

**INTERNATIONAL
EXPOSITION
OF RURAL
DEVELOPMENT**



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7 February 1984

ADDRESS OF DAME MIRIAM DELL

President of the International Council of Women

Addressing the 2nd plenary of the International Exposition of Rural Development, Dame Miriam Dell, President of the International Council of Women, lauded the role of the Indian Women's organizations for showing great promises of producing a world-wide demonstration by focusing on local areas in different parts of the country.

She layed emphasis on the need to develop and train rural women to the level where they can "speak for themselves".

Outlining some of the slogans of peace on which the ICW was founded, like negotiation, conciliation and arbitration, she felt that it was necessary for women all over the globe to use peaceful and non-violent means to solve the tensions that were hampering the people all over the world to achieve unity and harmony.

It was a matter of pride, she said, that the International Council of Women was engaged in determining policies and issues that were not yet touched even by the U.N. For example Rules of the Sea, carriage of dangerous goods, and usage of outer space, etc.

Emphasizing the importance of conferences at national and regional

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levels, she urged the delegates representing 55 nations to start at the village level and raise the status of organisations and women to a regional and national level instead of the other way down. She hoped that the international efforts through gatherings - such as the ten-day Exposition would succeed in achieving to bring people of the world closer.

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ADDRESS BY DAME MIRIAM DELL, DBE, PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL
OF WOMEN AT THE PALACE HOTEL, DARBAR HALL - 7 FEBRUARY 1984

Of course, it is a great pleasure today to have this opportunity of speaking to you.

I come from a small country, New Zealand, which is 2½ jet hours away from our neighbour Australia and I am delighted to find someone here from another neighbouring country which is 3 hours away by air - Tonga. It is a great comfort to me to have others from the South Pacific countries here.

New Zealand is a very small country and we have a population of just over three million people. However, we do have 66 million sheep and that shows that our country is based on agricultural production. We are a fully developed country and we are a very privileged country. Because of that I was able, as all New Zealanders are, to have a good education and graduated from university and became a secondary school teacher. My beginnings in the movement in the formal organisations for women came from the local church group, the Mothers' Union from around the world who are here now. I would also like to tell you that in 10 days from now I will be hoeing vegetables in my garden because we grow all our own vegetables and fruit.

Now I want to tell you something about the International Council of Women. It is not a new organization. One of the phrases which disconcerted me in the book of trends and keys in our handouts was the words feminine revolution in trend number nine. The International Council for Women began in 1888. I am glad to say that India was one of the participating nations at that first meeting that formed the International Council of Women. It was formed at a time when women had no political or civil rights. They were exploited in the very heavy industrialization of the western world at that time. So the first aim of the International Council of Women was to achieve civil and political rights for women. The second aim was to achieve an equal participation in economic development. Women were very much concerned that all the work that women do in their home, in family enterprises, on the land, was given no economic value; and women were being exploited in the employment field. So equal economic opportunity in the workforce was the second reason for the foundation. The third will have a familiar ring to you. It was a time of great international tension. Women were concerned and they considered that violence and war was no solution to conflict. So they wanted to work for the solution of conflict by peaceful means, by negotiation, conciliation and arbitration.

So if you have heard me you will know that in 1888 the International Council for Women was founded on the slogans of equality, development and peace. It took the rest of the world only 85 years to catch up and catch on. Our policies, our principles, and our objectives are all set. We work together to promote the welfare of all society - the family and the individual, to support all efforts to achieve peace through negotiation, to promote respect for human rights, to work for the removal of discrimination of any sort, to promote equal rights and responsibilities for both men and women in all spheres, to encourage women to recognize their responsibilities in the community, to train and assist them to participate in all aspects of public life at all levels, and to create a sisterhood among women around the world. We can all accept that anything that benefits women, benefits their families and the individual members of their family and ultimately their community. We have never sought to separate women out from the community.

I want to tell you very briefly how the International Council of Women works because it is a unique organization. It is important that it should not be confused with other women's organizations. A National Council of Women to be affiliated with International Council of Women must be representative of all actions of the community in that nation. In practice that means that it is usually an umbrella organisation with all of the womens organizations in the country. Sometimes of course, a national council is not at the stage where there are organized women throughout the country. So the national council will be formed by the educated women who are in leadership positions, who will work for and with all sections of the community. There are many other international women's organizations now and they have member groups in so many countries. These member groups are in general members of the National Council of Women. For example, the members of Associated Country Women of the World, The Federation of University Women, The Home Economics International Organization are also members of the International Council of Women through the local national councils of women.

We work at many levels. The first which is of great importance is that we have consultative status, category 1 as NGO with the economic and social council of the United Nations. We were the first women's organization to have that status. It gives us the responsibility of being at all United Nations meetings and centres. So we maintain a team of representatives at the United Nations Centre in New York, in Geneva, in Vienna and at all the economic commissions of the United Nations around the world. We also have appropriate consultative status with UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO, WHO, UNCTAD, FAO etc. We have consultative status with them all and are represented at them all. We take a full part in all the NGO activities and committees associated with these organizations. At those meetings we present the International Council of Women policies on particular topics. These policies are developed at our plenary meetings. I would like to say, because it is true, that any idea that comes from any member of a national council of women can go through the process of our Council, become policy and be presented at United Nations deliberations. Just as we were many years ahead in thinking of equality, development and peace, as we look through our policy book, we find the International Council of Women has developed policies on issues which have not yet been touched in the United Nations. We have policies on the law of sea. We have policies for use of outer space and the care of dangerous drugs and all other things that make up the concerns of the world. We usually have had policies well in advance of other international and governmental concerns.

Also at the international level, we hold meetings to lay stress on issues that we consider need particular attention. For that reason in 1979 in Manila we had a huge international symposium on rural development which was followed by many local and national practical activities. In 1981 in conjunction with the Thai Government and international agencies we had CONEX 81 which focussed on income generating projects in a programme very similar to this one.

At the regional level, we have regional organizations of our Council. For example, the American Regional Council takes in all the councils of Latin, Central and North America and in Europe we have the European Centre for the International Council of Women. They concentrate on their own particular concerns. In addition we have regional meetings. For example in Sierre Leone in 1977 we had a Pan-African Women's meeting which led to much activity at national level. We are having a follow-up meeting in Morocco (a sub-regional meeting) this year to assess how we have got on so far. Similarly, we had the first NGO meeting for women of the South Pacific. Sixteen South Pacific nations gathered in Auckland in New Zealand in 1982.

I would like you to think for a moment of the problems of South Pacific nations. Most of the people here live in highly populated countries with many problems because of that. South Pacific nations are small and their territories cover many millions of square miles of water. Small islands separated by miles of water is quite a different environment. We had a marvellous meeting in Auckland.

At local levels, national councils have the responsibility of presenting ICW policies to their governments and working with their government to promote practical programmes. They also carry out a wide variety of practical programmes themselves - working in the members' villages, in urban slums and in every area where they can meet a need.

The International Council of Women itself has a programmes of project development and supports the projects undertaken by our councils. These projects are financed and carried out in cooperation with aid agencies in their various nations. We also have a twin programme where national councils from developed countries "twin" with other councils to share in cultural exchange and in practical assistance and support. I hope this brief outline of ICW activities will give you some idea why we are very pleased to be associated with this particular Exposition.

Now I come to the part of the talk which is about the programme. I must now make some comments on rural development programmes as they affect women and their role and status in the community as well as in their daily lives. These comments for me will be frustratingly superficial and for you they may be selfevident generalizations. It is vitally important that we really hear the message before we commit ourselves to strategies, the next task of this very important programme. Gandhi said I believe that the rural poor are "the last, the least, the lowest and the lost". Sixty percent of the world lives in rural communities. Therefore, the rural poor are also the most. Of this most more than half are women. Unless we are bold enough to assert that women are not people, we should be able to accept that women have an even greater stake in rural development than men.

I must tell you a small story which I like very much because it is so true. New Zealand has the honour, I suppose, of being the first country to give women the vote. They gave them the vote in 1893, and the law which gave them the vote says this, "This is an act to give suffrage to all persons over the age of 21. (For the purpose of this legislation persons shall be deemed to include women)". We all know it has been necessary to establish that women are people in the laws of many countries.

You will be familiar, I am sure, with the 1980 United Nation's assessment of women's position in the world, which says that women work two-thirds of all the hours worked, earn 10% of the money earned and own 1% of the property. One can use statistics in a dramatic and sometimes unscrupulous way. But we can accept some facts with reasonable confidence. For example, women indeed make up more than half the world's population. A growing number of families are headed by women and this is true for many reasons - political upheavals, natural disasters, economic need, social change, conflicts between groups and nations. Women work long hours, often 18 hours a day in caring for children, producing and preparing food, carrying water, seeking fuel and trying to make something above subsistence level - all unpaid work, unrecognized in the GNP of nations despite the fact that 50% of national food is often produced this way and up to 80% of agricultural production in some areas. Historically women's role as food producers gave them control of the produce and any income from it. As "cash cropping" developed colonial management and later under international development under access planning, women lost access to the money-producing crops and struggled to maintain food production. This leads to

the introduction of machines. Guess who got to drive the tractors? It was not the women. The tractors tilled more land and, of course, made more work for the women in tending the crops. In the interest of

increased production systems of land holding were altered and women lost their traditional rights to land use. Again more productive planting methods were introduced which allowed weeds to grow between rows instead of being suppressed by the interplanting of the older techniques. This again increased women's workload.

Similarly, water has been brought to cash crops but not necessarily to villages or households, women being left to carry domestic water. Food requires processing. While new techniques may increase the supply of food, traditional methods of

preparing food, like handgrinding of cereal, continues the workload for women. The gathering of fuel becomes more difficult as well. It has been said that left to themselves women managed the environment well and ensured a continuous accessible supply of fuel. Their understanding of this environment was not consulted when development plans began to erode woodland resources.

We all know and thankfully recognise that there has been a great change in attitudes towards women and their interests. In particular, in the international development agencies and in the language of development planning such phrases as 'taking full account of the interest of women', 'integration of women in development', are compulsory elements of resolutions of developments. Development agencies themselves are also often frustrated in their genuine attempt to implement these resolutions by the unwillingness of government to cooperate. There have been very many special programmes for women that carefully include women. These have of course been partially successful particularly in such areas as access to credit, cooperative development, and marketing techniques. But such special programmes will never be totally successful because they do not start from the perceived needs of women themselves. Such programmes do not influence women because they consider them as irrelevant or peripheral to what they themselves consider to be the priority needs. Implementation of such programmes often ignore the very obvious. An illiterate woman can not follow written instructions. A woman suffering chronic fatigue from the crushing physical and psychological burdens she carries has neither the energy nor the time to deviate from the known path. How then can the desirable goal of men and women sharing equally in the benefits of development (to use yet another phrase of international jargon) be reached?

I would like first to look at what we mean by development. Who defined it? Who set out its goals? Who benefits from it? We have divided the world into developed, developing, least developed countries. Are we aiming to transform the world into the computerized, polluted, soullessness of an industrial society? Or to replace the rhythms of nature with the decibels of the electronic post-industrial era. Who has decided what? And for whom?

Women are an integral part of society. Therefore, they should have an integral part in planning development goals, developing national plans and implementing programmes. The 18 trends and 12 keys in rural development that we are studying in this seminar make repeated use of such phrases as local people participation, total community participation, grassroot planning. Let us be sure that we can truthfully say that.

National Councils of Women, wherever they are, work to assist women to have confidence in themselves as members of the community in which they live and to meet

the needs that women themselves identify. I want to tell you now very briefly about some of the projects that members of the National Councils of Women are carrying out.

There is nothing more wonderful for an international President than to be able to join the members where they are. To sit with a group of women in Kenya on the edge of the forest as they tend their beekeeping cooperative is a great experience. This cooperative, beginning as a means of getting in some extra money for very, very poor women and families, became a means by which women themselves began to learn about their environment, about their community, about how they could affect the decisions made in the community.

Another programme which has been very successful is in Madagascar where kitchen garden seeds were distributed to women with new ways of cultivating them and experimental nursery gardens through which women could cultivate improved varieties of home food.

Botswana is a very large country with a very small population. Many of the families in Botswana are headed by women. So the Botswana National Council has at least 63 childcare centres in villages around the country and has a travelling health care workshop which travels from village to village training women in primary health. - Access to fuel and the time taken for cooking has made the life of women in Fiji very difficult. We have a project for smokeless stoves in the villages. I currently have my feelers out for funding smokeless stoves in 30 different villages in Fiji.

In Lesotho the women try to overcome the time in grinding their meal. So we helped them to buy a cornmill. From the time they were saved they were able to learn to spin and to make saleable garments.

In Uruguay they have a crafts cooperative which is teaching women to make marketable goods - and how to sell them to best advantage.

It goes without saying that basic among the projects of national councils everywhere are clean water, literacy, nutrition and health care. We have basic programmes in those areas in every national council and believe it or not we have it in councils of the developed world.

Multi-purpose village community centres which provide literacy, health, nutrition and skill training are common features of the work particularly in countries like Pakistan, India and countries of Asia.

We don't of course concentrate only on rural women. We have a very large concern for migrant and refugee women and work in many migrant and refugee centres in the world. We also work in the urban slums and many other urban areas of the world.

I wanted to tell you about these projects because they are meeting the need that women themselves perceive. They give women the confidence to think out their own priorities and to take the next steps which will help them to gain the kind of confidence to break out of the social and economic constraints which hold them. We have standards for projects. The women in these social projects do not have the skill to develop proper proposals for funding. They do not have the time to do it. But if you can give them a few dollars I can guarantee just as you heard last

night in the Trickle-up programme that every cent of those dollars would be used to promote that project and put back any profit into it.

Any "development" will depend first on the health and vigour of the people, all the people, which can only be achieved by providing clean drinking water, sanitation, community hygiene, primary health care and access to energy-fuel, lights and heat. Secondly it depends on basic educational skills, literacy and numeracy. These above all, should be the goals of development projects. I recall Sir James Lindsay saying that governments should be responsible for putting these in place. But they cannot do it fast enough. The people cannot wait and so we have to work on these aspects too.

Keystone No.4, "Cohesive Community Identity", makes me a little nervous. Cultural, social and religious values and traditions have evolved over generations and they should continue evolving. Women as well as men are the guardians of cultural heritage. As they move into the future and accept the changes brought with economic and political development, they must together develop social and cultural patterns which will preserve social stability and cultural strength. I cannot urge you too strongly to face the reality behind our keystones and trends. Are we really talking about all the people - the total community? And we could ask ourselves if indeed we should accept Trend No.4.

Let us remember that if women were to withdraw their labour (in the language of industrial relations) for even 24 hours - water would not be drawn, crops would not be sown, tended or gathered, food would not be prepared or served, women and children would go hungry and unclothed, the sick would not be cared for, children would be abandoned, classrooms empty, factories idle, typewriters silent, boardrooms and cabinets would not have their agendas. But one labour woman could not withdraw is the labour of giving birth, and on that day - as on any day - women would be renewing both the world's resources and safeguarding its future. Any hope for the future of the world lies in the total human resource not a self-selected half. When women share equally with men in every aspect of the social, cultural spiritual, economic and political development of the world then we may indeed turn from confrontation, conflict, exploitation and expediency to at least the possibility of a future and at best the hope of an enriched and joyful one.

Thank you.

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G. Comments in Plenary Session
by
Dame Miriam Dell
President, International Council of Women

We had a tremendous learning experience here from the exhibition of projects and from the field visits themselves in both practical and human terms. We learned from the members of our groups. The issues raised from all these processes will be discussed in the next few days. I must, of course, make particular reference to women in the development process.

I questioned earlier in this association the meaning of "development" and in answer the assumption was made that we are working for an improved quality of life for each individual. We are committed here also to "grassroots" participation. So may I just make these points again -- not erudite principles, trends, keynotes -- just basic points:

- Women are individuals.
- They carry unbelievable physical and psychological burdens.
- Their well-being will affect the well-being of their whole family, village and community.
- A community development project that does not include women from the very beginning will fail because it will not improve the total well-being of all its individual members in their own terms.
- In order to be included from the very beginning, women need to be assisted and encouraged. There must be programmes that give them skills, confidence and economic independence that allow them to participate on equal terms with men.
- Programmes which do increase the range of women's skills need not and should not perpetrate the traditional activities of women, or the traditional methods of work. The smallest change of technology can improve working conditions, e.g., light to sew, weave and embroider can be improved by simple means -- not only by the introduction of electricity.
- Women in nontraditional activity will bring to that activity the full talents of the community.
- Basic to any improvement in the quality of life is improvement in the health, nutrition and educational level for all -- clean water and sanitation, improved use of available food, immunization programmes, child care and literacy are still the foundations of development.

What we have seen and learned here by the generosity of the Indian communities we have visited should help us to re-examine our own work, and see with new eyes the situation in which our own people live wherever they are.

I hope that one of the greatest insights you carry away with you will be that women, as well as men, are the instruments of the development process. They need special help to be able to contribute equally to, and share equally in, the environment of local and national life.

Now, a word to the sponsors. This has been a brilliantly conceived and admirably carried out event. We will all no doubt have regrets that there was not enough time to do this or that -- but we can have no doubt about the human connections that have been formed, the exciting exposure to ideas, experiences and understanding that will remain with us. The next phase of the three-year programme is perhaps the most important to you. I urge you to make every effort to include the national councils of women in your countries in all the follow-up activities of the International Exposition of Rural Development.

In conclusion, Dame Miriam read a message addressed to the Convenors by Sellami Meslem, Deputy Secretary-General, World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women

UNDP/UNITED NATIONS, VIENNA

REGRET THAT NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO SEND REPRESENTATIVE TO IERD IN NEW DELHI. HOWEVER MY DIVISION IS FULLY AWARE OF THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN AND OF THE MORE EFFECTIVE ROLE WOMEN CAN PLAY IN PROMOTING RURAL DEVELOPMENT. I WISH YOU FULL SUCCESS IN YOUR CONFERENCE. HOPE IERD CAN IDENTIFY VIABLE AND FEASIBLE APPROACHES TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT ON A LARGE SCALE IN DEVELOPMENT COUNTRIES WHICH CAN BENEFIT WOMEN. THIS WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE ISSUE ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL. WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING THE RESULTS.

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H. The Field Visits

From the 8th to 11th February, the delegates to the Central International Event traveled in 30 teams for the field visits. The Field Visits were built to portray the strong and varied tradition of rural development in India. Long before Independence, the Freedom Movement had set the stage for serious thinking on the role of India's villages in the nation, and subsequent efforts have worked toward provision of infrastructure, agricultural development, full rural employment, social justice, and the participation of the poor in the fruits of development.

Under the leadership of Mr. B. Rudramoorthy, the Project Participation Committee of the India Steering Committee solicited advice from many sources on the criteria for adequate selection of field visit sites, as well as which projects best met the criteria. Forty-three projects hosted four-day Project Description Laboratories in which project staff worked with people from other agencies to look at which of their learnings could be helpful to others, perhaps in quite different circumstances. Many other projects participated in Rural Development Symposia. Through this process, 30 Field Visit sites were selected, representing a panorama of approaches that had yielded results.

The 30 selected projects range from 3 to 35 years in duration. Their leadership varied from dependency on one charismatic leader to leadership teams to loosely-related community institutions. The agencies worked with 3 to 1000 villages. Some, such as AWARE and CROSS, are locally-based movements in which strategies of awareness and economic development are employed. Some, such as India Development Service and ICA:India, work with clusters of villages. Some represent massive efforts like the National Dairy Development Board's single-commodity cooperatives or Gonda Gramodaya Prakalp's campaigns (30,000 tubewells as "water to every field"). Some expedite the utilization of bank and government schemes (ANARDE Foundation and Syndicate Bank's Rural Development Cell). Nine of the projects work primarily with tribals. Various approaches to women's participation in development can be seen in the work of the Self-employed Women's Association and the Bharatiya Grameen Mahila Sangh. Gandhian efforts range from the traditional to the highly flexible, with a number of projects being built up around an ashram. Maharogi Seva Samithi has worked to create new communities. Several represent government efforts - Gujarat State Rural Development Corporation, the Hissar District Rural Development Agency, and the People's College at the Extension Training Centre, Haldwani. Private sector resources and management expertise have been applied in differing ways on projects like the Tata Steel Rural Development Society and Walchandnagar Institute. Institutions serving development agencies include Xavier Institute of Social Service and the Asian Institute of Rural Development.

Particular interests vary from appropriate technology (IERT and Yantra Vidyalaya) to housing for landless labourers and local economic systems (Ahmedabad Study Action Group). Several of these projects have developed prototype institutions like Jamkhed's three-tier health care system, Banavasi Ashram's revolving village fund, and Anand Niketan's open court and legal assistance programme.

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Field Visit Sites

Gujarat

1. ACIL NAVSARJAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION: ANARDE's Jamnagar Centre links the government's integrated Rural Development Programme and bank schemes with landless labourers and marginal farmers.
2. AHMEDABAD STUDY-ACTION GROUP, experienced in building landless labourers' housing, generates economic activity for the poorest 10% of 60 villages.
3. SELF-EMPLOYED WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION promotes access to credit and establishes women's cooperatives and training to provide new opportunities for income.
4. ANAND NIKETAN ASHRAM works in the arenas of small irrigation, family forestry, a "life education school", a legal assistance programme and an "open court".
5. GUJARAT STATE RURAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION develops wastelands by producing fodder and fuel trees and provides productive employment to settled landless labourers through the income-generating programmes of rearing milk cows.
6. STANDARD MILLS RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT harnesses water resources in cooperative irrigation schemes, and emphasizes agro-forestry and health programmes.
7. VEDCHI PRADESH SEVA SAMITHI has initiated 40 decentralized industries and institutions built around growth centres as part of an area planning approach. A stop was also made to YANTRA VIDYALAYA SURUCHI campus where rural artisans are trained to produce and use appropriate technology, e.g. redesigned farm tools.
8. NATIONAL DAIRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD has built on the experience of a district level union of dairy cooperatives to build a dairy programme in several states.

Madhya Pradesh

9. BHARATIYA GRAMEEN MAHILA SANGH, the Indian affiliate of the Associated Women of the World, educates and engages women in comprehensive village development.

Maharashtra

10. COMPREHENSIVE RURAL HEALTH PROJECT is a three-tiered health service for two blocks of 164 villages with local women health workers and a hospital centre.
11. INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS: INDIA emphasizes economic, social, and human resource development through training in methods of planning, organization, and implementation.
12. MAHAROGI SEVA SAMITHI has organized new self-supporting settlements for tribals and leprosy patients on wasteland and jungle sites with appropriate education.
13. WALCHANDNAGAR INDUSTRIES LTD. RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT supports and strengthens leadership of cooperatives and provides training in agricultural and employable skills.

Uttar Pradesh

14. BANAWASI SEVA ASHRAM works toward a cooperative style, involving people through local self-government, revolving village funds and government-planned programmes.
15. EXTENSION TRAINING CENTRE provides practical skills training for tribal and hill people to work with appropriate technology and innovative farming techniques.
16. INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND RURAL TECHNOLOGY develops and tests wind, solar and bio-energy systems, and organizes diploma courses in rural management.
17. GONDA GRAMODAYA PRAKALP's "water to every field" phrase resulted in 39,000 tubewells across the District, followed by "work to every hand" campaign.

Punjab

18. FOOD SPECIALTIES increases the regular income of village people by assisting them with seeds, fertilizers, etc. and creating infrastructures for development.

Haryana

19. HISSAR DISTRICT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY trains and finances each family in ventures such as basket weaving and other handicrafts.

Bihar

20. TATA STEEL RURAL DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY applies its business expertise to manage rural development inputs and provide infrastructures to 129 tribal villages.
21. XAVIER INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SERVICES trains rural people to enable others to start their own projects and assists individuals in entrepreneurial development.
22. VAISHALI AREA SMALL FARMERS' ASSOCIATION represents people's own efforts for tubewells plus an approach to credit that has resulted in fast and fair loans.

Andhra Pradesh

23. ACTION FOR WELFARE AND AWAKENING IN THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT works with tribals and Harijans toward economic growth with emphasis on catalyzing sustained development.
24. COMPREHENSIVE RURAL OPERATIONS SERVICE SOCIETY works to change attitudes of dependence through education, cultural and economic programmes.

Tamil Nadu

25. GANDHIGRAM, based on the Gandhian plan, has undertaken comprehensive development through education, industry, health, etc. towards rural revitalization.
26. RURAL UNIT FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE, sponsored by Christian Medical College in Vellore, has introduced a comprehensive programme of economic

development, starting with health and medical care as the initial entry points to the community.

Karnataka

27. ASIAN INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT provides training and consultancy services, and encourages the linking of government and nongovernment development activities.
28. INDIA DEVELOPMENT SERVICE INTERNATIONAL conducts a programme for organizing the community for social action and economic development.
29. RURAL DEVELOPMENT CELL has pioneered the involvement of banks in villages to reach 7,000 families through agricultural, health, and women's programmes.
30. INDIA'S NEW GROUP FOR RAICHUR'S INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT reflects the attempts of the new intellectuals committed to rural development, through sports, literacy training, and health programmes.

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FIELD VISIT REPORT

Team 2: AWARE
(Voluntary Sector Sponsorship Visit)

Action for Welfare and Awakening in the Rural Environment (AWARE) is located in Andhra Pradesh, India. AWARE has as its main activities the development of social education, motivational training, legal assistance, agriculture, irrigation, animal husbandry, marketing justice, community health and rural reconstruction based on equality, social justice, self-help and community action.

Tribals and Harijans are the target groups of AWARE's activities. To a large extent, tribals can be defined as a group of people generally of a common language, claiming a common ancestry, living in a particular geographic area and having social structure based on kinship. As they maintain a separate culture and identity, they live far away from the main roads of so-called civilization.

The Harijans experience another form of isolation. They live on the border and in the corners of larger villages and are isolated within society. They are from the lowest rung of the caste ladder and are considered economically and culturally backward.

The approach arenas which our team was investigating were:

1. Developing greater local participation in community decision-making, planning and implementation;
2. Two-tiered health care system involving a centralized health clinic and village health care extension workers; and
3. Developing village-based economic system.

1. Greater Local Participation

The single most important element of AWARE's rural development strategy revolves around the functioning of the Village Association and the Mahila Mandals (women's clubs). In both the tribal communities and the Harijan communities these associations function to bring cohesion and community identity to otherwise fragmented and isolated groups of people. These associations are totally governed by village people of the target group and are given assistance and guidance from AWARE's field staff who live with them in the village. The associations organize the target group into active and purposeful action to respond to issues raised in group meetings. For example, alcoholism has been totally eradicated in most villages due to a series of actions taken by the village association: fines for drinking which are paid into the village association fund, denial of food by the women if husbands are found drinking and other strong moral pressures exerted by the village community. The unifying dimension of the village associations has brought about confidence in the capacity of the poorest of the poor to meet their needs through cooperative planning and action.

2. Health and Sanitation System

The health and sanitation activities undertaken in the project villages are aimed at developing health education, preventative health care, community sanitation systems, treatment facilities, and a trained body of village health workers.

One of the major health programmes is concerned with the treatment of leprosy in Khammam District with a target group of 15,000 people. The overriding objective is to reintegrate leprosy patients into their villages as full participants in the social and economic life of the community which once rejected them.

An 11-acre community health center has been established in the district town of Khammam. The centre provides housing for leprosy patients, agricultural plots which produce crops both for the patients' consumption and for market, schools for children of the leprosy patients and vocational training facilities which teach non-farming skills such as sandal making, weaving, blacksmithing and others.

The staff doctors and health caretakers have developed health education curriculum which concentrates on providing information and instruction about preventing disease, the importance of personal hygiene as a means of promoting health and reducing the spread of disease, prenatal and postnatal care and other health related issues. The information is disseminated by health caretakers to the villages through formal training camps and through informal means, such as posters, role plays, dramas, and songs.

Because people with leprosy are often rejected and cast out of their villages, reintegrating them requires the re-education of the larger community about leprosy - its causes and control. Major emphasis has been given to changing attitudes and understanding about leprosy so that the disease can be controlled and so treatment is sought at the earliest indication of its presence. The village association has been the main mechanism for changing attitudes about leprosy within the larger community.

The village association assists the leprosy patient when he/she returns to the village. The association provides agricultural consultants so that the leprosy patient can establish viable farm loans for the purchase of farming equipment and animals, and any other support needed to promote the economic social reintegration of the leprosy patient.

3. Developing Village-based Economic Systems

AWARE has not only started new income generation projects but has also made available to villages a revolving loan fund that is available for any economic venture that is approved by the village association. The income generating projects have mainly focused on women and have been only introduced in a limited cluster of villages (60). A key new arena of activity for the future is the introduction of agriculture through a demonstration plot. AWARE is now at a stage in which they train individual farmers. When they have one hundred farmers involved, a spinning mill will be started.

The learnings from this approach fall into three arenas: 1) a revolving fund for economic ventures that is controlled by the villages allows for a high payback and has allowed for the poorest of the poor to be funded; 2) women's income

generating projects are best if they only take 2-3 hours since most women are still needed in the field; and 3) village associations provide a coordinating and accountability system to ensure the viability of new and intensified ventures.

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

FIELD VISIT REPORT

Team 10: ETC
(Public Sector Sponsorship Visit)

People's College is an outreach institution serving the tribal people of the Uttar Pradesh hill region. It is well established in the area, and its very active principal, D.S. Shisodia, manages to maintain liaison with a wide spectrum of local political and religious leadership as well as with the tribal people themselves.

Training for a particular income producing skill is the initial focus of contact between a tribal person and the college. Although some training is actually done in villages through a system of decentralized "classrooms," the programme revolves around activities on the Haldwani campus. Courses begin four times a year, and the person continues in training until he or she has mastered the skill. In the case of amberchakha machines and rope-making machines, the equipment is then provided free charge for the person to use in their home upon return to their village. For skills such as tailoring or electrical wiring, the person must purchase their own equipment and will go into business for himself.

It was evident to our team that the time of skill training is also a time when there is a parallel curriculum in attitudes, world view, and motivation. Songs and rituals are low-key, but clearly part of the "culture" that is absorbed. Upon return to the village, a person feels an affinity to the programme of People's College which makes it probable that they will join the village's fortnightly discussion group made up of graduates from People's College courses. There are such groups active in 269 villages, and in some villages, virtually every woman and young man is a People's College product. Because of their sense of connection with People's College, these groups seem able to easily ask for additional assistance from the staff of the college. Help includes a range of farming methods information, soil testing, advice on selecting strains of crops, fertilizers, pesticides, and nonchemical means of controlling crop pests. Help would also be available on any problems arising in connection with the income earning skill learned at People's College.

The combination of local leadership groups (headed by women as is the tribe's tradition), individual industry skill training, and improvement in farming practices, has dramatically improved village income. Housing, nutrition, education opportunities and ability to interact with the outside world have all obviously increased in the villages which we visited.

The team felt that several keys to success could be identified, and each was essential to the success of the programme. They are as follows:

- 1) National government policy favouring decentralized village industry and farming. The government does not tax products produced in villages. The same products produced by centralized industries would be taxed. The government has put massive investment into irrigation schemes and has assisted in clearing forest in selected areas (protecting other areas as forest preserve). State government law limits land ownership to 20 acres of irrigated land per person, thus reducing the incidence of massive farm holdings and keeping land in the

hands of small and medium-sized farmers.

2) Voluntary agencies support of village industry. The Gandhi Ashram, assisted by Khadi and Village Industries Commission, will provide raw materials and basic machinery to the home of the villager and will guarantee purchase of all materials produced. Although the earnings under this scheme are no more than those earned by an unskilled agricultural worker, they are guaranteed and do create the effect of a "minimum wage" for the region. More complex skills earn more income, but find their own markets.

3) Training in an income earning skill as a focus for a wider curriculum of "education for life" offered to tribal people in a context which affirms their tribal identity.

4) Consistent institutional support and outreach over a period of years creates bridges of trust between village and institution. Government policies may alter in approach over time, but the voluntary sector can maintain a relatively consistent presence. In the case of People's College, much emphasis is placed on the concept that the college is among the people, not located at Haldwani Campus - yet the base at Haldwani Campus allows the outreach work to continue in a consistent manner.

The team also visited some relatively large farms (amalgamations of the holdings of several family members) where intensive agriculture and in some cases mechanical agriculture are practiced. The College provides much support for these larger farms and attempts to use these as demonstrations for less receptive farmers in the area. The team did not see that this policy was yet actually succeeding in reaching the less prosperous local farmers. Those hired as daily labour in these large farms are apparently paid substantially more than elsewhere in Uttar Pradesh where farming in general is not so prosperous, but still appeared significantly less well off than persons who owned even a small amount of land. Trainees at People's College apparently do come from this group of landless people, yet the dilemma of providing a comprehensive development programme to them remains difficult. As they do not identify with any village group, they are excluded not only from economic patterns but also from social patterns of upward mobility in the area.

The 21 delegates who visited People's College were from France, Haiti, Senegal, Nepal, Indonesia, the USA, Germany, India, Upper Volta, Peru, the United Kingdom, and the Philippines.

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

FIELD VISIT REPORT

Team 21: Standard Mills
(Private Sector Sponsorship Visit)

Introduction

We went to visit the rural development programme in Panchmahals, Gujarat. This project has been managed by Surat Cotton Mills and Standard Mills. Our Team was composed of people from Nigeria, Canada, U.K., Malaysia, Bangladesh, India, U.S.A. and Philippines.

Before we go on, we as a team would like to say that this visit was a most wonderful experience for all of us. It is unlikely that in this short time we can do the project justice, but we would like to say that this project is an inspiring example of a project which has acted as catalyst in similarly inspiring the previous nomadic tribes of the area in building for themselves a life founded on enough food and now of expanding to other areas of their development.

The project's major base is irrigation. From this other things have developed including health and preschool education. It is an example of how a project, starting from one major need, the basic one of supplying food to the area, has gone on to include not only the provision of other services, but also inspired the commitment and dedication of the whole community.

Approaches

As a team, we took five approach areas with us from our previous discussions in Delhi, to look at them with reference to the rural development programme in Panchmahals, Gujarat.

Cooperation among agencies was instructive. The rural development programme was initiated by an outside voluntary agency which was only acceptable to the tribal people because they felt the agency had both identified and utilized financial and technical resources among government and nongovernment agencies and among financial and other private institutions. It has effectively channelled such resources to the local community and at the same time alerted government and private sectors to their potential contribution to the development of that community. The way the project, controlled by the Surat Cotton Mills and Standard Mills, controlled those initiatives also makes it easier for them to relinquish responsibility to the local tribal community - who are in the process of registering themselves as a cooperative society as part of taking ultimate control for the management of the project themselves.

Awakening and training local people for their own participation has taken place and continues to take place. As a team, we unanimously noted the renewed pride and concern among the tribals to directly involve themselves in their own new situation. The rural development programme has aided this by giving opportunities and training to local people to take positions of responsibility whether as a pump operator, mechanic, teacher or nurse. Those who have pursued education have returned to the village without question, as doctors, engineers and teachers.

Local leadership nurtured through the programme now negotiates both decisions among the various villages covered by the project and with external agencies like the banks which contribute to the programme.

The importance of COMMUNICATING INFORMATION from the tribal village is most exemplified by the fact that the first village to adopt the new irrigation technique, was subsequently visited by other villages both to demonstrate and to motivate them to replicate in their own areas. The relationship between the local structure (Panchayat) and the project management (Standard Mills and Surat Cotton Mills) is such that there are procedures whereby local farmers can express their concern or advice which can then be taken up by anyone for whom it is relevant.

In the establishment of EXTERNAL/INTERNAL FINANCIAL LINKAGE, the approach that worked in getting access to financial resources and inputs was initially the creation of an image of collective financial strength supplied by the outside project management with their experience and standing. This has now allowed the emergence of local community cooperatives and associations and local individual entrepreneurs. Again, the development is to a local self-running community.

The rural programme of Panchmahals, Gujarat is an outstanding example of private sector initiative which focused on a major perceived need of the area which had the effect of stabilizing the life style of hapless nomadic tribal people through irrigating their land. The management skills which the coordinating agent brought to bear have yielded results of wide scope and rapid success. It is a replicable model of a sector approach to launching rural community development from a very low baseline. The four sector approach in this case, where a private sector agent forged the linkage to the public, voluntary and local sectors, has succeeded through the approaches talked of above in bringing to the local community both technical and financial resources and a great sense of pride and commitment among the tribals themselves in tackling their own situation.

There are some red flags. A major possibility is that now that the tribals have a stable base and food resources, they are vulnerable to destructive or disintegrating influence which could be a product of both more leisure time and/or more money. Creative activity and further development in the best meaning of the word must somehow be safeguarded. Though there have been some supportive services developed (e.g. education and health care), the present coordinating agents' resources are concentrated on its primary concern, more land reclamation via irrigation.

We hasten to add that we find no fault with such focus. It is sorely needed for thousands more tribal folks in the district. Our concern, rather, is for further development of community among those already launched into a new life style. Some entity needs to take responsibility to guide them away from the pitfalls other nations have experienced in attempting to help "civilize" their nomadic natives. Unless somebody is available to assist them with comprehensive social development at the pace and in the other ways the tribal folk themselves will discern, then they may be condemned to repeat many of the bitter experiences which have befallen the nomadic natives of other nations when attempts at settlement have not been adjusted to their changing needs.