

REPORT ON THE BAYAD HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

prepared by the Institute of Cultural Affairs
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We believe it would be helpful at this time to write a statement on the Human Development Project in Bayad, conducted by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA). This statement includes:

1. A definition of ICA and human development
2. ICA methods for community development
3. Selection of the village of Bayad
4. Accomplishments after 18 months
5. Statement of economic results thus far
6. Expectations for the near future
7. Concluding statement on the people of Bayad

Definition of the ICA and Human Development

The ICA is a private, not-for-profit, international organisation concerned with the human factor in world development. It is presently operating in twenty-nine nations with coordinating centres in Brussels, Bombay, Singapore, Hong Kong and Chicago. The ICA prepares people to work in developing nations and in underdeveloped areas in other countries. The ICA is interested in helping local communities develop socially and economically. It believes that many economic development efforts do not reach intended results because people are not developed. Economic standards may rise in certain areas, but old methods do not sustain the new. Individuals continue to think only of themselves, and the community remains fragmented within and disconnected from other communities. This wastes much development effort as the self-centredness of individuals continues to undermine community development. In spite of the fact that such efforts are great and are made according to well-prepared plans, it is discovered after some time that results are little and the complications in people's lives continue.

Human development is based on plans to develop ways of thinking, both individually and collectively, to realise the potential of human and natural resources which are present in every community. This happens as the community undertakes common activities which call forth the creativity and participation of all its people. Individuals thus become more effective members of the larger society. This cannot be done in one step across a whole nation. We therefore address ourselves to local communities beginning with a demonstration in one community that can be seen and repeated by many communities.

ICA Methods

In starting a project anywhere in the world, we first receive an invitation to visit a nation or area and its concerned authorities. When official permission is received, an experienced team is sent to select the site and begin the project. A week long consult is held involving ICA people, experts in various fields from the host nation and abroad, and people from the local community. The consult itself is a demonstration of the intent of the whole project as people eat, work and live together for the benefit of the whole community. It therefore requires facilities adequate for 100 - 150 people to eat, work in planning groups and sleep. Specific procedures are used which allow for the ideas of all the people to be heard and which result in a number of programmes for the village. (Seventeen programmes were decided upon in Bayad.) The ICA team which remains in the village is expected to work with the local people in immediately starting those programmes. Fund raising for the various programmes is begun through contacting many organisations and individuals. This funding is continued through the life of the project. Most gifts are less than LE 100. People are trained in fund raising and the story of the project is told continually to many people so that they may be involved. National people are invited to join the team to enable the project to become indigenised. The team lives, plans and works together. It lives on an economic standard that is similar to that of the local community in order to demonstrate effective living on that level.

At present, ICA is working in projects in more than 100 communities around the world. In Kenya, on the edge of Nairobi, is a very poor and primitive community called Kawangware. People there have learned to work together to do cooperative agriculture and to recover pride in their community. Muslim Village is a part of Kawangware and has become the focus for much of the activity. In India, there are now forty-four villages in the state of Maharashtra involved in the project. The first village, Maliwada, is a strikingly beautiful and well-ordered community with profitable industries, and it is attracting visitors from all over India. A Human Development Training School established there has produced more than 700 graduates of an eight-week course who are now assigned to teams in the forty-four villages. Maharashtra State has fifty million people and the expansion to many villages has happened in response to the urgent request of their Governor.

The Village of Bayad

Bayad was chosen for the demonstration in Egypt because of its obvious need and because it represents well what is common in Egypt. It is a desert village. It is a rural, or farming village. It is a Nile River village. It is near Cairo. And it includes both Muslim and Christian families.

The introduction to Egypt for ICA came through friends in the Egyptian Church who were acquainted with our work and who have a concern for human development, and who offered facilities for the Consult. Meetings were held with the Ministry of Local Governments, the Ministry of Social Affairs, and with the Governor of Beni Suef. A formal agreement to do the project was made between ICA and the Governor with the approval of the Ministry of Local Governments. The Governorate of Beni Suef offered housing for the ICA team and the ready help of its good offices. The people of Bayad welcomed ICA and the project.

Accomplishments of the First Eighteen Months

1. Pure water system primarily through village volunteer work.

It has been a joy to see people carrying pipes, digging trenches, setting up the tank and enjoying working together for the benefit of the whole community. This is human development.

2. The discovery of clay for making bricks and the launching of a new industry from raw material available in the desert.

Thus, agricultural soil is not needed. Beginning a new industry is expensive. The Bayad pilot brick plant has been financed by a British foundation and has received the benefit of two experts from England. An Egyptian expert in building materials has called the Bayad brick the brick of the future for Egypt. Utilising undeveloped resources is a significant part of community development.

3. Cleanliness of the village .

Visitors have been thrilled to see trash barrels in use, to see people cleaning streets, to see children with clean faces. Cleanliness is important for health reasons, self-respect, and community pride.

4. Child care .

The pre-school for all three to five year olds prepares children to learn and grow throughout their lives. The primary school teacher has said that the children from the pre-school are more ready to sit in school and learn. The care given by the young women teachers is another sign of an undeveloped resource that, when developed, gives life and care to the community.

5. Literacy classes.

This past year the classes have been taught by village men and women. Their seriousness has been most exciting. The students' achievements have been rated high by the Government inspector.

6. Community kitchen

This has enabled the distribution of nutritious food to babies, children and elders. Growth records are kept and the improvement in health is visible throughout the village. Classes have been held in weaning, sanitation, family planning, nutrition, and sewing, and all add to the development of alert, healthy citizens with adequate health and energy to care about the larger community. The demonstration vegetable garden and cooking classes have added vitamins to the village diet, especially Vitamin A, the lack of which causes much of the blindness in villages.

7. Home renovation.

The home improvement model completed in June was the first step in the development of more adequate housing for the village. The space people live in affects their whole attitude toward life.

8. Bilharzia treatment.

Education about the disease and the treatment of bilharzia has already shown that village people want to be free of the disease and will take the necessary steps. Eighty percent of the village was tested and treated. Even small children are aware of the dangers of the canal.

9. Desert reclamation.

The small desert plot has already shown that the land behind the village is arable and the farmers of Bayad are ready to cooperatively reclaim the first 100 fedans. This provides the possibility for farmers to move beyond subsistence living.

10. Skills training.

Many people in Bayad have learned new practical skills. These include construction, plumbing, mechanics, leading meetings, planning budgets, directing work teams. A number have become acquainted with repair and service facilities in Cairo. There has been obvious growth in self-confidence on the part of many people. A community without skills cannot take care of itself and therefore cannot be a contribution to the larger society.

11. Student involvement.

Many students from Cairo, Beni Suef, and Alexandria, both secondary school and university, have taken part in work camps and have shown serious interest in village development. Many have come more than once.

Economic Results

The method of human development could be considered a slow process for economic development. But it is the only sure method because economic results are the fruit of individual and community growth, including study, leadership development, corporate work, consciousness of purpose, and the development of appropriate methods of work. It is good to see the increase of the number of taxis on the East Bank, which shows the increase of individual economy. The presence of three trucks is the promise of economic growth in the future, as they provide a means to market goods and to receive supplies. The beginning of private business is signalled by the bakery. Marmalade made by village women is on the shelves of sixteen stores in the Cairo area. Some thirty-five families have benefitted directly from new jobs created by the Project. Many youth have developed transferable skills.

Expectations for the Near Future

1. Completion of the water and sanitation system, including tank hook-up and shower/toilet construction.
2. 100 fedans in the desert under cultivation.
3. Brick Factory profitable and on permanent site.
4. Transportation system for the river and the East Bank.
5. Electrification of the village.
6. Construction of community facilities, including community centre, repair shop, and industry building.
7. Fish farm productive, providing protein necessary for village diet.
8. Continued remodeling of homes and village improvement.

Concluding Statement

We have come to deeply appreciate the people of Bayad. They can work in the desert, are able boatmen, and are excellent farmers. They have learned to live in the most difficult of circumstances. The family structure is solid - divorce is rare among both Muslim and Christian families. The people are eager to learn and have shown themselves capable of being trained quickly in things beneficial to their community. It is a privilege to live and work with these people, and we do so in the knowledge that development in Bayad will result in development in other villages across Egypt.

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