

A REPORT ON

THE GLOBAL RESEARCH ASSEMBLY

ON

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN MULTIPLE COMMUNITY PROJECTS

held at

Kamweleni Village (Machakos District), Kenya

13 - 27 June, 1983

The Institute of Cultural Affairs
Nairobi G.R.A.

THE
RESEARCH

During the four-day research process, fifty village leaders from around the country of Kenya joined the participants in eight task force groups. These groups were designed to allow dialogue between two or more labs, pilots or projects. They created individual project reports using as a screen the nine elements named in the Showcase. The reports included what each project had done, what had worked, what did not work, the learnings, future questions and issues.

All this data was then reported in a plenary session and passed on to four new combined task forces. These four new groups were each assigned two or three of the nine elements to refine. Taking the data from all previous work, and adding new insights from the village leaders, the groups organized the information into two lists, "what we know", and "what we don't know". From what we know the working groups generated intent statements and four practical sub-elements for each element of Local Development in Multiple Community Projects. At this point, they also cleaned the element definitions. The groups also generated lists of the key underlying principles or presuppositions and pillars. From what we don't know the groups created a list of questions and issues. All this work was reviewed in plenary session and cleaned by the groups. In the final plenary, participants struggled with the questions: "What new elements need to be included?", "What have we learned about the coming year?", and "What are the strategic questions that face us?"

From this dialogue and interchange the GRA defined its subject. Local Development in Multiple Community Projects is a coordinated system of planning, training and implementation which improves total community participation in the development process. At its heart is the systematic catalysis of local initiative that generates practical responsibility in people for the future of their own village, for surrounding villages, for the nation and for the planet. It catalyzes, involves, and equips a broadened base of local leadership in building and demonstrating the kind of social and economic improvements in their communities which lead to self-reliant, self-confident, and self-sustaining development. As such improvements become visible, LDIMCP could create movements of local people doing their own development in expanding numbers of communities. In this case MCP could serve as an integrated system in allowing such human development to reach many local communities. Finally, LDIMCP seeks ways to link this local initiative with the efforts and concerns of responsible officials and individuals in the other three sectors to create structures which would give form to a breakloose of sustained development at the local community level.

COMMON
ELEMENTS

In the statements of strategy expressed by the continents and the labs and pilots several common threads seem to run through the reports. There was a concern for generating and training indigenous auxiliary staff for expansion but also an assumption that mass expansion did not depend on an influx of highly trained and experienced extra-nationals. A question was "the appropriate role of inputs of technology and capital" and its role in accelerating local development and the organisation and timing of inputs to stimulate not dampen enthusiasm and participation. There was an emphasis on systematic expansion schemes rather than responding to opportunities and requests. Finally, there was an awareness of our role in catalysis--people to do their own development.

THE
STRATEGY

The three day strategy section applied the nine elements screen to the practical operations of the participating projects. There were sessions on global strategic scenarios, six month strategies for locations and continents, task forces on common concerns and recommendations to be made to the Global Priors Council and Council '84.

THE
PARTICIPANTS

The 141 participants of the GRA came from 14 nations. All 13 of the labs and pilots designated to experiment with Multiple Community Projects moving around the Human Development Zone were represented. Seventy-two of the participants were ICA field staff directly involved in Multiple Community Projects. There were five community leaders from outside Kenya and two sociologists. Fifty-two village leaders from across Kenya participated in the research of the Assembly.

THE
HAPPENING

This GRA was the first time all of the global labs, pilots and projects had gathered together at one time in one place to reflect upon the edge of multiple community development work across the globe. It was also the first time that such a broad gathering of village leaders had been engaged in a major research event. For many of those who came from around the world, the happening of the GRA was a rediscovery of the Movement; the excitement of the Kenyan Village Leaders Movement was constantly present throughout the GRA. On the closing day, John Patterson on behalf of the Panchayat stated the sentiments of the entire body when he said this Global Research Assembly on Local Development in Multiple Community projects ended with a conviction that interchange has come alive, that a new appreciation of the local is now present, that a oneness of the task has emerged and that there is a new sense of the common global struggle. Participants returned to their points of engagement with renewed commitment to the empowerment of the local around the world.

THE NINE ELEMENTS

CLUSTER SYSTEMS

An organized scheme of multiple community projects including the events which launch the project, the patterns of engagement, designs, models and structures in the project, and the means for catalysing the residents to be the moving force behind multiple community projects.

CIRCUIT DESIGNS

A training and visitation system of regular contact with all participating villages for evaluating, planning, implementation and motivation.

LOCAL LEADERS

An engagement system for calling forth and equipping local people to be the planning and implementing force both for doing their own development and in achieving multiple community development.

PROJECT STAFF

A team of mainly local people committed on a full time basis for a year or more to catalyse multiple community development and who are motivated by a sense of care for all communities and all people.

INTERCHANGE MECHANISMS

A dialogue and evaluation system across communities and among cluster projects involving local leaders, project staff and 4-sector people in sharing development experience and learnings.

FUNDING AND AUTHORIZATION

A mechanism that provides ongoing resources and permission for the whole operation of the project.

4-SECTOR NETWORK

A means of appropriate linkage and interaction among local, public, private and voluntary sectors related to the project.

MOTIVATING STORY

A clear story that relates the development approach and long-range strategy to the deep concerns and cultural heritage of all the people within the project geography and therefore has a motivating effect on the participation.

EXPANSION PLAN

A phased long-range strategy for multiple community development throughout the region or nation.