scale catalyst" implying that donations will achieve much more than what their cash values might suggest.

If an NGO was to regard the promotion of self-reliance as a key objective, its problem analysis would need to focus on the forms of dependency from which a community suffers. In effect, this would mean taking a structural view of problems, and an NGO would need to see two possible courses of action :

- assisting a community to become less dependent on external factors ; and
- tackling the external factors which cause dependency.

Taking the first course may not lead to a portfolio of projects too different from what a "developmentalist" NGO may select, and it views the work of an NGO in terms of project support. Baker et al. (*) in their study of VSO in Kenya used the promotion of self-reliance as a criterion for evaluating VSO's work, but the problem was seen entirely in terms of which projects to support rather than in what ways the NGO could attack the factors which create dependency (this is, perhaps, not surprising in view of the fact that many of the major companies operating in Africa are financial supporters of VSO). Of the NGOs considered in this study, only War on Want has made significant use of this second approach with its attacks on multi-national companies.

A final aspect of self-help referred to in Chapter 4 was that self-help may involve people in planning their own development. The case study of Kenya showed that this is not always the situation as self-help projects may often come from local politicians and government officials, and that whether or not planning by the

community leads to a "worthwhile" project will depend on the philosophy of the community. However, it has been noted that AID and SCF, NGOs which stress self-help in their publications, often support schemes which they themselves have initiated and now administer so that this possible benefit of self-help is lost. The harambee schools in Kenya supported by VSO are at least locally planned, but as shown in the case study, this is not enough to ensure that they are in any way developmental. In contrast, War on Want's 1976/77 Annual Report stressed not just support for existing community groups, but also the importance of "How a group analyses the economic/political situation of the region and/or nation with which it is concerned, its aims and its methods..."

Thus, like malnutrition, the use which an NGO makes of the concepts of self-help and self-reliance will depend very much on the NGO's analysis of development problems. Acceptance of the promotion of self-reliance as a major objective, however, should lead NGOs to a structural view of development problems.

13.4. NGOs in rural change

In Chapter 5 rural development was seen in terms of removing the constraints to change, and the case study of Kitui District in Kenya confirmed some of the ideas presented in section 5.1. , namely that peasant farmers will generally take advantage of the economic opportunities open to them, although on occasions the desire to preserve a form of society may reduce their apparent range of options. In this situation the main determinant of rural development may be the overall economic environment in which farmers operate - access to markets, prices of inputs and of crops, the demands of taxation and constraints imposed by government legislation, etc.

This suggests that the impact of NGOs can only be very limited, and the case study (Section 13.1) has shown that attempts to promote changes without changes in the main economic factors have been generally unsuccessful. This does not mean, however, that NGOs have

achieved nothing because the individuals and communities which have received their services will, in many cases, be better off than they were before. With relief aid it is clear that much immediate suffering may have been overcome, and "developmental" aid may have had some effect in that it involves a transfer of resources, but neither form of aid has had much impact on the overall economic environment. A senior Oxfam staff member admitted to this writer in 1976 that some evaluation of "developmental" projects supported by Oxfam showed that such projects were producing few lasting benefits, and as a consequence he was not going to be surprised if Oxfam reverted to the support of relief projects in which the results are at least more immediate and visible. This discussion again suggests the need for an NGO to take a structural view of problems : if the economic environment is the principal determinant of development, it may be necessary to see projects in terms of the effect they may have in influencing that environment.

In spite of this assessment of NGOs' efforts, Section 12.4 noted the extravagant claims which NGOs make about their work. Heatley (*, p.42) concludes that

"...the agencies create the impression that poor people in the Third World are passive, doing nothing but waiting for us to help them."

Lissner (*, pp.136-138) notes that in donating to an NGO people have a psychological need to feel that their donations will have a significant effect, and consequently NGOs play to this need in their fund-raising publicity. This image of the NGO as having a central role in the development process was clearly demonstrated to the writer at a conference for Oxfam supporters in Birmingham in 1975. A film of a fishing village in Chad, showing the village to be a self-sufficient and technically and culturally sophisticated society was shown, and as predicted by the Oxfam Education Officer who had planned the event, the audience seemed to find it difficult to accept that an African village could exist satisfactorily without outside help. In the discussion which followed, all sorts of possible problems and ways in which Oxfam should help were put forward.

Another issue for NGOs was raised in Section 12.4, namely whether support should be given to individuals or to communities. There is not any clear dividing line between the two approaches as, in the end, individuals must benefit, but the choice may be between helping individuals to progress within an existing structure and helping communities to change their positions in the structure. As argued in Section 12.4, although the first approach is more likely to produce visible results, e.g. a youth in secure employment after having had his education "sponsored", the second approach is more likely to strengthen demands for changes in the political and economic structures.

If the economic environment is the main determinant of change, then NGOs are faced with the choice of in which rural areas they should work, and this generally means the choice of countries. If the economic conditions are conducive to development, then it is likely that an NGO's efforts will reinforce an existing development dynamic, but if they are not it will be much more difficult for an NGO to achieve tangible results. However, in a country in which the economic policies are sympathetic to the poorer farmer, the need for NGO help may not be so great. For example, an NGO may need to choose between supporting poor peasants in Tanzania and poor peasants in Kenya : it might be argued that Kenya is a more wealthy country and that aid should therefore go to Tanzania where it may achieve more, but on the other hand it might be argued that the Tanzanian peasant has less need of NGO aid because of the more sympathetic policies of his government. The choice of countries for an NGO is further considered in Section 14.1.

It remains the case that much of the work of the NGOs, especially in Africa, is in the rural areas. NGOs would no doubt justify this on the grounds that the great majority of the population is in the rural areas (over 80 per cent in most African countries, and over 90 per cent in some), that the worst poverty is often found in rural areas, and that the urban poor are often those who have migrated to the towns to escape from poverty in their rural villages. NGOs could however, be criticised for over-emphasising the rural nature of

problems : although the rural areas experience poverty, the cause of the problems may lie in the urban-rural links, in the economy of the towns and with their policy-makers. The choice between urban and rural work may be an important issue for NGOs wishing to promote structural change. While an objective of structural change may be to improve conditions in the rural areas, it is questionable whether such change can ever be a solely rural phenomenon. Marx believed that for radical change to occur, the peasantry would need to rely of the leadership of the proletariat (**4). Ake (*, p.99), however, has noted that :

"a good number of ... revolutions have had a specifically peasant base - for example China, Cambodia, Vietnam and Guinea-Bissau. In short, there is no case for denying the revolutionary potential of the peasantry - including the African peasantry."

But although these revolutions have had a peasant base, they have had urban or intellectual leadership. According to Mao (quoted by Schram (*, pp. 259,260),

"Proletarian leadership is the sole key to the victory of the revolution ... It is therefore a very great mistake to abandon the struggle in the cities and to sink into peasant guerrilla-ism."

In the case of Guinea-Bissau, Davidson (*(3), p.51) quotes Amircal Cabral as follows :

"Does the peasantry represent the main revolutionary force ? This is a basic question. In the case of Guiné, I must answer at once that it does not. ...apart from certain zones and groups where we found a welcome from the start, we ... had to struggle fiercely for peasant support." (**5)

This is not to suggest that NGOs seeking structural change should not support work in the rural areas. Cabral, as well as the leaderships of FRELIMO and MPLA in Mozambique and Angola, saw a need to create a "revolutionary awareness" amongst the peasantry, and indeed, most of their work took place in the rural areas (**6). Although NGOs may not wish to see armed conflict as the only route to structural change, the arguments for giving the peasantry an analysis of their situation still hold as even non-violent change may be difficult without rural support. Moreover, the scope for NGO involvement in the towns on behalf of the rural areas is likely to be very limited, and

it can therefore be expected that irrespective of the analysis of NGOs, their main work in Africa for some time to come will be in the rural areas.

13.5 Some comments on NGOs' policies and practices

This thesis has considered three broad classes of development objectives :

- economic growth
- basic needs
- structural change.

Similarly the thesis has examined the activities of NGOs, and again a rough classification may be made into three groups :

- relief projects in which there is a transfer of resources to people in need;
- 'developmental' projects in which the poor are helped to provide for themselves; and
- 'political' projects in which the aim is to contribute to a change in economic and social structures.

This classification is, however, very imprecise, and much NGO activity is likely to have relief, developmental and political components.

Although the classification of objectives and project types do not exactly correspond, they are related in that certain types of projects are more likely to stem from particular types of objectives. The relationships may be as follows :

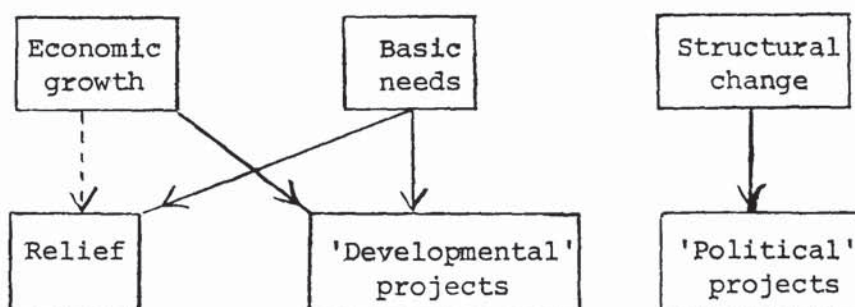


Figure 13

In spite of the inconsistencies in NGOs' policies and practices noted in section 13.1 above, NGOs do have general positions which they take in the spectra of objectives and activities. For example, VSO's policies encompass economic growth and basic needs with many of the projects they support in the 'developmental' category, while War on Want is on the structural change side of basic needs and sees its support for 'developmental' projects in a 'political' or structural context.

However, the views and activities of NGOs are not static, and in some NGOs at least there has been a slight move from left to right along the spectra of objectives and activities shown in figure 13 above. For example, in the 1960s economic growth was the generally accepted development philosophy of the First Development Decade, and at that time War on Want was essentially a relief agency. Christian Aid and Oxfam have both moved from relief to 'developmental' projects and their involvement in areas of Latin America has taken them into the political field with their concern for human rights (although the Charity Commissioners may have halted this move for the time being - see section 14.4). Both AID and VSO are refining their approaches, in the case of the latter, partly in response to pressure from returning volunteers.

A question which this study has not been able to fully explore is why different NGOs should take different stances on objectives and activities. Taylor's description of the situation as one of "fundamental confusion" (see section 13.1) seems inadequate, but although a full explanation of the differences would require a detailed study of the historical development of each NGO, factors which are likely to contribute to policies include :

- The constitutional objectives. These are (or were) the starting points for NGOs and they may determine the initial analysis which an NGO will make when planning a new programme. War on Want's founders, for example, established it as a campaigning organisation, while SCF's concern for children may lead it to a more basic needs approach with relief-orientated projects (although the example of the Child Poverty Action Group in Britain with its politicised and campaigning style shows that this need not be the case).
- NGOs' overseas experiences and contacts. One would expect an NGO's analysis of world problems to be being constantly refined by its experiences overseas. In this, NGOs' choices of overseas partners and the extent to which these partners contribute ideas may be significant. For example, VSO's and SCF's links with government bureaucracies may give them very different views of problems to those obtained by War on Want through contact with liberation movements. Kimberley(*, p.28) has studied the differences between volunteer- sending NGOs in Britain and has noted that :

"The VSO programme grew up in newly -independent Commonwealth countries, with new governments comprising mainly British-educated administrators, whose views as to the course their peoples should follow to improve economic and material conditions often coincided with the opinions of the Establishment figures in charge of VSO's operations. This made it very easy for the agency's activities to be based on a pattern which was in many respects simply imitative of the British model of development, the conventional view among the elite who made up the administrative groups with whom VSO dealt being that if everybody could have the benefit of an education then the nation would gradually achieve development."

By contrast, the volunteer programme of the Catholic Institute of International Relations (CIIR) worked in Latin America where links were formed with church groups, and,

"the 1960's in Latin America saw the rise of progressive forces in the clergy, who were analysing the nature of under-development and the causes of poverty from within their own societies." (ibid.)

Similar links no doubt partly explain why Christian Aid's and Oxfam's programmes in Latin America are more orientated towards structural change than their programmes elsewhere.

It might have been expected that the use of field staff would make NGOs' policies more responsive to overseas situations. However, this study shows a negative correlation between 'radicalism' and the use of field staff, War on Want having few and Christian Aid having no field staff but these NGOs being nearest to the structural-change end of the spectrum of policies. Given the other differences between the NGOs, however, it would be a mistake to attach much significance to this situation (**7) - in section 14.2 it is argued that the role of an NGO's overseas representation is more important than whether or not it consists of expatriate staff.

- How policy decisions are taken. Policy will come from both staff and committees, and how they are appointed or elected may partly determine the policy and how fixed or flexible it is. War on Want is the only one of the NGOs considered which has a membership structure and which elects a council of management (although VSO has plans for moving in this direction in 1981), but nevertheless, the reality in War on Want is that staff play a major part in policy formulation. Staff of an NGO will of course be recruited partly on the extent to which their views are in accord with the NGO's policies, and the same will be true when committee members are elected or appointed: in this way the appointment/election process may reinforce an NGO's position on policy matters, although new staff and committee members may bring new ideas and experiences which may lead to refinements in policy. The situation may be slightly different in NGOs such as Christian Aid where different interest groups - churches and political parties - are represented on the council : in such cases it may be more difficult for councils to reach consensus viewpoints, and councils may act as a constraint on NGOs taking political stances.

Kimberley(*, p.31) also notes that the size of an NGO may influence the ease with which it can take policy decisions.

In large organisations there may be greater differentiation in the roles and responsibilities of staff than is the case with small agencies, and this may "hinder the flow of communication and the application of relevant knowledge and information to policy decisions" and make such organisations "slow to perceive the need for change and slow to change even if the need is seen" (**8). Further study would be required, however, to assess whether War on Want's smaller size has enabled it to be more responsive in its policies than NGOs such as Oxfam.

- The donors. According to a former director of Christian Aid, "you can use other people's money, which they entrust to you, only for the objectives you believe they understand and intend to support" (Alan Booth, quoted in Nightingale (*, pp.249,250)). Other NGOs may not feel so constrained by the perhaps limited understanding of their supporters, and Lissner (*, p.272) argues that :

"there is much to be said for allowing agencies considerable leeway in choosing the concrete form and manner of providing assistance in specific situations. Too many agencies have tied their own hands at home and overseas, either because they did not have the courage to challenge the "conventional wisdom" of their supporters, or because they gave unrealistic promises to them."

Nevertheless, in all NGOs the intentions of donors is likely to have some influence on NGO policy. In the case of VSO the high level of support from government and business institutions must limit VSO's freedom to pursue radical policies, and with War on Want some donors are also members who can take part in the NGO's AGM and elections to its Council (although only a small proportion of the membership participates in policy formation even in this limited way).

However, here there is likely to be a chicken-and-egg situation : donors may influence an NGO's policies, but an NGO's policies will influence who its donors are likely to be.

The above comments on the influence of donors on NGOs' policies suggest the need for consideration of NGOs' constituencies of support.

Unfortunately it has not been possible to examine constituencies as part of this study (lack of information on the composition and characteristics of its constituency has been a problem for War on Want in planning fundraising campaigns and in creating a membership structure, and it is possible that other NGOs face similar difficulties), but some observations can be made :

- (1) Different NGOs have different constituencies. For example, many of the Rotary Clubs and businessmen who sponsor VSO's volunteers are unlikely to support War on Want's more radical policies, while some of War on Want's more left-wing supporters have little respect for VSO. Many church groups may be active in support of Christian Aid, particularly during 'Christian Aid Week', but some may take little interest in the work of other NGOs.
- (2) Nevertheless, there is considerable overlap in the constituencies of NGOs. Although no study has been carried out, the experiences of the writer suggest that a major proportion of people who are willing to support NGOs is not well-enough informed about the nature of problems and the work of NGOs to be discriminating in their choice of which NGO to support. For example, there are people who support both AID's child-sponsorship scheme and also War on Want, and it is possible that SCF has been as successful as War on Want in getting support from trade unionists. A consequence of this overlap is that NGOs are likely to be, to some extent, in competition with each other for support.
- (3) It is probable that most NGOs have a predominantly (but far from exclusively) middle-class constituency. This certainly is the case with VSO which seeks sponsorship for volunteers (who are generally middle-class with university degrees or professional qualifications) from local businessmen in Britain, and that sponsoring a child through AID costs £78 p.a. (in 1980) must limit those who

can participate in this scheme. Although War on Want has tried to present itself as the charity of the labour movement and has received support from left-wing politicians and trade-union leaders, much of its income comes from middle-class supporters (e.g. a fundraising campaign in 1981 aimed at trade unionists produced a very poor financial response (**9)).

- (4) The constituencies of NGOs do not cover the whole population. Many people regard the Third World with indifference, or even hostility, and in 1976 a survey (*Bowles) showed that only 46% of the population were in favour of Britain giving overseas aid.

That NGOs require financial support from the public no doubt influences their behaviour, and it would be a mistake to assume that it is an analysis of world problems alone which determines NGOs' actions. Lissner (*, p.74) has hypothesised that NGOs' decisions are governed by three objectives :

- "1. the desire to maximise the influence of agency values on public opinion
2. the desire to maximise agency income
3. the desire to maximise agency respectability and leverage."

Only the first of these objectives is connected with an NGO's view of development problems, while the other two are more concerned with the maintenance and status of the organisation. Nevertheless, all NGOs tend to measure their success largely in terms of the money they raise - the problems in measuring what they are achieving overseas or in educational work in Britain would be near to insurmountable - and it appears that with NGOs such as AID, the fundraising objective assumes a very great importance. And it appears that the desire to maintain organisational "respectability" has influenced Christian Aid's attitude to African liberation movements (see section 14.4).

Thus NGOs views of development and they ways in which they analyse problems are not the only determinants of NGO behaviour. NGOs are complex, social and partly political institutions, and policies are formed through the interplay between the interest groups within them, and between organisational as well as altruistic concerns.

Footnotes

1. Quotations in section 13.1 for which no references are given have been taken from various pamphlets, publicity materials and annual reports of the NGOs.
2. The work of NGOs in Asia has not been considered in this study.
3. For example, before War on Want's withdrawal from the Disasters Emergency Committee there was much conflict between War on Want and other member NGOs over how NGOs should respond to disaster situations, and this was a contributing factor to War on Want's withdrawal. Inter-NGO meetings to discuss matters before the EEC's NGO Assembly and to elect delegates to the Assembly have also shown factions, and even antagonisms, within the NGO movement. Kimberley (*) has studied the internal politics of the British Volunteer Programme and the way in which four volunteer-sending NGOs seek forms of co-operation in spite of ideological differences by "agreement - not necessarily explicit - ... as to what issues and which areas of the agencies' activities are deemed open to negotiation" (ibid., p.40).
4. Marx (*, pp.171-173), considering the French peasantry in the mid-nineteenth century, commented that :

"In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organisation among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interests in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention...

...the peasants find their natural ally and leader in the urban proletariat...". (Marx's emphasis).
5. Davidson (*(3), p.52) also quotes a Vietnamese revolutionary leader who had similar experiences : "There is nothing easy about being a revolutionary. Hardest of all is to win the peasants."
6. Che Guevara attempted to promote a peasant-based revolution even in Bolivia where tin miners and other unionised workers were a better organised and more militant force than the peasantry. That he failed to attract significant peasant support was no doubt a major factor in the failure of his venture.

7. For example, the opposite has been the case within the British Volunteer Programme. It was the smaller, more radical NGOs which first appointed field staff, and field staff have been given an important role in forming the NGOs' policies in the countries in which they are working. VSO is still in the process of changing from overseas representation by the British Council to having its own field staff : according to its 1979/80 annual report, "Over 80% of all volunteers are now working in countries in which VSO has its own field support".
8. Charles Hardy, 'Understanding Organisations', Penguin, 1976, quoted in Kimberley (*, pp.31,32).
9. Moreover, much of the response came in the form of bankers' orders, and the average size of donation was higher than had been anticipated. This may suggest that the financial response from working-class trade unionists was very low indeed.

Chapter 14

SOME ISSUES FOR NGOS

Most of this research project was focussed onto how the overseas work of NGOs is relevant to the major themes of 'development', 'the removal of malnutrition', 'the promotion of self-reliance' and 'rural development'. But in examining these issues it appeared necessary to consider other related operational questions. In which countries do NGOs choose to work, and what criteria are used in the choices? How do NGOs go about making and maintaining contact with the communities they want to help? How do NGOs approach the possible conflict between raising money and educating the public in Britain? And if 'development' is considered a political business, to what extent can NGOs enter into the political arena? That different NGOs have answered these questions in different ways gives rise to some interesting comparisons.

Contents:

- 14.1 The choice of countries*
- 14.2 The overseas representation of NGOs*
- 14.3 Development education and fundraising - possible contradictions*
- 14.4 NGOs in politics*

Related appendix :

- XIII Extracts from the Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales for the year 1969*

14. SOME ISSUES FOR NGOS

14.1 The choice of countries

Part IIIC of this thesis looked at the policies of different NGOs in Kenya. These NGOs, however, had already decided to work in Kenya, unlike War on Want which had decided to use its resources elsewhere. This section briefly looks at some of the factors which may, and which should influence NGOs' choices of countries in which they work.

Below, the largest six country programmes in Africa of each of the NGOs considered are shown (in order of size within each NGO).

<u>AID</u>	<u>Christian Aid</u>	<u>Oxfam</u>	<u>SCF</u>	<u>VSO</u>	<u>War on Want</u>
Burundi	Sudan	Ethiopia	Malawi	Nigeria	Mauritania
Kenya	Kenya	Upper Volta	Kenya	Kenya	Zimbabwe
Gambia	Zaire	Zaire	Morocco	Ghana	Zambia (SWAPO)
	Nigeria	Tanzania	Lesotho	S.Leone	Angola
	Rhodesia	Kenya	Ethiopia	Zambia	Eritrea
	Tanzania	Niger	Upper Volta	Tanzania	S. Leone

NOTE : With several NGOs the order of programme sizes changes from year to year. Lists have been compiled from the data in Appendix I, except

- (i) Christian Aid in which the 9 month period April-December 1977 has been used (** 1) ; and
- (ii) War on Want in which a listing for 1977/78 has been used : because of the overall size of War on Want's work in Africa, payments such as that to Sierra Leone represent support for a single project rather than of a programme.

The first, rather surprising thing which may be noted in the above lists is the frequency with which Kenya appears - in five out of the six NGOs, compared with three for Tanzania and two for each of Ethiopia, Nigeria, Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone, Upper Volta and Zaire. Secondly, of the countries mentioned more than once, none

except Tanzania could be considered attractive on the grounds of policies which are likely to redistribute wealth, or of democratic systems of government. Thirdly, although many of the countries listed are among the poorest in Africa, Kenya and Nigeria are not. Fourthly, although one might expect some correlation between programme size and country size, five of the fourteen countries (excluding Eritrea) appearing in the lists have populations under 4 million (in particular, the Gambia has only 0.5 million and Lesotho has only 1.2 million, and in Appendix I (E) it was noted that SCF's top nine recipients in Africa also include Swaziland (0.5 million) and the Seychelles (0.1 million)). This suggests a pattern of NGO aid not dissimilar to official government aid. Streeten (in the "New Internationalist", January 1976) offers some satirical advice to Third World countries : "First, if you wish to maximise aid receipts per head, you must become a very small country...Then you must have a regime that declares that it is favourable to private enterprise...".

These two factors may govern the ease with which an NGO can operate, although it is possible that many small countries have particular characteristics arising out of their histories or geographic situations which make them attractive to donors.

The fact that an NGO is working in a country does not, of course, imply that the NGO supports the regime there, as can be seen from the relatively large programmes of some NGOs in Latin American countries like Chile. However, in most countries of Africa the social structure makes it difficult to work entirely separately from the government services (except of course in the cases of liberation movements). Work with governments is part of the policies of AID, SCF and VSO, and the priorities they give to different countries are therefore likely to reflect the political orientations of their policy-makers : for example, that SCF supports social welfare in Malawi and Morocco but not in Mozambique or Angola no doubt indicates what SCF regards as desirable forms of development in Africa.

What criteria then does an NGO use in deciding in which countries to operate ?

The discussion of this thesis suggests that the relevant factors are :

- (i) Poverty, although this may refer to the poverty of a section of the population rather than per capita GNP ;
- (ii) The ability of an NGO to work in a country : administrative structures or a high level of political control in some countries may give NGOs very little scope for action, and may make it difficult for them to achieve anything useful (e.g. this may have been the situation in countries such as Angola shortly after independence, and it still may be the case in Guinea) ;
- (iii) Partner organisations : unless an NGO wants to act like SCF in initiating its own projects, it will require project organisations through which it can channel its aid. Without such organisations, projects aimed at structural change are unlikely to succeed ;
- (iv) Scope for NGO action in structural change. For example, in countries such as Upper Volta, the weakness of local organisations and their lack of will to break away from a dependency on aid may lead an NGO to conclude that it can achieve little in such circumstances. On the other hand, an NGO may see the problems of Zimbabwe as stemming from that country's links with Britain and conclude that NGO involvement is necessary so that the NGO can campaign for changes in British policy.
- (v) The possibilities of educational work : following from (iv) above, an NGO may choose to work in a range of countries which enable it to mount a variety of educational programmes in Britain. For example, work in parts of Kenya may provide case studies of the effects of Western investment, while work in Tanzania may enable an NGO to illustrate alternatives in development policies (as well as the difficulties in following such policies in the face of IMF pressure, etc.).

14.2. The overseas representation of NGOs

Here the lines of communication between potential applicants for aid and potential donors are examined, as they will, to a large extent, be a first selection filter on the projects which an NGO can support. It is not realistic to talk about an NGO's "responding" to requests for help : NGOs are based in Britain and the organisations seeking assistance may be in remote rural areas of overseas countries - small projects are rarely in a position to approach the bases of the NGOs and so the NGOs must take steps to seek out the projects.

Section 11.2 and Appendix I show that the NGOs considered in this thesis use a variety of different approaches :

- (i) Oxfam and VSO have field offices with expatriate field staff and these field officers make contact with what they consider to be appropriate organisations, and they try to make the existence of their NGOs known to groups who may be able to use their aid. There will, however, be some bias introduced into the portfolio of projects supported by the field officers' selections of contacts, their own analyses of problems, and by the extent to which an expatriate field officer will be accessible to (and in some cases trusted by) local organisations.
- (ii) Action in Distress and Save the Children Fund have a similar approach to Oxfam and VSO, but they go further in that their field officers actually initiate and administer projects. "Selection" then becomes merely selection of an area of need, and there is a danger that any "organisations" supported will exist merely to administer the NGO's aid.
- (iii) Christian Aid sees its work as support for the development efforts of churches overseas, and therefore, instead of having its own field officers, it works through indigenous partner organisations.
- (iv) War on Want does not normally use field officers : reasons given for this policy include the apparent neo-imperialism of

the field office concept, and not wishing to contribute to the large overseas bureaucracy of aid administrators. Nevertheless, in Central America War on Want has a part-time expatriate field officer, and uses expatriate staff in research roles and in some major programmes. Moreover, London-based staff make overseas visits to do much the same sort of job as Oxfam's field staff.

These differences in the type of representation do not appear to be a major determinant of the natures of the programmes of the different NGOs. For example, VSO and Oxfam both have field staff, but they have very different programmes (quite apart from one being a volunteer and the other a funding agency), and Oxfam and Christian Aid have different views on field staff but similar programmes. A more important factor may be the role of overseas representation. Three main functions of overseas representation are :

(1) To assess requests for help and to oversee the use of aid money

For example, in the case of Oxfam,

"...we must ensure that all applications are sound, so that contributors' money is wisely used to the greatest effect... No project is supported until it has been visited by our own representative. Only in rare circumstances of emergency can this rule be broken."

(from an Oxfam grants' list)

Similar thinking is shown by SCF's unwillingness to trust local government health services in Upper Volta with money raised by donors to SCF (see Appendix I (D4)). (** 2).

The assessment of requests for support is certainly necessary, both to ensure that project objectives are in line with those of the NGO and because, in cases of scarce resources (which are perhaps not as frequent as may be imagined if an NGO has well-defined selection criteria - see Section 11.4) it may be necessary for an NGO to choose between two worthwhile projects. However, there is nothing to suggest that this assessment could not be carried out by local partner organisations, e.g. in Kenya NCK probably does as satisfactory a job for Christian Aid as Oxfam field staff do for their organisation. The experiences of

Scottish War on Want in Kenya (see Appendix VIII) show the dangers of not being in a position to have anyone make a local assessment, and War on Want itself has found projects which it is supporting in parts of the world where it does not have field representation to have objectives far removed from those of War on Want.

Linked to the assessment of new requests for help should be the on-going assessment of projects already being supported.

(2) To analyse problems in a country and to interpret the NGO's policy there

Overseas representatives, be they field staff or partner organisations, are able to take a closer look at problems and possible actions, and they will therefore have a primary role in determining the NGO's policy for the country. For example, some BVP agencies regard the first priority of a new field officer as being to produce an analysis of underdevelopment in a country, to identify areas in which the NGO could make a useful contribution, and to identify appropriate partner organisations. This means laying or selecting the lines of communication by which the NGO will receive requests for aid. From the case study of Kenya it appeared that AID, SCF and VSO had done little analysis, and in the cases of AID and SCF the lines of communication did not seem to go far beyond the field officers and their own NGOs' projects. On the other hand, by accepting NCCK as a partner, Christian Aid had to accept NCCK's analysis, but by doing so, Christian Aid made its aid available to a wide range of local organisations. Although there is little indication of Oxfam's level of analysis, using its own field staff it has also succeeded in contacting many local groups.

(3) To initiate and administer projects

There are large differences in the extent to which NGO's work in this way. At one end of the scale, VSO does not initiate, (although

it would be surprising if field staff did not, on occasions, suggest new ways in which volunteers might help), and at the other, AID and SCF establish and run their own projects, almost independently of local organisations. Christian Aid's partner organisations also often act in this way although there is a qualitative difference in that the partner organisations are local rather than expatriate. Although Oxfam and War on Want claim only to work with existing organisations they may often take a highly interventionist approach in proposing projects to organisations and assisting in their implementation (e.g. War on Want's work in Mauritania and Bangladesh).

Thus, what is important in overseas representation is not so much what it is, but what it does. The NGOs considered in this thesis have different arrangements for project assessment, but the existence of field staff or a partner organisation is no guarantee that assessments will be made in a satisfactory way. Although it was not possible to examine War on Want as part of the case study, it may be expected that it runs greater risks of inadequate assessments in areas in which it has no permanent representation : the experience of Scottish War on Want is noted in Appendix XI which also notes dubious assessments made by Oxfam during the period in which Oxfam had no field staff in Kenya.

However, perhaps more important than how projects are assessed is which projects are assessed. In the cases of AID, SCF and VSO, field staff appear to have made very little contribution to the NGOs' analysis of problems, and, at least in Kenya, to have done little in seeking out more relevant areas of work for the NGOs. Admittedly AID is moving more towards vocational training, and VSO is hoping that by weakening its links with British Council it will be able to enter new fields, but these are small changes after several years of field office activity. In Kenya, Christian Aid is relatively fortunate in that its partner organisation, even if not ideal in every respect, takes a fairly analytical and thorough approach to its work, and has a philosophy similar to that of Christian Aid. But from this study it is not possible to generalise about Christian Aid's work elsewhere :

as noted in an internal Christian Aid report, "Where the local Christian community is either too small, or too ingrown or socially isolated from the poorest sections of society, it may be a barrier rather than a channel for development programmes...".

These arguments point to the need for overseas representation which is much more than a mechanism for assessing or administering projects. Whatever form it takes, overseas representation may need a broader and more analytical role if an NGO is to obtain an adequate understanding of the development process in a country, and of how the NGO can best be involved in that process.

Finally, in this section, a few comments are made on War on Want's experiences in working without permanent overseas representatives. In the past this has undoubtedly led to War on Want supporting projects which do not fit with the organisation's objectives, especially in the health field where War on Want had a scheme (now discontinued) in which drugs were sent to overseas hospitals. In recent years, War on Want has tried to compensate for its lack of field representation by concentrating its work in areas in which staff have some expertise, and in which contacts can be maintained by regular visits. A second line of policy which was proposed was to work only in areas from where there is a community in Britain through which the organisation could work, e.g. it was proposed that aid to India be given in consultation with Indian immigrant groups in Britain. This, however, has serious drawbacks, as, for example, even if there is complete political agreement with the immigrant groups, they are not necessarily the best placed organisations to identify appropriate projects. In fact, after a cyclone in India in 1978, War on Want gave part of its share of a joint NGO appeal through the Disasters Emergency Committee (** 3) to Oxfam, as, with field officers on the spot, Oxfam was in a better position to use the money. With War on Want planning an expansion of their work in the early 1980's, it remains to be seen how War on Want copes with the problem of overseas representation.

14.3. Development education and fundraising - possible contradictions

Development education and fundraising are logically two quite separate functions of NGOs but as activities, they come together as different aspects of the impact NGOs make on the public in Britain.

Why an NGO should engage in fundraising is obvious, but why an NGO should be concerned with development education may be less so. It has been a main theme of this thesis that the underdevelopment of the Third World countries is, in a large part, a consequence of their colonial past and their existing economic links with the developed world. Although all the NGOs examined in this thesis have acknowledged this fact, there are great differences in the emphases they put on it in their publications. Some see their role as being only to attack poverty overseas, while others, recognising that some of the causes of poverty lie in Britain, set about trying to make the British public aware of the situation.

In both cases there is need for the NGO to give information on the situation in the Third World : in one, to establish the basis for the NGO's appeal for money, and in the other, to explain the relationship between the British economy and Third World poverty. However, the type of information which is likely to generate most money is not the type which best explains the causes of poverty, and conversely, an explanation of the causes of poverty, may confront people with unpleasant truths about Britain's role in the world, and may not, as a consequence, be the quickest way of getting financial support. This presents NGOs with a possible conflict of objectives.

The stances of British NGOs are examined below according to a classification proposed by Lissner (*, pp. 189,190) :

"The fund raisers maintain that the overriding purpose of a voluntary agency is to provide social services in the Third World...Expenses for information and education are necessary to maintain and increase agency income, but they should be kept at a minimum...

"The middle-of-the-roaders acknowledge the importance of an informed and concerned public and are willing to accept a concerted educational

effort, as long as it does not jeopardise agency income. They are in favour of constituency education based on the dualistic world image, but shy away from any fundamental criticism of people or policies in the high income countries...

"The educationalists, on the other hand, claim that social services in the Third World are only one among main foci in voluntary agency work. As some of the important causes of Third World misery trace back to the high income countries...it is...not only legitimate but imperative that voluntary agencies invest a substantial share of their resources in efforts to influence public opinion and policy in the high income countries."

(1) The fund raisers :

AID and SCF fall into this category with their advertising styles aimed at having maximum impact on people's emotions. Nightingale (*, p.138) noted the advice of one consultant fund raiser which seems to have been followed by SCF : "show babies, all the time show babies and more babies". AID aims more at young children : for example, a photograph of a naked, malnourished young boy has the caption : "Without your help this child faces a bleak future. And quite possibly a brief one". Another advertisement with two smiling young faces has the heading, "Won't you be my "Postal Parent" for £4.34 a month ?".

As noted in Appendix I, both AID and SCF do some "educational" work, but when the main concern is a sophisticated form of alms-for-the-poor, "education" will merely be a method of generating the alms. Poverty is portrayed in a way which arouses sympathy, but not in a way that offers explanations of the causes.

Oxfam, which has hovered between being a "middle-of-the-roader" and a "fund-raiser" also "has long exploited young, suffering faces" (* Nightingale, p.139), and has been criticised by Rodney (*, p.259) for doing so :

"Oxfam called upon the people of Europe to save starving African and Asian children from Kwashiokor and such ills. Oxfam never bothered their consciences by telling them that capitalism and colonialism created the starvation, suffering and misery in the first place."

However, not only does such advertising not explain the causes of poverty, but it may not even be educationally neutral :

"Fund-raising campaigns and any other attempts to communicate to the public carry with them an explicit and/or implicit "message" about the development problem."

(* Lissner, p. 147)

"The majority of people who give to an overseas development charity are giving, not to "other people overseas", but, more accurately, to an "image of other people overseas". In everything it does a voluntary agency presents images...

(Wren, quoted in *Lissner, p.147).

Thus these NGOs may actually be distorting the public's understanding of the Third World, and some have warned that it may even encourage a form of paternalistic racism towards immigrant communities in Britain - the "all blacks are uneducated, malnourished and helpless" mentality. This "impression that poor people in the Third World are passive, doing nothing but waiting for us to help them" in NGO advertising is noted by Heatley (*, p.42], and NGOs may therefore be insulting the many groups in the Third World who are struggling for their own development.

In considering the "fund-raisers", some comments on "child sponsorship" or "adoption" schemes are required. These involve individual donors raising money for individual children overseas, usually for school fees, uniforms, etc., and there are often exchanges of letters between donors and recipients. SCF raises about 20 per cent of its income from this "most heart-warming form of international help" (from an SCF magazine) which it has been involved in since the 1920's, and even Oxfam is involved, raising £35,000 p.a., some of which it channels through SCF. Criticisms of this form of giving, both as a method of helping overseas and as a form of paternalism in Britain, have been noted in Section 11.2 and Appendix I (parts A and D of each). A most significant criticism of these schemes, however, appears in Christian Aid's 1978/79 Annual Report :

"...Christian Aid does not consider child-adoption schemes in any way as an appropriate method of helping Third World children - though we recognise that as a fund-raising technique it has considerable popularity. We still recall the discriminatory effect of refugees being "adopted" back in the 1950's, and the cruel disappointment of those among them not thus favoured. And ever since then evidence has mounted...of the harm which adoption of this sort can do...The welfare of tomorrow's children depends on the success of today's development programmes and the physical, moral and economic health of local communities. Child"adoption" is of little relevance to this."

Finally, it may be noted that VSO is also a "fund-raiser" in that it does very little educational work, even compared with AID and SCF. However, its appeal is generally based on its volunteers rather than on those they are going to help : the towns they come from and the universities they attended are at least as important as the problems overseas. Here, the "message" may be of the Third World needing superior British know-how, without any explanation of how Britain might be a cause of Third World problems.

(2) The middle-of-the-roaders

Christian Aid and Oxfam probably fit into this category. They both have used fund-raising methods which appeal to the emotion rather than reason, e.g. Oxfam's "suffering faces" which were referred to above, and Christian Aid's "You won't be the only ones with tummy trouble this Christmas...We know a few million people who wouldn't mind being sick on a full stomach...", and, to the accompaniment of a picture of a field of graves, "Ignore the hungry and they'll go away" (reported in * Nightingale, p.139). The overall message is that problems are "out there", and that the poor are waiting for the NGOs to send a solution. Nevertheless, they have in the past taken some radical positions (e.g. their joint protest against the British Government's support of the Nigerian Government during the Biafran war), and they both produce educational materials for schools, Oxfam employing "development education officers" to work with teachers round the country.

Christian Aid's and Oxfam's own education material is largely concerned with environmental problems and life styles overseas (as well, of course, as with aid programmes) and is not propagandist in nature. Their support for campaigning work is done by what Lissner (*, p.147) terms "constituency education by proxy". The method is that :

"...instead of confronting the political issues directly themselves, the agencies encouraged - even financed - other groups to do the political work for them...But, from the point of view of public involvement in political issues, the stance of the agencies themselves (with some exceptions) remains unchanged. In some cases it became even less explicit..."

(Nevile, quoted in *Lissner, p.196)

Thus Oxfam and Christian Aid have help to form World Development Movement (WDM, a non-charitable, campaigning organisation on development issues) and the "New Internationalist" magazine. Oxfam on its own helped launch Third World First, a student movement. These three proxies - WDM, the "New Internationalist" and Third World First - have all taken a much more radical stance than their parent agencies. Oxfam and Christian Aid still finance their activities but by supporting what is essentially political education in this way, they have not jeopardised their own fund-raising. However, an objection to the approach is that because Oxfam and Christian Aid are much better known to the public at large, it is still their "messages" about the Third World which will predominate.

(3) The educationalists

Only War on Want of the NGOs considered in this thesis falls into this category. War on Want uses as a subtitle to its name, "A campaign against world poverty", and it has, at least since the early 1970's, regarded its educational work as an important aspect of its total programme. But while Oxfam and Christian Aid have produced materials which are essentially 'apolitical' in character, War on Want's published research reports have been attacks on transnational companies, on the policies of Western governments, and even on the failings of the trade union movement in its Third World involvement (see Appendix I (F)). (The consequences of this approach are considered further in Section 14.4). War on Want makes little use of advertising in which the appeal for money predominates, but typical slogans have been :

"There's a War on Want...

A small charity and a worldwide struggle by the underprivileged majority to claim a more equal share of the prosperity around them. A War on Want that desperately needs your support."

and :

"In the poor world it may be illiteracy. In the rich world it may be bigotry. Either way, we're fighting it."

What is the effect of an educationalist stance on fund-raising ? Heatley (*, p.44), even writing in 1979, follows Lissner (*, p.196) in noting War on Want's increased income in 1973/74, and suggests that "fears of losing funds may be overstated". However, War on Want income dropped in 1974/75, and in 1975/76 it only made a small recovery (if specific donations through the Disasters Emergency Committee (see **3) are excluded). By the middle of 1976 there was an organisational crisis, and the then chairperson stated that "The first task is to reconsider our fund-raising capacity which has rather diminished over the last year or two..." (Guardian, August 1976), and fund-raising continued to be a problem in subsequent years. It would not, however, be reasonable to judge the fund-raising effectiveness of an educational approach on War on Want's experiences alone. War on Want has faced a number of problems both within its organisation and within its constituency through moving from a fund-raising to an educationalist position, and it is still trying to establish itself in its new role, and these factors as well as its policies will have affected its fund-raising appeal. However, as noted in Christian Aid's 1978/79 Annual Report (p. 9),

"It is still regrettably true that most people find it easy to be generous when their money is needed to buy food for the starving, temporary shelter for a disaster victim, medical treatment for the sick. "What the public wants", said the head of a news agency recently to Christian Aid, "Is photographs of Brits handing out food, clothing or medicines".

Thus it is difficult from the present evidence to conclude how successfully educationalist NGOs may be able to raise funds in the future, but it is almost certainly the case that by adopting an educationalist stance, an NGO cannot expect the rapid increase in income which AID has experienced.

From the above descriptions of these three approaches, the policy choice for an NGO may appear to be as follows :

Policy	Fund-raising/overseas work	Development Education
I	Raise lots of money to help lots of poor people overseas	Do little to change attitudes
II	Raise less money and have less help to give overseas	Try to change attitudes and policies

However, even if the possibility of a relatively large fund-raising income coupled to an educational approach is ruled out, the choice of policy may not be quite so simple. Educational work in Britain should be aimed at improving conditions in the Third World as much as project support, and so both are strategies towards the same end, and the NGO must decide which is likely to be the more effective. An NGO using a structural analysis of Third World problems may decide (1) to concentrate on supporting overseas groups seeking structural change while confining its educational work in Britain to what is needed for fundraising purposes, or (2) to use all its resources on educational and campaigning work in Britain, or (3) to seek a balance between these extremes. Some NGO staff have argued in favour of a balance in that educational work and project support may be complementary - involvement overseas may give an NGO information on, and understanding of Third World problems which can form a basis for educational programmes, while project support offers donors a practical way of responding to educational programmes and showing 'solidarity' with Third World communities

It can be noted that in the case study of Kenya there appeared to be an inverse relationship between the emphases NGOs put on educational work and the likely effectiveness of their overseas work in promoting structural change. This suggests that emphasis on development education is something that grows out of an increased understanding of the nature of problems overseas. The more an NGO comes to see the problems of Kenya in terms of the imbalanced political and economic structure of the country, the more it may see the 'developmental' approach of supporting small projects aimed at increasing peasant production as having only little impact, and may see the main problems in the operation of transnational companies and Britain's support for the Kenyan regime. Thus NGOs which take a structural view of underdevelopment are the ones which are most likely to be active in the educational field. Moreover, the case study shows the danger of equating the amount of money an NGO sends overseas with the changes it may achieve there.

Thus this section has noted that not only do the NGOs considered have different approaches to their overseas work (as was shown in section 13.1), but they also present to their constituencies different messages about the nature of Third World problems. The case study has argued that economic and political structures are major causes of Third World poverty : if an NGO were to accept this analysis it would be likely to conclude that development education aimed at achieving changes in policies of government and other institutions in Britain should be seen alongside overseas project support as a strategy for helping the Third World. A shift in emphasis from project support to development education may involve a drop in NGO income (although this is far from certain), but the aim would be seen to be to maximise not the fundraising income, but the overall effectiveness of the NGO as an instrument of change. Such a conclusion about the role of an NGO would involve changes in the allocations of funds between home and overseas work for all the NGOs considered here, with the possible exception of War on Want.

In this section development education has been taken to mean simply the dissemination of information which should make the public more aware of the reality of Third World problems and their causes, and the assumption has been that by doing so there will be changes in Britain's economy and society which will benefit the Third World. That, however, implies changes in British policies, and is in the realms of politics.

14.4 NGOs in politics

"Why is charity incompatible with politics ? At the level of principle, it is because charity constitutes a simple effort to help others in distress, whereas politics is a struggle for power and so inevitably tainted by vices such as self-interest and aggression...

.. Any charity worth its salt must attack the causes of poverty and not treat only its effects." Alas for that point, we can all agree on the "effects" of poverty and combine to relieve them. But the "causes" of poverty are the very stuff of political argument."

This view was offered by a Daily Telegraph editorial after the Charity Commissioners had questioned some of War on Want's activities

in 1978. It is perhaps not surprising that a right-wing newspaper should take an opportunity to attack an NGO which generally takes a left-wing stance. However, the article raises some important issues concerning the role and status of an NGO :

- firstly, there is the recognition that the causes of poverty are often to do with politics ;
- secondly, there is the difficulty of differentiating between what is "charitable" and what is not ; and
- thirdly, in pursuing their aims to relieve poverty, the most effective course of action open to an NGO may be a "political" rather than a "charitable" one.

Below, each of these points are examined in turn.

1. The causes of poverty may be political

This was a conclusion of the case study of this thesis, and of the NGOs considered, it has been acknowledged by Christian Aid, more cautiously by Oxfam (see Appendix I, Sections "B" and "C") and more directly by War on Want. For example, the Daily Telegraph (above) describes politics as a "struggle for power" : the introduction to a War on Want booklet, "Power Pack" (1976) states :

"If development means anything, it means the redistribution of power.

The world's poor...are increasingly engaged in this struggle for power and are achieving rapid change as a result.

To meet this change, War on Want is moving away from traditional charity giving...instead we seek to assist programmes created by the poor themselves - and work with them as equals in common struggle.

That means increasingly that at the request of the poor and with their active support, we tackle the forces here at home which conspire to keep them in poverty."

Thus War on Want is involved in a "struggle for power", or politics, according to the Daily Telegraph's definition. However, that does not mean, as the article could be taken to suggest, that War on Want's work is "inevitably tainted by vices" : Lissner (*, in preface) takes a more reasonable view of NGOs' political involvement -

"...altruistic intentions must be translated into concrete actions. In a world of conflicting interests, that means making choices which are political, accepting compromises which are debatable, and influencing public opinion in one direction rather than another. In other words, helping people is a political art, just as politics is a way of helping people."

2. The differentiation between "charitable" and "political" work

All the NGOs considered in this thesis have "charitable status" which entitles them to tax benefits. The British Government exercises its control over which organisations may register as charities and which may not through the Charity Commissioners, a group of three civil servants. However, the existing charity law of England and Wales dates back to 1601, and there are, therefore, difficulties in interpreting the law and applying it to existing institutions, problems and social values. Towards the end of the 1960's, some NGOs were moving to a more campaigning stance (e.g. challenges to the Government's policy in the Biafran War, and the funding of the political work of World Development Movement), and in response the Charity Commissioners made a statement of their policy in their 1969 Annual Report : extracts from this report are contained in Appendix XIII from which the following main principles can be drawn :

- a charity must not normally attempt to change the law or government policy, or encourage others to do so ;
- the only exceptions to this principle are cases in which either the government itself has proposed changes, or the changes are considered by the Commissioners to be either central to the charity's objects or to be not of a political nature ;
- education is permissible, but not "propaganda", although it is admitted that the dividing line is not distinct.

A problem, however, is that there do not appear to be any appropriate recent court actions from whose judgements the boundaries of charitable action may be defined. Financial constraints as well as the dangers of adverse publicity make NGOs reluctant to risk test cases,

especially when correspondence from the Commissioners (such as the extracts below) shows even their lack of clarity on how cases might be adjudicated :

"In their 1969 report, the Commissioners endeavoured to provide guidance for trustees. In the absence of further judicial decisions they could do no more..."

"The branch of law relating to the extent to which charities may properly apply their property in the political arena is not an easy one and the Commissioners were glad to have the opportunity of reading the opinions of the two Counsel, even if, with great respect, they cannot agree with all that was said in them..."

(**4)

NGOs must therefore consider whether they can pursue their objects within the confines of charity law, and whether the tax benefits outweigh the limitations imposed. There has, however, been a move to challenge charity law (although charities are forbidden to do that themselves), particularly by Amnesty International, a non-charity campaigning on human rights issues, which is seeking the advantages of charitable status. The views of many charities are well-stated by Whitaker (* (1)) :

"It is absurd that the law prevents a charity from striving to remove the cause of distress, which then makes its work unnecessary. I think that it should not only be the right but in fact the positive duty of charities in a number of fields to act as political pressure groups, and that legislation is overdue to end the present widespread uncertainty about this."

Although, as will be shown in the examples below, charity law at present is interpreted in such a strict way that charities cannot comment on what the main body of expert opinion might regard as clear causes of poverty, it is not obvious what the most desirable amendment to the law might be. In this thesis it has been argued that a logical result of an NGO's concerns may be that the NGO must seek forms of political change in Britain, but whether NGOs should operate as political parties and whether the institution of "charities" is irrelevant is another matter. In reality, for many NGOs being a "charity" may mean much more than their legal status : by having some perceived "moral" authority they may command much broader support than they would if their aims were overtly political, and quite apart from fund-raising considerations, this may affect

the constituency which they can influence with their educational programmes. Furthermore, with many NGOs the political positions of the policy-making committees may be more of a constraint than the Charity Commissioners.

Perhaps the best solution to the radical charity's position is that being implemented by War on Want in 1980 - the NGO effectively splits into a charitable and non-charitable part. However, before examining this proposal, the experiences of NGOs in their involvement in "political" issues is noted.

3. NGO involvement in "political" issues

The participation of NGOs in political debates is not something new. SCF, the NGO closest to the "establishment" (it has Princess Anne as its President), began with a court case in which its founder was charged with distributing propaganda which was not just non-charitable but also subversive (namely a pamphlet describing the effects on children of the Allies' blockade of Austria in 1919 - see Appendix I (D)). Oxfam also had a brush with wartime regulations soon after it was founded when it was prevented from sending aid to civilians in occupied Greece during the Second World War.

Turning to more recent examples, NGOs' entanglement in political issues appear to stem from two sources - their involvement in areas of political conflict overseas, and a slow radicalisation within them which has moved them from relief agencies to "developmentalists", and then towards an appreciation of the wider, structural nature of underdevelopment.

The case of Zimbabwe is an example of the first type. Christian Aid, although going to some lengths to avoid involvement in the conflict, found that that was not to be possible. The 1978/79 Annual Report stated :

"The controversial decision last August by the officers of the World Council of Churches to make a grant for humanitarian purposes to the Patriotic Front of Rhodesia unleashed strong passions in these islands. Christian Aid felt compelled to make it plain that we were not to be associated with this decision."

The use of "Rhodesia" rather than "Zimbabwe" must have been a conscious choice. The report went on to re-iterate the message of the previous year :

"Not a penny of Christian Aid money goes to the World Council of Churches' Special Fund to Combat Racism - the source of so-called grants to guerillas."

(1977/78 Annual Report)

However, because of Christian Aid's links with WCC, a leaflet campaign allegedly backed by South African money was directed against Christian Aid, but instead of taking a positive stance, the theme of many Christian Aid pamphlets was merely a restatement of the agency's non-support for "guerillas". Nevertheless, Christian Aid sent relief to refugee camps through local Christian Councils and UNHCR.

(According to the 1978/79 Report, aid through UNHCR to Namibian refugees was "mischievously described by a discreditable critic of Christian Aid as "£7,500 of aid to SWAPO" simply because the South West African People's Organisation administers the camps..." and so again Christian Aid expressed public disapproval of liberation movements.) (See also Appendix I (B)).

Oxfam's approach in Zimbabwe has been very cautious. The grants list for 1977/78 shows £5,000 worth of "humanitarian" aid going to ZANU, and in 1978/79 much larger amounts were given to both ZANU and ZAPU, but no other publicity seems to have been given to these grants.

A special fund-raising leaflet on refugees produced in 1979 only made the very briefest mention of refugees from Zimbabwe, and the same was true of a section on refugees in the 1978/79 Annual Report. Neither did the leaflet nor that report actually state that Oxfam was assisting Zimbabwean refugees, and the names of the liberation movements were never mentioned. In 1978, an Oxfam staff member admitted to this writer that Oxfam considered itself to be taking a big risk in supporting the refugee camps of liberation movements as any publicity for the work would lead to a reaction from the fund-raising constituency. Oxfam's approach in this matter, therefore, shows the extent to which its actions are controlled by the political views of its supporters : Oxfam clearly felt that support for ZANU

and ZAPU was a correct course of action, but it felt frightened to publicise this work, far less to publicise the struggle of the liberation movements and the injustices which were creating the refugee problems (**5).

In 1975, War on Want published a research report, "Aid in Conflict", in which British NGOs were criticised for their failure to support liberation movements in Africa in situations in which these movements were the most legitimate representatives of the people and were the best channels for sending development aid. Consequently, aid to FRELIMO, SWAPO and ZANU became part of War on Want's programme. But as well as highlighting the needs of refugees, War on Want in its publications has attempted to publicise the background to the situation (**6). Although there was some conflict within the organisation over whether or not War on Want should recognise violence as a legitimate response by the liberation movements, the following resolution was passed at the 1977 AGM by a very large majority :

"War on Want supports the oppressed peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe in their struggles for justice and commits itself to support that struggle both by giving humanitarian aid and by campaigning for increased economic pressure on the racist governments of South Africa."

However, War on Want, as a result of its policies, suffered from some of the reaction which Christian Aid and Oxfam apparently feared. The most direct criticism appeared in the "Sunday Express" of 5 November 1978 in an article entitled "War on Want Cash Grab by Marxists" in which it was claimed that :

"Thousands of well-meaning people in Britain have been making weekly contributions to a registered charity under the impression that their money would go exclusively towards combating poverty and suffering."

But without many supporters realising it, the charity - War on Want - has taken a sharp turn to the Left politically. It has been producing a controversial magazine...

The main emphasis is on exposing "colonialism" and encouraging "liberation movements"."

This stance by War on Want, however, is more a consequence of radicalisation within the NGO rather than a consequence of its involvement in a conflict overseas. Concern for structural change no doubt attracts an organisation to situations in which existing economic structures are being seriously challenged.

A structural approach has also led War on Want to attack through research reports and campaigns on the activities of British-based companies. For example, the response to poor living conditions on tea estates in Sri Lanka was not a project in Sri Lanka, but a campaign against the tea companies involved. Similarly, War on Want has published an expose of the marketing of powdered milk in Third World countries and the consequent malnutrition through its misuse, of the harmful effects of the promotion of tobacco growing and smoking, and of the manipulation of Third World trade unions by Western government interests. Taking a structural view of development problems, these reports and campaigns are logical consequences of the NGO's analysis, but nevertheless it leads to work which can be considered political. In 1979 the Charity Commissioners' Annual Report stated that :

"Research into international trade unionism and investigation of the activities of tobacco firms, multi-national companies, and defence expenditure seemed remote from the Charity's object of conducting research into the causes of, and ways of relieving poverty ; and the campaigns on drug companies, the arms trade, the sale of powdered milk, multinational companies, and tobacco companies appeared to be "propaganda" as defined by the Courts."

Hence it is difficult for NGOs to tackle the causes of poverty if that is seen to mean attacking the existing international economic structure, as by doing so they are considered to be moving from "charitable" to "political" action.

However, the case in which War on Want probably pushed its charitable status to the limit was its grant to the Grunwick Strike Committee in 1977. A strike by a group of Asian immigrants in West London who were trying to gain union negotiating rights in a low-paid industry was seen to have many similarities with the type of situation in which War on Want was giving support overseas, and so a donation for "the most needy families" of the strikers appeared as a logical result of the organisation's policy. In a statement, War on Want maintained that

"If we are to be criticised, it should be for having taken so long to come to a real understanding of the causes of poverty and to appreciate the inter-relationship between the poor and deprived here and overseas. The Grunwick workers on strike may be a small minority, but they deserve our help in the same way as peasants in Honduras, workers on the tea estates in Sri Lanka and others in the developing world who face problems that have their origins in the same unjust economic system that is now called into question at every international forum."

The device by which the donation was given by Council of Management members and staff was a legal nicety, but it did not affect the fact that War on Want's policy-makers had aligned themselves with strikers in what had become a major confrontation between unions and the proponents of free enterprise. The charity's actions provoked strong reactions, many attacking War on Want's taking one side in what was seen as a political dispute and many supporters cancelling their membership of the organisation, and at the same time many commending War on Want for its action and sending donations in its support.

However,, it must be noted that War on Want is the exception amongst the NGOs considered in this thesis. AID, SCF and VSO pay little attention to structural problems and international links, and so they are not led into "political" controversies. Oxfam and Christian Aid recognise the problems to a greater extent but avoid involvement in the political issues. For example, when Christian Aid and Oxfam were attacked along with War on Want in a Daily Telegraph article (12th April 1978) for supporting the magazine "New Internationalist" (described in the article as "politically extremist"), the Director of Christian Aid replied that :

"By careful interweaving of references to Christian Aid and Oxfam with those of War on Want, Mr. Szamuely tries to suggest that we have the same approach. We do not. War on Want can, and no doubt will, defend its own committed position. Christian Aid's is different."

(Daily Telegraph, 19.4.78)

How far can NGOs go in taking a political approach ?

NGOs seem to face two types of constraint in moving to a more political position on development. Firstly, there are the legal problems, and then there is the nature of the organisations themselves.

During 1978 and 1979, the Charity Commissioners, acting in response to complaints made to them, increased their pressure on War on Want until the organisation was obliged to "hive-off" its activities which were considered outside charity law. Early in 1980, a new company, WoW Campaigns Ltd , was registered as a company capable of undertaking

all types of activity which War on Want may want to do but is legally unable to do. It should be noted that this solution is not the same as Oxfam's and Christian Aid's "education by proxy" (see Section 14.3) as the name chosen was as close to War on Want as permissible, and the directors of the new company are the same as those of War on Want. War on Want/WoW Campaigns Ltd. can therefore make a joint attack on development problems, one side of the double organisation campaigning against sources of poverty in Britain while the other supports organisations overseas, and using this device there need be very few legal limitations on what an NGO can do.

Why, however, did War on Want not adopt this tactic before, and why do other NGOs not follow suit? The cost can only be a minor problem as Oxfam, for example, could easily make its Public Affairs Unit non-charitable without much loss in the benefits compared with its income. The reason is probably that charities do not wish to go too far into political issues.

NGOs may be seen as organisations with policies and with support bases (a view adapted from *Lissner). These three factors are all interconnected - the organisation requires the support base to maintain it, and it exists to carry out its policies. Its policies are determined by policy makers within the organisation, but in the long term they must reflect the wishes of the support base. Conversely, the support base in the long term is dependent on the policies being pursued.

NGOs seek to survive as organisations, and to do this they must ensure a sound support base. (This may be particularly true of larger NGOs where maintaining the structure may become a major consideration.) If an NGO takes a too-well-defined political stance it will reduce the number of people willing to support it, and consequently it may suffer as an organisation. For example, a more radical approach taken by War on Want in recent years has cost it the support of many former contributors, and it has not yet succeeded in attracting a new, compensating constituency. Christian Aid, on the other hand, ensures that it has both Conservative and Labour MPs on

its board, and it avoids policies which may alienate parts of its support base (e.g. grants to liberation movements).

Moreover, NGOs are in some respects the descendants of Victorian charities, and their support base is predominantly middle-class and liberal. The fact is that charity exists because a division between rich and poor exists, and just because a donor wants a radical redistribution of wealth overseas, it does not mean to say that he would welcome the same in Britain. Ironically, Lissner (*, p.143) follows Whitaker in describing "a strong preoccupation with comfortably distant issues at the expense of uncomfortably close issues" as "Afghanistanism" - the events of December 1979 which thrust Afghanistan into the centre of the political scene show the weakness of the "Afghanistanist" philosophy (**7).

The place of 'charity' in society appears to be a particular problem for War on Want which describes itself as a "radical charity" and on occasions has taken an overtly socialist line. In spite of its policies, most of its income comes from middle-class supporters, and while many in the leadership of the Labour Party and trade union movement have shown support, financial contributions from trade unions have on the whole been disappointing in spite of the organisation's efforts to develop a constituency there. The fact that War on Want's staff and council are largely composed of middle-class intellectuals may increase the NGO's difficulties in attracting working-class support (see footnote 9 to chapter 13).

The nature of charity raises questions of whether it is a viable position for an organisation to adopt policies which attack its own support base (as may be the result if an NGO takes a structural analysis of underdevelopment). If, on the other hand, an NGO is to stick to policies which reflect the consensus view of its support base, then it will have little scope for adopting a more relevant political and campaigning approach in Britain. NGOs may have a particular place in the social structure of Britain, and to challenge the structure may be to challenge NGOs as organisations.

Thus, in general, to be political is not in the nature of NGOs. War on Want is at one end of the spectrum of NGOs, and it remains to be seen how many other NGOs will follow it in trying to escape from the restrictions of the Charity Commissioners. But their own social bases may be the main limitations with which NGOs must contend.

Footnotes

1. With Christian Aid this may introduce some inaccuracy into the listing of major country programmes as in many countries Christian Aid's main support is given as an annual block grant to a local Christian Council, and such grants made in the fourth quarter of the year will therefore have been omitted. The ordering of countries may also change if payments of a relief nature for refugee work were to be excluded.
2. Similar thinking is also shown by ODA's reluctance to finance NGO activity because of their "accountability to Parliament for the use of public funds", an argument put both by a British official in Kenya and in British Volunteer Programme discussions.
3. The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) consisted of five charities - Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children Fund, War on Want and the British Red Cross. It was created in the 1960's by the broadcasting authorities in order that only one set of television appeals might be necessary when major disasters occur. The members take it in turn to co-ordinate the appeals for different disasters, and the funds raised are split between the member organisations. War on Want withdrew from the DEC in 1978 (see appendix I (F)).
4. Extracts from a letter to War on Want from the Charity Commissioners, February 1973.
5. Only at the end of January 1980 when Zimbabwe was moving towards elections did Oxfam issue a bulletin announcing that :

"Our Africa Area Co-ordinator ... made two trips to the area last year. His reports indicate that while there is a need for immediate relief, if we are to involve ourselves in the country's revival, we must have closer contact with the situation for a real understanding of the conditions that created the conflict, and the needs and hopes of the people.

Oxfam is, therefore, setting up an office in Salisbury..."

Some may ask why Oxfam was starting to look for "a real understanding of the conditions that created the conflict" only after the conflict (at least the armed conflict) had come to an end, and why only then were they publicising their involvement in

Zimbabwe. However, the bulletin continued with a background note on Zimbabwe which, for Oxfam, was unusually explicit in its attack on an unjust economic system : for example :

"The Southern Rhodesian economic system was organised over a period of some 90 years to serve the exclusive interests of a settler community that constituted less than 4% of the overall population ...

... this pattern of development, underdevelopment and exploitation explains why 3% of the population owns 50% of the land, why 70% of European farmers are subsidised by generous government credit facilities, and why agricultural industry which employs the largest number of Africans also pays the lowest average wages ...".

6. For example, War on Want magazines during 1978 and 1979 have contained several articles on Zimbabwe (e.g. 'Aid for Zimbabwe, or ourselves?', 'Women in ZANU', 'Zimbabwe : the price of peace'). Additionally, leaflets have been produced on the country's background and on the problems of refugees.
7. It is possible that the opposite of 'Afghanistanism' also exists - some who seek 'social justice' in Britain may have little knowledge of, or little concern for, Third World problems. Thomson and Larson (*) have noted that British trade unions have not always shown great concern for injustice at an international level.

POSTSCRIPT

This thesis began as an examination of the role of NGOs overseas, and it has concluded that if NGOs are to tackle the causes rather than just the symptoms of problems, they may need to take a wider view of Third World poverty, to see underdevelopment as a consequence of international as well as intranational political and economic systems, and to plan their work both overseas and in Britain accordingly. In this short, final chapter, the writer gives some further justification of his standpoint, and it is argued that unless NGOs move to this perhaps more politicised and more radical position, then their work may be of decreasing relevance to the Third World poor.

15. POSTSCRIPT

This thesis has tried to examine the nature of NGOs in terms of different views of the development process. It has not been intended as an assessment of the work of particular NGOs (although critical comparisons of particular aspects of different NGO's have been made to illustrate some issues), but rather as an assessment of the possible role which NGOs do and could play. Now, although the work of NGOs has been evaluated against various objectives such as raising nutritional standards, promoting self-reliance, etc., it is inevitable that these evaluations have been made against the framework of the writer's own analysis of development problems.

It is the writer's view that development, or underdevelopment, must be seen in the context of divisions between rich and poor, of the historical relationship which established the present economic and social structures both at the international as well as the international level, and of the present, changing patterns of commercial and political power. A different viewpoint might have led to a different assessment of the NGO's role. But this is not to suggest, however, that the approach has been completely subjective : firstly, any alternative view of development should be able to explain the co-existence of poverty and affluence within linked economic systems, and secondly, the writer's analysis has largely been formed through study of the evidence encountered during the case study :

- The treatment of large sectors of the Kenyan population during the colonial period whereby many lost their land and many were put in a subservient economic position has created an economic and social system which maintains an inequitable distribution of wealth.

- While living in Nairobi and making field visits to Kitui District one becomes very conscious of the concentration of resources in the city and in Kenya's "high potential" areas. To regard the poverty of Kitui District in isolation from the wealth in Nairobi does not appear a tenable position.

- Field studies were carried out in two drought-prone districts, Kitui in Kenya and Igunga in Tanzania. It appeared that the different ranges of possibilities for change and the approaches being tried in each district were much more consequences of government policies than of environmental or cultural differences. Tanzania's villagisation programme which was creating more scope for government investment and services, its agricultural plans which seemed more sympathetic to local needs and the greater participation of the peasantry in its political process altogether made one much more optimistic about the prospects for change there which would be beneficial to the district's population. Returning to Kitui, it would not therefore seem possible to analyse that district's problems without considering the effects of Kenyan Government policies.

It might be argued that different case studies may have led to different analyses. This, however, is unlikely. In many other countries of Africa NGOs are working in similar post-colonial situations, often using institutions which were established by the colonial powers, and the same processes of colonisation and neo-colonisation have taken place in countries of Asia and Latin America. It would, however, be interesting to conduct comparative studies in other countries, particularly in Latin America where there has been a longer process of underdevelopment, not so much as a matter of academic interest as a search for lessons and experiences which NGOs may be able to apply to their problem analysis in Africa.

One of the main arguments of this thesis is therefore that for NGOs to attempt to reverse the process of underdevelopment they may need to take a wider view of Third World problems than they have often done in the past, seeing the structural relationships between the rich and the poor, and planning their work accordingly. This need for a wider view is constantly increasing with changes in the world scene

whereby a simple analysis in terms of developed and less-developed countries no longer has much validity : Britain's own position in the world economy is of declining importance, while many "less-developed" countries have growing economic strength ; world shortages of non-renewable resources have emphasised the dependence of the industrialised countries on the Third World, and in particular, the rise of OPEC has shifted the balance of financial power ; Third World countries are becoming more vociferous (even if not more successful) in their demands for a New International Economic Order ; and the penetration of transnational companies, many of whose annual sales exceed the GNP of any African country, into Third World countries' economies continues. Thus if rich and poor continue to exist, they do so within the same economic system, and if the problems of the Third World are so linked to the West, one must follow the Director of Christian Aid in asking :

"...would it not be disingenuous for a charity like ours to try to hide the fact so as to leave our supporters comfortable at the price of being misled ?"

(Daily Telegraph, 19.4.78)

Nevertheless, it will not be easy for NGO's to confront the issues and accept their implications. The purpose of traditional charity was to compensate for the economic system and not to change it, and as noted in section 14.4, many supporters of NGOs as well as the Charity Commissioners want to see NGOs continuing to operate in this way. But if NGOs are to face many of the serious problems of the Third World, they may need to analyse their programmes in the context of world-wide processes of development and underdevelopment, and as a consequence it is possible that they will see a role for themselves in attacking perceived causes of poverty lying in Britain as well as overseas. This may lead to involvement in issues considered political, and it may cause conflict with many existing supporters, but any other course of action may merely be maintaining the existing economic structure (**1). Confronting the issues may therefore mean taking organisational risks, it may mean problems of constituency re-education, and it may mean needing to find new constituencies for support.

Of the NGOs considered in this thesis, only War on Want has taken major steps towards a structural analysis of Third World problems.

According to Lissner (*, p.195), however, Oxfam-Canada is pursuing similar policies, and the following quotation from an Oxfam-Canada pamphlet summarises the conclusions of this thesis :

"We can no longer appear to be solely pre-occupied in the intricate and demanding business of raising and dispersing funds while we know that fundamental social, economic and political injustices exist which all the aid in the world will never remove. We are at a point in our history when we run the risk of being seen as lacking in conviction and honesty if we do not show that we understand the underlying causes of poverty and underdevelopment, and that we are unwilling to tolerate them and that we wish to help remove them insofar as we can." (ibid.)

Footnote

1. Indeed, in terms of changes in political and economic structures it may be difficult for NGOs to be neutral. It has not been within the scope of this thesis to fully explore the extent to which NGOs are neo-imperialistic (VSO, for example, has been accused of working to maintain a British presence in some countries), but although all NGOs would claim that their work contributes to the long-term good and self-reliance of the communities they aid, Leys (*, p.21) notes that :

"The impulse behind the vast programme of practical and academic activity involved in the business of 'development' is essentially liberal, democratic and generous. It is painful for anyone who has been involved in it to entertain the possibility that this whole programme may have functioned primarily to help make the subordination of the Third World to metropolitan capitalism more palatable and permanent."

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