Rural Development and its Implications in Eastern Nigeria

Ngwu Okoro
RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS IN EASTERN NIGERIA

BY
NGWU OKORO

A thesis submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree, Master of Science, Department
of Rural Sociology, South Dakota
State University

1968

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Thesis Adviser

Date

Head, Rural Sociology Department

Date
BRIEF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The writer is from Ooutu Edda, an agricultural and commercial center of Edda town in Afikpo Division. With over 98,000 inhabitants, Edda town is located at a spot forty-five miles, an equidistance from Abakaliki and Umuahia, both of which are large industrial and commercial cities in the Eastern Region of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

He had his elementary education in Government School, Afikpo, from where he won a government scholarship into the Government Secondary School, Umudike, Umuahia. Graduating five years later, he joined the Ministry of Agriculture, Eastern Nigeria. Since then, he has had a series of courses in the field of agriculture, including the two-year Agricultural Assistants' and the two-year Diploma Courses of the School of Agriculture, Umudike, Umuahia.

As a civil servant in the Extension Service Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, the writer has served the farmers of his Region for over eight years. He came over to the United States on a scholarship under the Students' Exchange Program. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Rural Sociology from South Dakota State University.

On the completion of his studies in the United States, the writer hopes to return to his country to help his government and his people develop the potentialities of the rural communities.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with genuine pleasure that I acknowledge the assistance which several friends, colleagues, faculty, as well as other members of this institution have given me during my studies here in South Dakota State University. Especially deserving appreciation and gratitude are the following:

Professor Robert M. Dimit, Department of Rural Sociology, for his guidance as thesis adviser;

Professor Howard M. Sauer, Head of the Rural Sociology Department, who made the necessary arrangements to enable me to do this study;

Professors Douglass W. Chittick and Marvin P. Riley, Department of Rural Sociology, for their verbal and material encouragements during the period.

Appreciation is also expressed to Mrs. LaVonne Niklason, who typed and proofread this manuscript.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is not easy to state precisely, and yet adequately, the meaning of rural community development. There is no precise and generally accepted definition for it. For instance, the authors of one community development report defined it as a process during which people in the small community first thoroughly discuss and define their wants and then plan and act together to satisfy them.\(^1\) While the emphasis here is all on the community, others, however, would stress the development agency's role. Thus, at Cambridge, England, in 1948, it was defined at a Conference of Colonial Administrators as follows:

A movement to promote better living for the whole community, with the active participation and if possible, on the initiative of the community, but if this initiative is not forthcoming, by the use of technique for arousing and stimulating it in order to secure its active and enthusiastic response to the movement . . . . It includes the whole range of development activities in the districts, whether these are undertaken by government or unofficial bodies.\(^2\)

While the emphasis here is less on the community project, community development is identified with almost any form of local betterment which is achieved with the willing participation and cooperation

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of the people.

On the other hand, Wayland J. Hayes distinguished between community organization and community development. He defined the former as a means of collective action to achieve some end or purpose assumed to be worthwhile, and the latter as being more embracing in its scope and as providing a larger umbrella under which people can gather than does community organization.\(^3\) To him, then, community refers to people who identify themselves with a particular local area and with purposes and actions to control or to develop their collective life and interest.

To an Eastern Nigerian political leader, Dr. M. I. Okpara, however, "Community development means self-help. It means hard work freely undertaken through the inspiration of a vision of a finer future for our country."\(^4\)

These variations in the definitions of rural community development emphasize the fact that different communities have different needs, and also that the same community has different needs at different times. The prevailing situation in a given community should determine what action should be designed to benefit such a community. As is shown in the statement of the problem which follows, this study embodies almost all of the definitions given here but with emphasis on


Statement of the Problem

It was the purpose of this study to analyze rural development and its implications in Eastern Nigeria in order (1) to find effective ways of stimulating, helping, and teaching the people to adopt new methods and to learn new skills; (2) to help them to adapt their way of life to the changes they accept, or have had imposed upon them; and (3) to ensure that the feeling or spirit of community is not destroyed.

Need for the Study

Before October 1, 1960, when Nigeria became an independent sovereign nation, the main emphasis in the development of the country was on communications and material resources, most especially as these related to the cities and towns. There was much less emphasis on small-scale development specifically related to the needs and welfare of the people in their local communities. Consequently, some rural communities tried, within the limits of their human and material resources, to adapt themselves to change and to improve their way of life without outside help of any kind; this kind of community self-development is exemplified by the Yoruba village of Aiyetoro in Western Nigeria. Most small communities, however, needed help to enable them to adjust to the rapid changes that were taking place around them. Such small communities in Eastern Nigeria are groups of people -- in some cases less than a hundred and at most a few thousand -- who live and work together in villages or neighborhoods to which they belong.
Many of these groups still live in the main, according to tradition and inherited custom, and many of them are unprogressive by modern standards. While some of these communities have stayed too isolated from the cities and towns to be much affected by them, others have held so strongly to their traditional beliefs and customs that they have resisted attempts to change them. Others have been too ignorant, or too poor, to change their ways without outside help. Moreover, some changes have been known to cause new problems in some of these areas, to the extent that people changed their farm implements but not their methods of farming and were then threatened with soil erosion. Others used the schools to help their children find work in the cities and towns. In other words, they accepted enough change to upset their traditional way of life without accepting the further changes which would deal with its disorganizing effects. Furthermore, people in the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria feel that they 'belong', and it is mainly this sense of 'belonging' that has kept them observing community standards of conduct and behavior. For centuries now, the people have enforced the accepted group standards on one another. Whenever such enforcements were disrupted by sudden changes, either socially, economically, or psychologically, these communities have been observed to segment or to disintegrate. In addition, rural community development in Eastern Nigeria entails working in the many places where economic development has arbitrarily brought together people from many different communities: for instance, in farm settlements, on plantations, in towns, in industrial areas, and in some
rural resettlement areas. Such places collect people out of their rural communities without providing them with any real community in which to live.

It is for these various reasons, therefore, that this study concerns itself with finding the most effective ways of not only stimulating, helping, and teaching these people to adopt new methods and to learn new skills, but also helping them to adapt their way of life to any changes that may eventually occur, without in any way disrupting their feeling of belonging or their spirit of community. To achieve this purpose, it was necessary to consider many trends and principles of rural community development and to recommend eventually the ones that were likely to be most adaptable and most useful to situations in Eastern Nigeria.

Two limitations of this study are worth mentioning here: the first one is the fact that rural community development in Eastern Nigeria began only about two decades ago, and literature in the field has been very scanty; the second limitation results from the inaccessibility to the writer of more up-to-date materials on rural development programs being currently undertaken in various communities of Eastern Nigeria, in spite of the Civil War now ravaging the whole country. Consequently, the rural community development trends and principles and the proposed process for introducing and inducing change in the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria, as shown in this thesis, are based mainly upon the combined experiences of a few authors in the field and those of the writer who, himself, has not
only been born and reared in a rural community, but has also worked with the rural people for many years. The importance for this study to Eastern Nigeria cannot be overemphasized.
CHAPTER II

PRESENT SITUATION IN EASTERN NIGERIA

Location and Size

Eastern Nigeria is situated at the southeastern end of the Lower Niger, a river which forms a natural boundary between the Eastern and the Midwestern regions of Nigeria. The Eastern Region is bounded on the north by Northern Nigeria, on the west by Midwestern Nigeria, on the east by the Cameroun Republic, and on the south, by the Bight of Biafra, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean. The Region occupies a total land area of 29,484 square miles and has a population of well over 14 million people.

Climate

Eastern Nigeria is entirely within the tropics, but while the climate of the southern part is tropical, that of the northern zone is sub-tropical. There are only two main seasons in both sectors -- the dry season and the rainy season. In the northern area (exemplified by Ogoja and Obudu), the dry season is of a longer duration than it is in the South where it lasts from October to April. In the South, the rainy season is from May to October, with a break in mid-August and September. A principal feature of the Region's dry season is the harmattan -- a dry, northeasterly wind blowing from the Sahara and carrying with it fine particles of sand in a haze which temporarily blots out the sky. During this period, moreover, the nights and early
mornings are cold, while the days are very hot. The severity of the harmattan is greatest and longest in the northern part but reduces both in duration and in intensity towards the coast, being hardly felt in Port Harcourt for more than a few days in December.

In the South the annual rainfall is between 60 and 150 inches. The coastal belt is hot and humid all the year round and has the highest rainfall. Northwards, the relative humidity remains high, dropping only during the harmattan period, from December to February. In the South, temperatures range between 70° and 75° F. in the early morning and between 80° and 90° F. in the afternoon. The northern area is drier, with an annual rainfall varying from 20 to 50 inches; temperatures range between 55° and 75° F. in the early morning and between 85° and 105° F. in the afternoon. The hottest months of the year are March and April, and the wettest months are May, June, and October.

Vegetation and Soil

The vegetation consists of a coastal belt of mangrove swamps at the base, followed by a belt of tropical rain forest of between 50 and 100 miles in width. This is succeeded by a narrow belt of tropical grasslands covering much of the northern half of the Region. North of this is the Savanna with dry open woodland.

The soils of the Region run very much according to its vegetation types, and in some areas, are in patches. Thus, along the coastal zone, tidal swamps interspersed by creeks and rivers predominate. In
the tropical forest belt, the soils range from the very poor, sandy, and porous types around Enugu to the extremely rich and fertile volcanic soils of the Anambra-Ikom plantations. From this part northwards, the soils decrease in quality, terminating in the very open Savanna areas, the soils of which are sandy and porous due to excessive lateral, vertical, and sheet erosions.

The Rural Community and Its Characteristics in Eastern Nigeria

Like other rural communities in various parts of the developing world, a rural community in Eastern Nigeria suffers from certain inherent characteristics; namely, such a community has essentially no power to levy taxes. It is at the mercy of national or regional government for all major and most minor developmental funds, including those for schools and for paying teachers. Thus, any project that costs much money must be financed from outside the community. Moreover, the community government is truncated, for only the most minor decisions can legally be made, and elected community leaders are reluctant to push beyond the defined limits of their authority. Furthermore, populations here are mostly illiterate, and as such, people are often uncritical in their judgments; rumors and gossip run rife. Likewise, leadership patterns are poorly developed, and very often the most competent people avoid entangling themselves in leadership squabbles. Thus, there is a traditional cooperation laden with suspicion and inarticulation as people fear cooperation will enable their potential rivals to take advantage of them. From the economic viewpoint,
the rural community is considered as part of the depressed area of a nation, for it cannot really count on the channelling of much help from other parts of the country. Along with this notion is the fact that basic technical services are either completely lacking or are sometimes poorly developed; even if the community defines its needs, it cannot often get the outside support it wishes. Strictly speaking, then, what are sometimes called "felt needs" of the rural community very frequently turn out to be those needs recognized as such by national planners, and not necessarily those that can legitimately be regarded as major needs of the rural area.

**Diffusion of New Ideas**

During the colonial days, colonial administrators in Eastern Nigeria saw literacy campaigns as the spearhead of progress in the rural communities, but since Nigerian independence, experience has led indigenous Eastern Nigerian administrators to take a more sober view. This is especially true of some remote villages where there is no widespread "lingua franca," where it is difficult and costly to produce and circulate books, where most so called literates are slow and stumbling readers, and where, indeed, many people still cannot read at all.

Fortunately, it is now a well-known fact that the printed word is only one way of reaching people with new ideas, and that it is not necessarily the best, even for people who can read and write. Its disadvantage is that it is difficult to explain new ideas clearly and briefly if only words are used, and harder still when the words are in
books which, unlike teachers or change agents, cannot answer questions or clear up misunderstandings. Consequently, the three social institutions of the family, the religion, and the government and its agencies, render the most visible services in disseminating new ideas and new practices to the rural people of Eastern Nigeria. Religious denominations and families cooperate through church and local organizations to plan and execute rural community development projects. Much of the diffusion work, however, is left to the government and its agencies, the most active of which are the Ministries of Community Development, Agriculture, Information, and Local Government. Apart from reaching the rural community people through various other ways like local councils, district councils, customary courts, cooperatives, schools and adult education centers, these Ministries have one other thing in common and that is, use of pictures in the diffusion of new ideas. Pictures can often convey meanings better than words, especially if the pictures are drawn to represent ideas and relations between ideas as clearly and simply as possible. It was with this notion in mind that the government of the Eastern Region of Nigeria published hundreds of small books and posters in collaboration with the Isotype Institute of Great Britain. Each book was issued in several of the main languages of the region, and on each page was a large picture accompanied by one or two lines of text. Most of the meanings were contained in the pictures which were carefully related.

to one another and to the local culture. The words, moreover, were few and presented no difficulty to the learner. Even the illiterate, once he had the pictures explained to him, could go on studying and learning from the pictures without troubling about the text. Isotypes make books more useful as carriers of ideas by conveying meanings in pictures which even illiterates can understand.

On the other hand, broadcasting avoids the barrier of illiteracy altogether, for radio programs can be heard by people who cannot read. They are especially useful for reaching small and scattered populations whom it would be expensive to try to educate by any other means. In spite of its great advantages, however, broadcasting did not present an easy solution to problems of influencing adults in the rural areas, even where people could listen to the programs. Such programs would only be effective if people could be attracted to listen to them, could understand them, and could see how they could apply the lessons of the programs to their daily lives. Broadcasting, like the printed word, is mainly useful for introducing people to new ideas and preparing them for change.

This is also true of films, and the government Ministries mentioned above, now use some kind of mobile cinema for showing films to people in the villages. Films have many advantages over print and broadcasting as a means of propaganda. Film shows are popular in rural areas so that there is usually no difficulty in collecting crowds and focussing their attention on the screen; and the film, it
is often believed, is a good medium for telling a story which appeals to the emotions of the audience. The Nigerian films -- Smallpox and Daybreak at Udi, and the Ghanaian film, Adu of Kodjokurum -- are of this category. Unfortunately, because of the high costs involved in film production and in training and maintaining technicians to operate film units, the cinema as a medium of diffusion of new ideas still has only limited use.

Another process usually employed by the Extension Service, Ministry of Agriculture is teaching by demonstration. This teaching consists of two sub-processes: (1) the Method Demonstration which deals with showing people how to carry out a given practice, either on their farms or in their homes; and (2) the Result Demonstration which portrays the results of recommended practices in comparison to former practices, under existing conditions.

The Eastern Nigeria Government Policy on Rural Community Development can be summarized in the words of one of its leaders, Dr. Michael Okpara, "We believe that our policy of self-help must affect the whole range of government policy. It is essential that the activities of all Ministries should recognize the need to help first those who help themselves. Our second principle is that there must also be a Ministry charged with responsibility for specialized aspects of community development, such as training, the employment of multi-purpose workers and the like." 6

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While the people of Eastern Nigeria believed that rural community development was an appropriate instrument of change because it used traditional African means to achieve modern ends, strengthened the ties joining the members of their village communities, and supposedly, advanced human dignity, there still existed certain factors that tended to promote or to negate the people's efforts toward reasonable realization of their developmental goals. These factors are considered in Chapter III in the next section.
Figure 1. Map of Eastern Nigeria.
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<th>LOCAL GOVERNMENT</th>
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<th>MINISTRY OF COMMERCE</th>
<th>MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Schools</td>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>13 Road Network 11,000 miles</td>
<td>Water Points 3,000</td>
<td>Cooperative Societies 1500</td>
<td>Community Development Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>(Rate of extension was at 200 miles annually)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Had a total capital of more than $44.80 million)</td>
<td>Offered 167</td>
</tr>
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<td>Secondary Schools</td>
<td>Health Centers</td>
<td>61 Maternity Homes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Students Involved 2,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Youth Clubs established 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>Maternity Homes</td>
<td>556 Bailey bridges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Membership of these Youth Clubs 7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Dispensaries</td>
<td>350 (With a total length of 8,761 feet)</td>
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Figure 2. Rural Development Projects established and supervised by the public Ministries of the Government of Eastern Nigeria, 1960-1964.
CHAPTER III

FACTORS INFLUENCING RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN EASTERN NIGERIA

Communication Media

The essence of community, as John Dewey suggested, is communication.\(^7\) This is true in that without communication there cannot be the usual interaction by which common understandings, common life, and common values are established. Thus, communication portrays a process by which the area of common understanding and shared values is widened in the community. On the other hand, effective communication within a rural community, or between community groups, depends very much on the quality of relationships between the people involved.\(^8\) Thus, in Nigeria where tribal and political rivalry created petty squabbles, upheavals, fear, aggression, and distrust, communication was far less effective than it would have been had there been more friendliness, mutual respect, and trust. Neither the regional nor the federal government leaders, nor even the local community leaders thought it important enough to create a social climate which was necessary for useful and integrated communication. Consequently, messages tended to move more effectively through accepted and reliable channels than through new channels. For instance, rural community


people accepted more easily whatever information they obtained from their neighbors than they did information from an outsider.

One of the most effective communication devices in such a situation is the pilot project, in which the problem is worked out on a small scale by the people who will later decide whether to expand the range and size of the project. It was for this reason that the Olokoro Farmer-Level Project was established by the Ministry of Agriculture, Eastern Nigeria. This project was created to serve two main purposes: (1) to afford students of Extension at the School of Agriculture some practical experience in extension work; and (2) to bring nearer home a collecting ground for a large number of farmers from the local community and thus creating for the first time, the spirit of participation. Clearly then, this pilot project provided an opportunity for the people to see and hear (perhaps to feel) at first hand the nature of an idea, technique, or operation with which there had previously been little experience and about which communication was extremely difficult. In short, it provided for participation, demonstration, and understanding in a way that was difficult to anticipate or to predict.

With the widespread acquiring of cheap transistor radios, moreover, a special program, "The Radio Farmer," was introduced and sponsored in most of the radio studios and television channels. During the schedules, extension officers, or any government officials who had information or ideas to convey to the people, did so. Every talk given during the period was translated into the various vernaculars of
the region. Like other types of mass media, radio and television programs were only useful in calling farmers' attention to new ideas but not in persuading them to accept such ideas. Unlike radios, which were available in almost every family, television sets were still regarded as luxuries, for only the very well-to-do families (especially those in cities) could afford them. The government, however, installed television sets in some local schools and councils in most communities. In spite of these efforts, it was still impossible to get a sufficient number of farmers to participate actively; reports received from a number of extension workers located all over the region showed that only a few farmers even had the time to remain home during the program schedule. Others, particularly those living in the remotest parts of the region, did not see any sense in listening to a "Farmer" that could only be heard and not be seen. Thus, owning a radio was one thing and listening to it, or adopting any practices taught by it was yet another.

Farm magazines served a limited purpose here, for most of the community people were illiterates. Posters were comparatively more useful than magazines in portraying ideas and meanings to farmers. Mere possession of magazines and posters did not necessarily mean adoption or acceptance of new ideas and practices. This applied also to bulletins published by the Agricultural College and the Ministry of Agriculture.

County Agent or Extension Worker

Not very many farmers favored going to an extension agent or
extension worker for advice. In fact, trained extension agents were so few that each of them had to be assigned to manage provinces of well over two million inhabitants. Consequently, only very few farmers could be reached, and even when this happened, not much could be done to follow up action in seeing to it that those who showed signs of accepting new practices were encouraged. The fact that most Extension programs were always formulated by high officials of the Extension Service Sector of the Ministry of Agriculture and pushed unto the local farmers, made most local community inhabitants feel unconcerned about such programs. Farmers' participation in drawing up their own program right from the grass-root stage was very necessary to enlist their full cooperation at the execution stage. While it could be said that a farmer could be an Extension Agent's friend without in any way adopting practices recommended by the agent, it could also be contended that the more farmers contacted by an Extension Agent the greater the chances that such farmers would endeavor to adopt new practices taught them. Apart from extension workers, there were other change agents such as missionaries, Peace Corps volunteers, and local community volunteers. The numbers of these agents, however, were too small to be of much consequence in disseminating new ideas and new practices to people scattered in the vast but remote areas of the region.

Agricultural Show or Field Day Attendance

While this event showed some encouragement, it did not in any
way mean that everybody present at the show was interested in adopting new ideas. This emanated from the fact that people from different areas of the region, as well as people from all works of life, assembled in the shows and exchanged views and information. Moreover, in addition to agricultural exhibitions there were on display some traditional dances and thrilling acrobatics which in themselves, drew larger crowds than those seen around the agricultural booths. Some competitive sports for school children were also organized, and these sport events equally attracted large crowds from far and wide. Once again, then, while it would not be right to assume that attendance of such shows as those mentioned here meant adoption or acceptance of new ideas and new practices, it could be said, however, that it portrayed some elements of potential adopters.

Social Characteristics of the Rural People

By examining the rural community inhabitant in his social and economic context it was possible to explore his accessibility to and exploitation of information about recommended practices and ideas. Many things were involved here, but some of them were more important than others. Thus, the ethnic group, or even the religious group to which a farmer belonged did not influence his willingness or unwillingness to accept new practices. This was so because the majority of these people were of a fairly homogeneous population, differing only

in their personalities. Moreover, there were no other nationalities living in these areas; the only people of different ethnic origin were a few missionaries and volunteer workers. Likewise, religious affiliations mattered not to these rural people, for they often felt that the ultimate decision to adopt or to refuse any new practices was solely their own business and their business alone. It was not only that many of these people were not Christians but also that almost all of them regarded every other person outside their group as an agent of the government possibly sent to exploit the rural people.

Another factor considered was whether or not work and residence experience of the rural inhabitant influenced his decision to adopt new practices. This also did not make much difference, for having been exposed to the same rural environment and to the same age-long, traditional practices, everybody knew almost as much as every other person. While, however, there were possible differences in adoption rates in favor of the groups with wider experience, such differences could not be taken as significant in that they were not measured statistically.

It would normally have been thought that differences in age would lead to differences in adoption rates in the sense that younger people often assumed to be more liberally minded would adopt or accept new practices faster than older people who, usually would be regarded as more conservative. This notion was not the same with the rural people of Eastern Nigeria; the opposite was the case. The older the farmer grew the more experienced he became in the customary ways of doing
things. Moreover, since the older rural person had better command of land and other material resources, and in addition, was exposed to more varied experiences, there was the possibility that he would be more adaptable to new practices than a younger person. The little differences mentioned here, however, were only inferred and not measured.

*Education.* Education was one of the immediate needs of the region -- including the rural communities. This was so because the people's development plans depended upon an ever-increasing supply of educated persons at many different levels. In addition, the region's plans for building a democratic society required an educated electorate. Consequently, the Government of Eastern Nigeria devoted 40 per cent of its budget -- an annual total of well over twenty million dollars to education. The basis of this educational program rested on the primary school system, the total enrollment of which amounted to about one and one-half million pupils in 7,000 primary schools. These schools were situated in every village, and the village communities were staunch allies in carrying through the plans. During the colonial days, education in Eastern Nigeria was incompatible with rural life. Peasant agriculture, dominant in the rural communities, had nothing to offer to young school leavers who rushed to white collar jobs in government departments. The average school leaver, therefore, regarded the life of a peasant farmer as a terrible bore, and peasant farming, as full of uncertainties. In the light of this, the exodus of school leavers from the rural areas to the big towns continued to increase at an increasing
rate. It could be said, then, that as far as adoption of new practices was concerned, education played very little part in influencing a farmer's decision. Subsistence farming based on traditional practices did not demand much modern education. All that was required of a young rural inhabitant was traditional education based on observation and imitation. As Nigeria began managing her own affairs in 1960, educational plans (adult education) became more widespread in the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria. It still remained to be seen, however, whether education would play any major role in promoting or in militating against these rural people's adoption rates.

Social Participation. On the other hand, the rural inhabitant's formal social participation -- in most areas organized in age-groups -- tended to influence his adoption decision. Like most other reference groups, these age-groups had much influence on their members, and this influence could be either for or against adoption of new practices. One prominent advantage in this was that whenever a few members of the groups adopted any new measures or practices, many others joined because of the competitive spirit that was rampant in their patterned activities. Thus, it could be seen even from casual observation that rural farmers with high adoption prospects were more active in social organizations and tended, comparatively, to participate more widely in age-group activities than non-members. Since change agents -- extension workers, missionaries, and local volunteer workers -- often channeled their actions and programs through these organized groups, it could easily be
assumed that such wider social participation tended to expose a farmer to a wider range of ideas, and hence prepared him to adopt more new practices.

**Farm Organizations.** The same thing happened in the case of membership in farm organizations. This was demonstrated by the fact that membership in the two largest farm organizations found here — The Poultry Farmers’ Association and the Rice-Mill-Owners’ Union — were respected for very high adoption rates. This also might be interpreted as an expression of social participation, for there was often a concerted willingness to try new ideas even at a time when risks for the unknown were heavy and enormous. With every member of these farm organizations being willing to adopt new practices, these participants made visible economic progress that tended to encourage them in their efforts to abandon traditional practices. This economic strength has further reinforced the adoption capability of the members of the farm organizations.

**Level of Living.** The next factor considered was the level of living of the rural inhabitant. This factor could hardly be seen unless given a more intensive, closer study. People who adopted and tried new practices were not necessarily those who had the highest level of living in the community. In fact, some of the richest farmers were among the most conservative in the region. Yet, while it could be agreed that a farmer with a higher socio-economic status would be more disposed to change than one with a lower status, it was difficult
to isolate this one factor from many other possible factors.

**Characteristics of Farm Operating Unit and Adoption**

Among the important factors considered in this study for their role in influencing adoption was the size of operating unit. In the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria, units of farms, measured in acres, were fragmentary and scattered. Apart from large plantations and communal farmlands which belonged to either cooperative societies or communities, no single farmer could boast of owning large enough acres of farmland to significantly allow for trials of the unknown. Moreover, shifting cultivation begun here since the making of man managed to change place with another type, an alternation of cropping and fallow, which has remained an essential feature of the agricultural economy of most of the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria. There was in practice a common rotational pattern in which yam, maize (corn), and other minor intercrops were planted in the first year, followed thereafter by cassava, which could be harvested progressively from the twelfth month until the land reverted to bush fallow. Usually the years of fallow ranged from two to seven years. Fertilizer was not widely used; this was not economically feasible. A man farmed in order to feed his family and to make some little money that would enable him to pay his tax. Gross farm income was, therefore, very meager and extremely discouraging by modern standards. In the rice-growing areas where vast swamps were being cultivated two times a year, farmers were more prone to adopting new practices than the ordinary farmers mentioned earlier in this thesis.
Land Tenure. Land tenure system remained the greatest impediment to successful commercial agriculture in Eastern Nigeria. Land was generally scarce in the region; communal rights to land were ill-defined, and individually owned plots were frequently found in fragmented holdings. Moreover, there was always some highly emotional attitude toward land, as demonstrated by most farmers. Any attempt to alter existing land tenure customs often raised some grave suspicion and distrust. In the circumstance, even a progressive farmer owned scattered and uneconomic plots, and his holdings on communal lands were usually allotted him for two or three-year periods only. Consequently, the system did not allow enough time for trials of new practices, nor would a tenant risk investing his money in land from which he would be driven away two years later.

Diversification. Diversification played little or no part at all in determining the farmer's adoption decisions. Rural farmers carried out their diversification practices merely by planting yams, cassava, cocoyam, and perhaps, peanuts — all planted separately or mixed up as major and minor crops. The operational and cultural practices involved in raising these crops were virtually the same and were as traditional as ever. Since this meager diversification of crops did not entail a large acreage of land, nor did it make any difference in the farmer's attitude, it could only be said that any farmer willing to adopt new practices might do so with other possible factors in mind and was not necessarily influenced by diversification.
Record-Keeping. Farm record-keeping, while considered to be an important potential factor in channeling a farmer's adoption decision, could be more so termed only when associated with large scale or commercial undertakings -- including farming. But farming in the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria could not, by world standards, be described as commercial. As has already been mentioned in this thesis, farming in the region was still on the subsistence level stage, with farmers and their families living from hand to mouth. Farming operations were not undertaken for profit; they were merely carried out as a routine designed to keep life going. Such operations, moreover, were so simple that a farmer could tell offhand the types and numbers of crops planted on his farms. In addition, since these farmers were mostly illiterates, farm record-keeping was out of the question. Under the situation described here, then, a farmer made his decisions in respect to adoption as a result of other possible considerations, probably, that of farm record-keeping not inclusive.

Personality Orientations and Adoption

The relationship of personality orientations to adoption of new ideas and practices came next in the continued attempts to find factors that played the greatest role in influencing rural inhabitants of Eastern Nigeria in their adoption decisions.

Reference Groups. Reference groups -- notably, village-groups
age-groups, and councils of elders -- had the tendency to influence adoption decisions of their fellow rural inhabitants. This was possible due to the fact that almost all of the people in these communities traced their descent to a common ancestor. The ties of blood were reinforced by the constant contact which came of village, rural life. Thus, a child passed through the stages marked by such isolated life in company of his contemporaries. With the onset of manhood, the child and his colleagues were initiated into an age-grade of young men as designed by the traditions of the land. As the years advanced, and death thinned the ranks of his age-grade, he gradually acquired the prestige of an elder and joined the council of the senior men who controlled the affairs of the rural community. The typical village or rural community in Eastern Nigeria was, therefore, a self-sufficient unit, both economically and socially. Life followed an age-old pattern. The bonds of community loyalty were very strong. Added to this was the fact that most land belonged to the community and was divided out annually by the elders among those who wished to farm. Thus, by both loyalty and self-interest, a man was tied to his village community where his simple needs were met, and where his life moved steadily in grooves already worn smooth by the customs of many, past centuries. Identification with local groups was a common practice. Rural community inhabitants often identified themselves with their immediate communities, neighborhood, than they did with communities farther away from their own. Such extreme interest in local affairs by the rural people could influence them into accepting or refusing new
practices. What individuals did depended very much on the collective action of other members of the group. In a society where the citizen still had to shoulder his own social and economic welfare, it was axiomatic that such an individual should have some form of security and dependency. Various local groups grew up to serve this purpose in the community. The influence of these local groups was enormous, and the failure of the teachings of early missionaries was attributed to the fact that most of these missionaries began first by aiming at destroying existing local groups instead of working through them.

High local group identification, therefore, could be negatively associated with adoption in the sense that most of these local groups were more traditionally oriented than they were modern.

Membership in agricultural organizations often enhanced the farmers' chances of adopting new practices. Examples have been given in this thesis of the way members of the Poultry Farmers' Association and the Rice-Mill Owners' Union have progressed because of their more liberal, more dynamic practices. The writer happened to have worked with members of these two agricultural organizations and could, therefore, testify in person that the people were most amenable to change. They were often the first groups to accept new varieties of seeds, seedlings, and practices such as using modern techniques and skills for farming operations. It was easier for them to assemble in their meeting places to listen to the addresses of the technicians than for non-members. Their willingness to listen to technical advice and their readiness to put such advice into practice attracted many government
officials to the two agricultural organizations. Their concerted actions, from the raising of their crops to the selling of their farm products, and above all, their ability and willingness to assemble their resources gave these organizations an economic position that was difficult to beat. Thus, the more identified members were with these agricultural organizations, the higher their rate of adoption.

Rigidity, Flexibility and Adoption

Analysis and evaluation of this factor was limited to a consideration of the farmer's attitude toward credit and how this influenced his adoption decisions. The rural Eastern Nigerian was conditioned by his colonial masters into developing cold attitudes toward credit. All production credit facilities were in the hands of expatriate citizens who were more interested in what benefited their home country (Great Britain) than they were in that of a colonial country -- Nigeria. It was no wonder, then, that the British banks in Nigeria, for instance, the Barclays Bank and the Bank of British West Africa, made loans available only to such commercial firms as the United Africa Company (U.A.C.), the John-Holt, and the Shell Oil Company, all of which belonged to British subjects. When loans were extended to indigenous Nigerian business men, if at all, they were loans not only loaded with very exorbitant interest rates but also designed to promote the business interests of the British commercial firms. Agriculture was not given any attention except where it
concerned the establishment of rubber and oil palm plantations, also owned by British companies. This kind of official attitude toward agriculture undoubtedly discouraged rural community farmers. Lack of funds and the difficulty of obtaining loans from commercial sources of credit held back many far-sighted and energetic men and women in the region. People might have land, labor, skill, and experience but were without capital to improve and develop these resources. With the assumption of power by indigenous Nigerians, however, a new era of progress was ushered in the country. Two local banks -- the African Continental Bank and the United African Bank -- were established to cater to the interest of the Nigerian people. To provide the people with this sorely needed capital, the Eastern Nigeria Legislature passed a law in 1963 establishing a Fund for Agricultural and Industrial Development (F.A.I.D.) within the governmental framework. About $4,500,000 was allocated to the whole scheme. Consequently, many types of production credits were set up, such as sale of supplies and equipment on credit to be repaid in farm produce. This kind of production credit was used effectively in many parts of Eastern Nigeria. It had the advantage of relieving the farmer of uncertainty about the price which he could get for his harvest out of which to repay the loan in cash. He might purchase improved seed varieties (rice or corn), or fertilizer, knowing how much grain or other produce he must give in

payment for it after harvest time. The second type was known as supervised credit. This combined production credit with technical help to the farmer using it. A trained government agent first helped the farmer to make a production plan for his farm business for the coming year. This plan included the amounts of seeds, fertilizers, implements, and other necessary materials to be purchased and the cost of each. It often included an estimate of the amount to be spent on hired labor as well as an estimate of the amount of credit needed to finance these expenditures and the value of the increased harvest. On the basis of this farm plan, credit was extended to the farmer either in cash or in kind. The credit agent visited the farmer from time to time, helping him use efficiently the supplies and equipment financed by the loan. Many farmers borrowed frequently to meet urgent farm needs, but many of them did not like to borrow unless it was absolutely necessary. Farmers' attitude toward credit changed considerably for good, and this somehow increased their adoption rates.

**Role of Extension Education in Adoption**

Remarkable progress has been made in establishing extension education in Eastern Nigeria. In fact, Extension Organization was set up as far back as 1929. So far, the organization's programs have had little impact on adoption of improved practices in the rural community. Two major limitations were responsible for this: (1) an insufficient number of well-trained extension personnel; and (2) lack of effective means of communicating with and motivating rural populations.
Numbers of extension workers were woefully inadequate, but this was only part of the whole story, for this lack of success might also be attributed to the over rapid initiation and expansion of extension education programs. Moreover, not only were many of these staffs inadequately trained (crash courses offered), but also the urgent nature of some programs forced them to cope with ill-planned activities. Thus, the desire for maximum impact in minimum time encouraged the establishment of an extension organization which generally was administered independently of research institute and Agricultural College. This was not conducive to good coordination.¹¹

Extension has failed to meet its goals partly because of major obstacles in the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria. They included: traditions impeding progressive change; low status of agriculture and farm people; lack of appropriate credit institutions and farmer incentives; little or no representation of farmers in the political power structure; lack of understanding by national leaders of extension's potentials and requirements; inadequate protection from political interference; human resource deficiencies, including illiteracy and poor facilities; inefficient transportation and communications with isolated farm and rural families; lack of complete packages of improved production practices; and extension personnel with insufficient training in crop and animal management. Consequently, the know-how, show-how concept has been no more successful in extension than in research.

¹¹Notes by Dr. Reagan Brown, Extension Sociologist, University of Texas.
It was not all extension methods that could work successfully in Eastern Nigeria. As a result of this, the gross concepts of extension that had been borrowed in toto from other parts of the world experienced some setbacks, for no adaptive research was done to discover and refine effective teaching and communicating methods for the rural communities. Experience has shown a number of characteristics which a farmer education program must have if it is to succeed. Mosher has outlined these as follows:

- It must go to farmers where they are; it must be specific to farmers' present interests and needs; it must respect the fact that farmers are adults; it must be fitted into times when farmers are not too busy; the unit of instruction for teaching and learning must in most cases be a particular new or changed practice; it must be accompanied by immediate opportunities for farmers to try out the new methods taught; each new or changed practice proposed must be technically sound and economically profitable; farmers need encouragement to experiment.  

This set of guidelines, adapted to local conditions, will need extensive trial. Such guidelines, badly lacking in the Eastern Nigerian Extension Education programs would surely improve adoption potentials of the people should they be tried over there. There was every possibility of things improving more rapidly as a result of many United States trained extension specialists of Eastern Nigerian origin going back home in great numbers.

It could only be said in the circumstance, that extension education in Eastern Nigeria was slowly making some impact in the lives

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of the farmers, even though this was meager, and also that the chances of the rural people being more amenable to extension programs and practices were extremely bright and encouraging. With farmers' participation in extension programs and activities, it was anticipated that farmers' adoption decisions would improve considerably.

**Inadequate Marketing, Processing, Storage, and Distribution Facilities.** Furthermore, inadequacies were found in the marketing, processing, storage and distribution facilities of farm products in the rural communities. The importance of these facilities to the rural inhabitants could not be overemphasized, and each one of them was as important as the other. To provide aid when it was needed was not solely, or even mainly, a matter of providing money. In fact, what the rural community inhabitants really wanted were materials or skilled help of a kind not locally available. There was not much the people could do by themselves; they relied entirely on the Extension Service, solidly backed by government programs and funds. The government, through one of its agencies, the Extension Service, had the primary responsibility for providing these essential elements. It was required to do everything possible through research, education, service, and some regulation to ensure adequate and effective inflow of aids into the rural communities. As in other tropical communities of the world, losses of grains after harvesting were extremely high in Eastern Nigeria. In some areas of the Region, particularly in the rice-growing parts, it was estimated that 3.55 per cent of the 1961-1962 production of rice and benniseed was lost to rodents. The
quality and amount of available grain could have been increased by providing proper storage. In addition, since supplies of farm products were seasonal, construction and operation of storage facilities would also have provided the basis for a more stable market by making it possible to avoid gluts during the harvest season and shortages during the planting season. Indeed, agricultural development increased the output of farm products in the Region. There was, on the other hand, the demand that there be a market for these products and a price for them high enough to repay the farmer for his cash costs and his effort in producing them. Failure to achieve this objective tended very much to blur farmers' adoption rates. This was because farmers had been encouraged to produce without any market demand for their products, to sell their products, at times, to speculative business men without any organized marketing system, and to lose confidence in the working of the marketing system which, if properly organized, would have promoted and ensured farmers' reliance on extension programs, and, therefore, their adoption potential.

**Economic Factors**

Economic factors also had some part to play in farmer's adoption. For instance, there were present here some needs, as well as some production potentials. Eastern Nigeria needed to increase its food production faster than ever before. This was necessary because of its rapidly growing population, the rate of which was 2 to 3 per cent annually. The situation has been worsened since 1966 by the
influx of refugees of Eastern Nigerian origin who were ejected from other regions of Nigeria. Thus, as the people's incomes increased, a large proportion of the additional income (50 to 60 per cent) was spent for food. This demanded continued increases in both the people's incomes and in their food supplies. On the other hand, Eastern Nigeria had many advantages because there were large accumulations of technical information available to it on how to increase agricultural output. Moreover, Eastern Nigeria had large potentials for increasing crop yields by applying known production methods. However, careful adaptation and testing of agricultural technology in the Region was necessary, especially as this area was located in the tropical zone where climatic and soil conditions differed greatly from those in other parts of the world. There undoubtedly were large potentials for improving productivity in agriculture in the rural communities by applying better farming methods and using more capital. Effective use of scarce capital and abundant labor was necessary to achieve this possibility. Arable land per person in Eastern Nigeria was less than that of any other region in Nigeria. But limited land resources were not construed to be a barrier to economic growth, even though it was realized that abundant natural resources obviously favored economic development.

Moreover, the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria had much labor and relatively little capital. This was obvious because human labor was a major source of capital improvements in the rural areas. Farm people carried out many operations that needed extra hands; they
cleared land, made mounds or ridges, dug drainage ditches, constructed farm building, and built roads. In this situation in which labor was plentiful while capital and land were scarce, what was needed most was finding the best effective combinations of these factors for maximum productivity.

Consequently, emphasis was laid on increased output per acre. Increased crop production per acre inevitably ranked as one of the most important ways of increasing farm output in Eastern Nigeria. Greater use of fertilizer was probably the greatest promise for achieving these quick results. When combined with improved seeds, disease and pest control measures, and better soil tillage practices, large increases in crop production per acre were possible in most areas. Furthermore, with the Eastern Nigeria Government Land Reclamation Policy coming into force two years ago, opportunities existed for expanding land area under cultivation in many of the riverine areas of the Region. Expanded and improved irrigation facilities also offered opportunities for expanding farm output in the rural areas. But, provision needed to be made for improved power, pumps, and know-how to ensure good and lasting results.

Increased investment in the human factor was essential to implement planned production programs. Education and research were necessary for agricultural progress. Therefore, the need for overcoming the illiteracy obstacle and making elementary education freely available to as many children as would go to school could not be stressed too much. Basic education was required for improved farming
and the successful functioning of cooperatives as well as for intelligent participation in the economic and political affairs of the rural communities. Adoption of new technology required drastic changes and the learning of new skills and management techniques from both local and outside teachers. Only a few families in a community could be sufficiently courageous enough to try new methods. Occasionally, even these families needed guarantees that no economic losses would be incurred by the change. Accomplishing breakthroughs in adoption of new farming methods were especially difficult in these rural communities where most of the people were illiterates. Thus, many ingenious devices were employed to carry out an improved production program with people who could not even read the directions on the seed and pesticides packages or the contents of a bag of fertilizer. Moreover, with the establishment of cooperative societies in the Region, it was realized that successful functioning of these cooperative organizations became even more difficult than teaching new methods of production.

Economic incentives and the means of achieving them could play vital parts in farmers' adoption rate. Thus, economic incentives associated with family operated poultry farms were a powerful stimulus to agricultural output and productivity in Eastern Nigeria. Not only these, for public programs that assured markets for farm products at stable prices also were necessary to get farmers to try new production methods. In Eastern Nigerian rural communities, farm people clung to traditional production methods by which they had survived. Many of the people were ill-prepared to take risks and try new production methods; they did not have resources to fall back on if the new methods failed.
Even when benefits from improved farming were beginning to be known and economic incentives were being provided through land and marketing reforms, the means for carrying out the new farming program were badly lacking.

In addition to management and technical assistance for learning new ways of farming, rural community people needed supplies of chemical fertilizer, pesticides, better seed, and simple tools. Local storage and marketing facilities were also needed to handle the expanded production. Above all, government sponsored works programs were needed to engage under-employed workers who could be organized to provide storage facilities, access roads, and other rural improvements needed to increase farm output and to transport the products to market.

Finally, the necessity for balanced agricultural and industrial economy could not be underestimated; hence the Government of Eastern Nigeria's establishment of a fund for Agricultural and Industrial Development (F.A.I.D. Scheme). By so doing, the government demonstrated its belief that agricultural and industrial growth could be complementary as well as competitive. Thus, while evidence was growing of the movements of farm people to non-agricultural occupations in the Region, it was also known that these movements made possible the development of manufacturing, construction, transportation, and service industries. On the other hand, industrial growth created employment opportunities for rural people not needed in agriculture and helped make possible the introduction of farm mechanization which, in turn, contributed much to increased productivity of labor and land used in agriculture.
Consequently, this expansion of agricultural output and larger exports of agricultural products helped finance imports of badly needed capital goods. For adequate analysis, however, many more factors, other than economic ones, were considered for their possible role in influencing adoption decisions of the rural community inhabitants of Eastern Nigeria.

**Cultural Factors**

Cultural factors undoubtedly had considerable impact on the people. Thus by tradition, many of the rural people viewed new things with skepticism and uncertainty. In fact, conservatism appeared to be culturally sanctioned. In most of these communities, groups of elders served as experts in the ancient traditions and customs of their people. Such elders were not only embodiments of folk wisdom but they also were symbols of power. They piloted the affairs of their groups according to their traditional beliefs and convictions.

As if this situation was not already a sufficient setback to the progress of change in the Region, the Eastern Nigeria government early in 1960 enacted an act, "The Customary Court Act, 1960," which established at least one customary court in every county council unit within its area of jurisdiction. The majority of the judges appointed to serve in these courts were illiterates and as such, could not have had any experience either in legal studies or in legal practice. Their only qualifications were their supports for the political party in power or their experiences in the ancient traditions and customs of
the land. This 1960 act thus strengthened the activities of the elders and helped instill in the members of these communities old ideas that tended to block adoption of new practices. Not only that these culturally defined ideas differed greatly from one community to another but that each elder, or for that matter, every customary court judge interpreted them according as they were handed down to him by his own ancestors. Worst of all, many rural people believed the sayings and proverbs of these elders and often contended that what the old folks said was always true.

This attitude of the people posed a great threat to possible adoption of new ideas and practices in the rural areas. This was even more so when extension workers and other change agents completely neglected the people's values, customs, and beliefs. At any rate, it would not just have been enough for the agents to take into account the community's needs, customs, values, and beliefs unless they also recognized that these aspects of the traditional community culture were in some way linked with one another, and that change in one aspect of the culture might, therefore, affect other aspects of it and might create new problems.

Thus, even the smallest innovation easily set off a whole series of other changes that it was often very difficult to see what the end result of any change would be. For instance, in many areas, agriculture was linked with religion and religious rituals in keeping with the people's belief in their ancestors. While such people often welcomed changes in the crops they planted or the tools they used, they were
very resistant to attempts to change the central concepts of their culture. It was believed that these people would continue to retain their old beliefs long after new ideas and new practices have destroyed forever the old pattern and balance of community life.  

Social Factors

Social factors constituted another set of impediments to adoption in the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria. The traditional patterns of interpersonal relationships among people in these communities had a great deal to do with whether adoptions of certain new ideas and practices were possible. Indeed, in these rural areas family and kinship relations so welded people together that their solidarity as a group left little or no room at all for individual initiative and decision. Elders of village communities made traditional laws by decrees and interpreted them according to how they thought and felt the laws should apply to their people. The villagers had no options; they recognized and accepted the laws without question. There was no doubt that there were some occasional conflicts and disagreements among the people; yet, this traditional attitude of the people kept the community well intact and highly integrated. This happened because everybody had grown up to know his or her obligations and expectations, many of which were regarded as social imperatives. Reciprocal behaviors among community members fulfilled a number of functions. Thus, in times of emergency —

famine or food shortages, lack of money, death, and in many other situations -- economic, spiritual, and physical support was provided.\textsuperscript{14}

It was little wonder, then, that the people of Eastern Nigeria were able to shelter and accommodate their kith and kin of well over two million in number, who were forcefully and brutally pushed out of other parts of the former Federal Republic of Nigeria. To receive and feed all visitors, especially relatives, was still an obligation. These mutual obligations either replaced or reinforced many activities such as social security and welfare, cooperatives, and credit facilities, that normally should be provided by the government. The rural areas were not yet enjoying as many of the government social amenities as the cities and towns.

Moreover, some aspects of the communities' social structure and their associated values seriously inhibited change in much the same way that family structure was capable of doing. For, while it was correct to say that castes were absent in these rural communities, the same thing could not be said about social classes. Traditional title holders were regarded as the upperclass citizens of the land, with only the members of the royal family (Chief's family) above them and every other person under them. Membership of this "Title Holders' Society" was optional, open, but very expensive. The society served as thrift and recreational refuge to its members. Its defects, however, lay in the selfishness of its members and in the unnecessary religious rituals

associated with its working. Its principles and philosophies were embodiments of traditional values, customs, and beliefs. Many prerogatives arbitrarily claimed and jealously guarded by groups of this kind considerably slowed adoptions of new ideas and practices. Yet, still many more factors were to be identified and evaluated.

**Psychological Factors**

Psychological factors caused many visible barriers to adoption and change in the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria. To get a full insight into the problem, it was necessary to examine these barriers under such categories as basic perception, communication, and learning.¹⁵

Effects of differential perception, one of the causes of low adoption of new ideas, were widespread in the Region. For instance, agricultural extension agents encountered difficulty in introducing improved rice seed to be used in replacing the local, low-yielding varieties in the Ogoja and Abakaliki provinces. In these areas, the farmers grew degenerate local varieties, mainly from rice winnows which yielded a very high percentage of empty glooms after harvest. Since the winnows were worth little or nothing, they were often sold to the local farmers at very low prices, with the result that when extension agents introduced a superior, high-yielding variety -- the British Guiana 79 Rice Variety (B.G. 79 Variety) -- it made no difference to the farmers, who believed that it was just the same rice. The fact

¹⁵Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 121.
that this improved BG 79 Variety was more expensive than the local varieties even worsened the situation. In the circumstance, the farmers and the extension agents perceived this same problem in different perspectives and, therefore, made change difficult.

Furthermore, farmers were doubtful and suspicious of programs initiated by government agencies. They contended that government officials visited rural communities mainly to uphold the laws, to gather taxes, or to follow criminals. In almost the same way, differing perception of purpose or goals of programs between planners and technicians on the one hand, and recipient farmers on the other, impeded adoption or change. There were many occasions when extension projects that had very successfully gained local support were suddenly stopped for no apparent reason, except that perhaps some top extension service officials appeared to have lost interest or to have been unwilling to follow up with the program. Farmers in the area did not really demand much; they were easily satisfied when their minimum expectations were met.

Communication problems or language difficulties very often led to non-adoption of new ideas. Most such difficulties were attributed to the fact that technicians frequently talked to or advised illiterate villagers in technical terms, hopefully thinking that their advice to these people would be carried out to the letter. In a majority of the cases, however, the results turned out to be exactly the opposite of what such technicians had meant to impart to the people. Dangers of misinterpretation of purpose were sometimes involved
in agricultural demonstrations. The extension agent, for example, asked for the loan of a small plot of land which was cultivated in a fashion considered to be superior to traditional ways and in which improved seed was used. Based on careful research, and on the agent's ingenious step-by-step method, such a demonstration plot produced a greater yield than nearby fields cultivated with the old methods. Use of fertilizer in breeding and storage of the yellow yam variety showed such results on government farms. But when this very kind of demonstration was not skillfully carried out on farmers' plots, it actually set back agricultural programs in the area. Thus, in the Anambara, Ogoja, Ikom, and Abakaliki areas, local farmers paraded their very fat yams (after harvest) in an attempt to demonstrate to their neighbors the superiority of the old method. Experience revealed later, that these dangers were particularly great when local workers were under pressure from their superiors to show results for national and political targets.

The adoption of new ideas and techniques required that the rural people learn and, often, unlearn according to the circumstance demanded. This entailed learning problems, the psychology of which was detrimental to progress in the area. Thus, in order to succeed in disseminating information or new ideas to the rural people, a continuing presence of a teacher (or a technician) for a good number of days was necessary to give advice at the moment it was required, not a quick and hurried demonstration. The learners, moreover, would have the opportunity to try the new practice or technique and to
practice on it without investing money; nor would their interest in any way threaten the basic security of their families or divert funds to untried operations. In fact, each of the farmers or learners would be given adequate opportunity to convince himself of the usefulness of the innovation before committing himself financially. The cost of the innovation, in addition, must be within the resources of the learner.16

The absence of all or some of these conditions could make it much less likely that the innovation would be adopted. Whatever masteries of techniques were used in introducing new practices still required that farmers and local participants have personal desires or motivations to change.

Stimulants to Change

Stimulants to change formed another important factor the presence or absence of which determined the adoption or rejection of new ideas and new techniques in Eastern Nigeria. Consequently, the strategy of planned development in this area involved not only identification and neutralization of barriers to change but also the identification and utilization of some positive factors -- cultural, social, psychological, and others -- which constantly opposed the elements of tradition and conservatism.

Such positive factors, Foster termed "Stimulants to Change,"17 and contended that when in a particular society such stimulants were

16 Foster, op. cit., p. 141.

17 Foster, op. cit., p. 144.
few and poorly developed, the culture remained static; when they were numerous and strong, change came easily. Speaking of community development, Jackson stated the picture clearly:

When a village is faced with a suggestion of change, there exists a balance of forces. On one side of the scales are those forces which are against change -- conservatism, apathy, fear and the like; on the other side are the forces for change -- dissatisfaction with existing conditions, village pride, and so on. Successful community development consists largely of choosing those projects where the balance is almost even, and then trying to lighten the forces against change or to increase the factors making for change.\(^{18}\)

As a matter of fact, the rural inhabitants of Eastern Nigeria were very strong in some and yet very weak in other stimulants to change. For instance, the desire for prestige was a universal trait among the people. This increased prestige was achieved through acquisition of or modification in some visible symbols such as food, clothing, housing, material items, and even, dancing patterns.

Likewise, desire for economic gain very often compelled an individual to adopt a change; hence, demonstration techniques, especially in agricultural extension programs, capitalized on this fact. It was realized, in addition, that programs designed to persuade farmers to grow new or improved crops had a better chance if the produce was destined for the market rather than for home consumption. This was so because once people began to grow new crops for the market, they were almost certain to begin to consume them at home.

Mair found developments in one African country's land tenure

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suggested that economic forces ultimately superseded those of such values as tradition and religion, and concluded that "an abstract theory of the sacredness of land which inhibits their recognition of its economic potentialities... There are not many recorded cases where someone who was invited to dispose of land for a profitable consideration has invoked such principles as a ground for refusal..." 19

She suggested as a generalization of wide application that "the conservative force of tradition is never proof against the attraction of economic advantage, provided that the advantage is sufficient and is clearly recognized. In the case of land it is abundantly clear that the emotional and religious attitudes towards it which are inculcated by native tradition have not prevented the development of a commercial attitude." 20

Innovation or change was at times accepted by the rural people because of a competitive situation between individuals, between groups, or between villages. The importance of this was often recognized and, hence, the use of agricultural shows and fairs to stimulate interest in programs. When straightforward appeals to progress and development failed, another method was tried; apathy was often broken down by arousing a spirit of competition or emulation between neighboring communities by playing up local rivalries. Indeed, the rural or village


20 Mair, op. cit., p. 52.
communities of Eastern Nigeria enjoyed very warm loyalties from their members, to the extent that when one community acquired for itself some amenity that its neighbors lacked, this was a matter for great pride. This always caused envy among neighboring communities, which often strove to keep up. The Eastern Nigeria Government felt that encouraging competition between villages was a very useful developmental technique, and it used its grant-in-aid and subsidy policies to perpetuate the practice.

The success of an innovation, as has been pointed out repeatedly in this thesis, depended in large measure on the major and supporting circumstances that existed as well as the recognition by people of the need for the new practice. The sequence and time at which the innovations were introduced and the major and supporting circumstances combined as a result had much to do with acceptance or rejection of the innovation. The time aspect required that innovations be introduced at the right time within the yearly cycle. This was necessary in order to ensure that rural people had enough money for their purchases. In the average rural community, for example, the amount of cash that people had or kept fluctuated widely during the year. At harvest time people were relatively prosperous. Thus, if new materials or practices came to the attention of villagers at this time, they were much more willing to spend money on these materials than they would have done before the new harvest or during the famine season when food was scarce.
In concluding this section, it was essential to emphasize the fact that the rural people of Eastern Nigeria accepted and were able to accept innovations because of a variety of interlocking and, indeed, mutually reinforcing reasons. Frequently, too, these reasons for acceptance were quite different from those that motivated change agents.
CHAPTER IV

RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES CONSIDERED

IN RELATION TO THEIR POSSIBLE APPLICATION TO

THE RURAL COMMUNITIES OF EASTERN NIGERIA

In previous chapters, rural community development was described as the process by which a community adapted itself to change, and a rural community development agency as the inside or outside organization (government, missionary, volunteer group) that tried to help speed up this process. In the light of this, some rural development principles were examined and evaluated in relation to their possible application to the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria.

Discontent with existing conditions in the community must initiate or sanction the development of the agency. This was necessary in order to avoid wasteful dissipation of efforts. Deep and widely shared feelings of discontent with respect to certain features or needs of the community might be an effective springboard for creation and development of an agency. While it should be said that such discontent could not be artificially induced, it could be assumed, and indeed, experience often showed that such discontents might arise spontaneously or that freeing people to talk would bring to the surface discontents which had long lain dormant. This principle was essential to develop a sense of community in a functional rural community.
Discontent must be focused and channeled into organization, planning, and action with respect to specific problems. Wholesale discontent was not of much value. To provide motivation for action, however, discontent must be focused on something specific. For instance, people who were aware of and disturbed about a problem needed to come together, to begin discussions about the problem and its scope, to begin to plan how to deal with it, and in light of this, to begin a program of action. Programs must be based on realistic and achievable goals to avoid frustration.

The discontent which initiates or sustains community organization must be widely shared in the community. While discontent was an appropriate springboard for many different kinds of minority movements -- political parties, religious sects, educational movements -- rural community development could not be viewed as a minority movement and could not be initiated solely by reason of needs or discontent which appealed to only a very small group in the community. The discontent must, therefore, be recognized and understood by the major parts of the whole functional community. Like a welfare community, the development agency must seek to identify problems which were of deep concern to all its members.

The agency must involve leaders (both formal and informal) identified with and accepted by major subgroups in the community.

Rural community development as described earlier in this thesis required the participation of the people of a community; the
people were to be united in common action. Since, however, everyone in the community could not be involved in face-to-face contact with others in the community, a means must be devised for participation through representation. This required identification of those groups of people in the community which had significance for the participants and the identification of the leaders of these groups. Identification of such major groupings required some understanding of the social organization of the community in which the work was being initiated. Care must be taken to include those formal and informal groups which held the allegiance of the people. Inclusion of the respected and trusted leaders with whom the major subgroups identified themselves provided a major step in integrating the community and made possible initiation of a process of communication, which if sufficiently effective, would nourish and sustain the process of rural community development.

The agency must have goals and methods of procedure of high acceptability. The development agency needed to bring together diverse elements in the community, each with its own interests, attitudes, and behavior patterns. To do this would not be an easy task. Consequently, the agency needed to formulate its goals and guidelines as a frame of reference. Frequent reference to goals often provided for security, stability, and consistent direction which was essential in such an agency made up of diverse groups in the community.

The agency must develop active and effective lines of communication both within the agency and between the agency and the
rural community. This was essential for the free-flow of interaction by which common meanings, common life, and common values were established. It implied that communication involved a good deal more than the mechanical process of receiving and transmitting messages. The idea of communication as shown here, moreover, portrayed a process by which the area of a common understanding and shared values was widened in the community. Some conditions were required to achieve this aim: there must be created a social climate which permitted and facilitated communication. Communication in meetings, for example, would be more effective when people felt comfortable and secure; when there was freedom from fear and anxiety about others in the meeting; when people felt on equal-status terms; when contributions to discussion were received with appreciation and understanding. The way in which communication was structured was also of enormous importance. Thus, the arrangements of people and their relationships that were made to facilitate communication and the methods that were used to make interaction meaningful, all needed to be properly investigated.

The agency should seek to support and strengthen the groups which it brings together in cooperative work. The agency, hopefully, sought to be an organization of the whole rural community. Consequently the whole community required to participate through the units or groups into which it had divided itself. These units, moreover, came together through their leaders to achieve objectives all had defined as desirable. It could be said, then, that the agency did not exist
apart from these units; it represented the common life of the units. In short, the agency should be no stronger than the sum of its parts, the groups which composed it. The agency should not be torn apart or disorganized by dissension and apathy but must work as a strong, cohesive group.

The agency should be flexible in its organizational procedures without disrupting its regular decision-making routines. In this case, specialists or groups of knowledgeable people from the area could be involved in or consulted on matters pertaining to development. A great variety of patterns for arriving at a consensus might be used without necessarily, at any point, taking responsibility away from the group charged with decision making.

The agency should develop a pace for its work relative to existing conditions in the rural community. Two ideas were involved here: one referred to the pace which the agency developed for its own work, and the second to the pace of life which existed in the community and which would condition the speed of the community program. The first idea required the agency to develop and acquire its own pace; this was its internal organizational arrangement. The second idea, the existing pace in the community and the pace at which the community would involve itself in a community program mattered more. This could be so because almost any community project, even though it implied a relatively simple development, required adjustment not only to the obvious change but to the effects of the change on other
aspects of the culture. A simple change like the introduction of a water system in a village might require decisions as to outlets for homes, gardens, farms, and even plantations, and each of these would in turn affect existing behavior patterns. There was, therefore, the possible implication of long months of planning, negotiating, and referring matters back to subgroups. Differentiating targets clearly into short and long-term categories might constitute a useful strategy in the circumstance described.

The agency should seek to develop effective leaders. The main concern of the agency here should be to develop leaders who would facilitate the community organization process, who would help the central agency to be productive, and who would contribute to development of morals both in the agency and in the community. This required that different leadership talents be developed for different tasks.

The agency must develop strength, stability, and prestige in the community. Rural community development could be regarded as a process which tended to move forward toward increasing cooperation among community groups as the latter dealt with common community projects. It required to be more meaningful to the community, and this could be accomplished in part, at least, by the successful achievements of the development agency, by persistent and consistent interpretation, and by the high prestige of the agency, be it a local council, committee, or board.

People in a free society might not cooperate if they felt they
were threatened. An agency which threatened in any way the existence of certain traditional groups might become an object of suspicion. Ways must be found, therefore, to clarify this relationship; the agency should exist to carry on planning only in those areas which members agreed represented common concern and suitable fields for co-operative work.
CHAPTER V

A MODEL FOR RURAL COMMUNITY GOAL SETTING

One way of looking at rural community goals as an important element in effective community problem solving constituted a model which hypothesized three levels of rural community goals, the broad, intermediate and operational goals. 21

Broad, Intermediate, and Operational Goals

Broad (basic) goals. Broad goals are statements of broad over-riding, somewhat ultimate, basic aims or purposes.

Intermediate goals. Intermediate goals are statements of rural community aspirations for the future which included some indication of how they might be achieved. The assessment of the ability to achieve these goals was relatively of small significance, for such goals were somewhat the realistic dreams and hopes for the future of the rural community.

Operational goals. An operational goal is an explicit, precise statement of expected solution to immediate rural community problems or parts of these problems. This model implied that wide and general agreement was needed in the rural community at each level of goals for effective community problem solving. These goals, moreover, pointed to the direction of action in broad outline and in

details. This meant that effective action took place when goals were explicit, understood, and widely agreed upon in the rural community. Ideally, then, understanding and general consensus were necessary at all these goal levels.

**Barriers to Setting Goals**

The following ideas had direct application to the problems of a change agent or community leader who sought to aid a community achieve goal consensus as a prelude to effective community problem solving activities.

**Imposition.** Goals that were imposed on people seldom elicited high motivation toward goal attainment. Thus, when rural leaders, teachers, chiefs, community volunteer workers, or others who were attempting to motivate the rural community people, imposed organizational or personal goals upon the members, they often met with resistance or apathy.

**Over-abstraction.** Goal statements were often too abstract to be functional. The goal statement needed to tell the person or the group how it might be achieved, and how the person or the group might know when progress was made toward the goal.

**Over-aspiration.** Children, particularly those in the middle class homes, were taught to work for goals that were impossible to attain. Rural community group members and groups were more likely to work toward goals which were possible to attain with effort.
Lack of awareness. Members and groups were often unaware of real goals or of hidden agenda, or underlying motives. Members frequently worked hard for goals, the nature of which they were not aware. Bringing goals into awareness was one step in goal attainment and in control over one's goal-action behavior. Uneasy concern over unacceptability of real goals usually caused organizations, groups, and individuals to build up elaborate rational structure to take care of goals which, if stated openly, would conflict with public statements of morality or good.

Premature decision-making. Premature decision-making usually emanated from the fact that impatient people made verbal statements of goals without adequately working through at the conscious level. Hasty formulation of goals led frequently to less than full commitment to work toward the goal. Group goal setting was really a long process of clarification of difference, reconciliation of difference, and creation of something that contained the individual goals but was something more than the individual goals. Consensus was difficult but rewarding.

Inadequate resources. Inadequate resources often made it impossible to achieve set goals. Rational persons and groups set goals within the bounds of available resources. Resources could be internal or external. Groups, to be effective, set goals that were attainable with the resources that were in hand or that might be procured.
CHAPTER VI

A PROPOSED PROCESS FOR INTRODUCING AND INDUCING CHANGE
IN THE RURAL COMMUNITIES OF EASTERN NIGERIA

Creation or Stimulation of Pre-conditions That Could Be Instrumental
to Rapid Rural Development and Adoption.

The rural communities must be given some power to tax themselves whenever necessary. This would eliminate the official red tape often involved in the process of rural inhabitants attempting to get permit for collection of funds for community projects. Moreover, there must be under community control, administrative organizations with the necessary legal powers to take action.

A good percentage of the population must be literate. As has already been stated in the previous chapters, the level of illiteracy was still high. This point would be further treated later.

Leadership patterns must be well developed. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the importance of developing and using local leadership to further the cause of rural development could not be over-emphasized.

The Eastern Nigeria Government must allocate more funds toward the development of its rural areas. Technical services in health, agriculture, education, and the like must be well developed and made available.

These conditions should serve as supplementary to the principles listed in the last chapter, all of which could be regarded as
necessary ways for introducing new ideas and practices to the rural community. Where such unlimited basic potentials existed, the role of the rural community developer would just be that of a catalyst, that of someone who could stimulate people to take stock, assess needs, decide upon action, determine priorities, and get to work. But since almost all of these basic potentials were not available in the areas under consideration, a rural developer would adopt a different method — introducing and inducing change through identified channels.

Use of Educational Institutions to Introduce Change

The educational system of the rural communities could aid in the preparation of the young for adulthood by inculcating in them the basic social values, and in developing the skills necessary for participation as citizens and as economically self-supporting individuals. Regular schools which could be more visible expressions of the educational institution, would best serve as channels for directing some social change. Any program for change, therefore, should carefully assess the part the school could play in the process.

As has already been mentioned earlier in this thesis, the schools in Eastern Nigeria were once a means of removing the brightest boys and girls from their local communities, but that practice stopped long ago. Schools were now getting more deeply involved in directing and organizing the young into constructive efforts to improve rural or local conditions. This was because the people of the rural areas learned, though in the hard way, that social change could come more
easily only when people had developed a willingness to try a new idea or practice. Involving school children in development programs would mean involving their parents also. This method was once tried and proved to be very commendable by the Extension Service in Eastern Nigeria. Extension agents distributed "ES. 1. Maize" to school children in the rural areas of the Region, and because it cost the parents nothing to purchase the seeds, a majority of the children received complete cooperation from their parents. After harvesting the crops, the pupils were allowed to retain whatever they reaped. Almost all of the reports from agents in the areas where the distribution had been made indicated, two years later, that the parents of those children who participated in the program had adopted the new variety of maize.

The same method has been used in introducing the use of fertilizer in yams, rice, vegetables, and other crops. The latest use of this method was in the distribution of improved varieties of budded citrus and mangoes in which the competitive spirits created in the pupils made it possible for the first time in the history of Eastern Nigeria for people to enjoy fresh fruits throughout the year.

In addition, schools and churches would be the widest and fastest sources for reaching people as almost all families would be represented in either of these two collectivities.

Provision of More Adult Education Facilities in the Rural Areas

Literate populations would be easier to deal with in introducing change to a community. In Eastern Nigeria, most of the more elderly rural inhabitants could neither read nor write in English.
The Regional government was already doing much to improve the situation, but much still remained to be done in that line. In fact, adult education should form a "core project" of change the program of which should be planned and introduced in all of the rural communities. The success in this field could help solve easily most of the other blocking habits often associated with illiteracy.

Many local inhabitants frequently indicated their willingness to enroll in many of the adult education schools but were often discouraged by lack of funds on the part of the government. Many of these adult school centers had to shut down as a result. Should more adults learn to read and write, then, a rural developer could rely more on the people's understanding and cooperation.

Utilization of Agricultural Extension Education to Introduce Change

Since the majority of these rural inhabitants were farmers, it was reasonable to say that any intention to bring change to them must be directed to a medium that they would understand. Extension agents and their field men, moreover, could tell easily where leadership was located in the rural areas and could, therefore, contact and consult with such leaders.

In addition, the teaching methods used by extension agents as a means of teaching various classes of people, people often varying in age, education, interest, and in their responses to such teachings, portrayed the extension method as most appropriate for disseminating new ideas and practices in the rural areas. The methods often used by
extension agents and their field men could be shown as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Contact</th>
<th>Group Contact</th>
<th>Mass Contact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm and home visits</td>
<td>Method demonstration meeting</td>
<td>Bulletins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office calls</td>
<td>Leadership training meetings</td>
<td>Leaflets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone calls</td>
<td>Conference and discussion meetings</td>
<td>Circular letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal letters</td>
<td>Result demonstration meetings</td>
<td>Radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result demonstrations</td>
<td>Tours</td>
<td>Television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Exhibits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miscellaneous meetings</td>
<td>Posters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of all these methods mentioned here the most useful in introducing new techniques or change in Eastern Nigeria would be the Method and Result demonstrations. The two methods would be based upon showing people rather than telling them and would present to the people new ideas and new techniques as adapted to their local conditions and situations. These two types demonstrations would be:

**Method demonstration.** The method demonstration would show people the step-by-step process of carrying out a given technique. It could be a lesson designed to show farmers the way to apply fertilizers to rice, yam, or citrus; or it could be a program to show cocoa farmers the method of spraying fungicides on their infested cocoa pods; it could even be carried out in the domestic center to show would-be housewives how to prepare special dishes.

The advantages of the Method demonstration include the following:

(1). It is highly acceptable in proportion to teaching costs.

(2). It has high publicity value.

(3). It is adaptable to many teaching situations, such as
home, field, and public buildings.

(4) It teaches skills.

(5) It motivates and stimulates action because seeing, hearing, discussing, and doing are employed.

(6) It provides opportunity for developing leadership.

(7) It builds confidence in the demonstrator.

(8) It promotes personal acquaintance between demonstrator and people.

(9) It often provides some opportunity for gaining insight into other problems or learning how people in an audience think and feel.

There are, however, limitations of the Method demonstration. These limitations include the following:

(1) It is not well adapted to all subject matter.

(2) It requires careful preliminary preparation and practice.

(3) It necessitates considerable skill.

(4) It involves slightly greater expense than verbal presentations.

(5) It may lower teaching values. 22

Result demonstration. This teaching technique would demonstrate the results of recommended practice in comparison with a former practice, under existing conditions. It could be used to demonstrate the differences in the yields of crops showing treated and non-treated plots in fertilizer application trials; it could be used to compare differences in the yields of improved and local varieties of crops.

The advantages of the result demonstration are:

(1). It furnishes a local proof of the desirability of establishing a recommended practice.

(2). It is an effective method for introducing a new practice.

(3). It appeals to the eye and reaches the "show me" type of individual.

(4). It provides a good source of information for meetings, news items, pictures, radio talks, etc.

(5). It furnishes cost data and other basic information for use in revising the program.

(6). It yields a high rate of takes to exposures.

(7). It aids in developing local leadership.

(8). It establishes confidence in the agent and in extension work.

The two methods described above have already made considerable impact on the farmers of Eastern Nigeria and could still be more frequently used in introducing new practices and techniques to the people.

**Farm and home visits.** Despite the high expense involved in this method, it could still be used in rural communities in Eastern Nigeria, some parts of which were so sparsely populated and so remotely situated that very often motor vehicles could not reach them. When well carried out, this method would afford to the extension worker more first hand information about the life of the people; develop more cordial and more personal relations with the people; and would enable the worker to ascertain the source of leadership and influence in the area.
Office calls. An extension worker has an unlimited environment or space as his classroom. Whether in his office, at his home, on the field, even while traveling, he would often be called upon by farmers to demonstrate his ingenuity through personal advice and technical demonstration. Office calls often formed such demands for the extension worker's help, and he would always be prepared and willing to help his farmers without fear or favor.

Meetings. By attending meetings with farmers the extension worker would get to know more of the local farmers and would be in a better position to acquaint himself with their needs and problems. During such meetings, the extension worker must allow free participation of all present.

Newspapers and radio. Not much could be accomplished by the use of newspapers and radio; although agricultural programs like the "Radio Farmer" and the "Farmers' Life" were often carried by radio, experience showed that only a minority of the rural inhabitants were interested in them. Newspapers and radio could, however, be used to convey information to both the rural and city literates.

Application of Appropriate Communication Methods to the Process of Change

Three kinds of communication could be regarded as written, spoken, and visual. These three could either be used separately or combined in a teaching method in the rural areas. Much of the
teaching would be better presented by use of visual aids to ensure reasonably lasting impact in the minds of the inhabitants. Thus, in the words of Hicks:

Pictures and words together perform a more effective function than either can perform alone. There can, however, be an inequality in their communicative values, the value of each medium being the clarity, coherence and force with which, in its own way, it says something about a given subject. The ideal is reached when the values are equal and in balance, for then the single expressive statement has maximum impact. 23

Visual aids could be defined as any device utilizing the sense of sight intended to improve communication, and they could be divided into (a) Primary Visuals; and (b) Visuals classified by method of use.

Primary Visuals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photographs, including transparencies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drawings and art work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specimens, Objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models, Symbols</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visuals classified by method of use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Displayed:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specimens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objects, Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits and displays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters, flash cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flip books, bulletin board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flannel boards and magnetboards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalkboards, Maps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charts, graphs, diagrams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrated circular letters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illustrated publications</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Projected:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slides and filmstrips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motion pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead projection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opaque projection material</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visual aids, as the name reveals, would be used as an aid only. The role of visual aids is varied:

(1). They can arouse and hold interest.

23 Sanders, op. cit., p. 233.
(2). Good visuals can help to teach more.

(3). Facts communicated with the aid of visuals are remembered longer.

(4). Visual aids can save time.

Moreover, the characteristics of good visual aids can be enumerated:

(1). Visual aids should be suitable.

(2). They should be simple.

(3). They should be accurate.

(4). They should be attractive.

(5). Visuals should be necessary.24

It has often been said that the efficiency of any group depends upon the efficiency of its communication system. Stated in another way, it can be said that he who controls communication, controls totally. Thus, in order to succeed in making useful impacts on farmers and the rural people, rural development agents must endeavor to establish an effective communication system with other region-level and, particularly with the community development and organizational specialists. In other words, there should be some concerted efforts in carrying out tasks, and all would likely be needed in the development process. Effective lines of communication would need to be maintained between rural development agents on the one hand, and other professional workers, organized communities, and urban as well as rural leaders.

Local leaders should be assigned the responsibility of keeping the people in the community informed at all times regarding goals, projects, results, and consequences of the development program. This would be necessary, for people could participate in rural community development largely to the degree to which they understood the program; such people would accept and promote change if they understood the necessity for it.

**Adoption and Adoption Process**

Adoption could be defined as a decision to continue full use of an innovation, implying that the adopter was satisfied with the innovation.

The adoption process is the mental process through which an individual passes from first learning about a new idea to final adoption. The five stages in the adoption process are listed below.

(1). **Awareness**: In this stage the individual is exposed to new ideas but lacks detailed information about it. This stage, for example, could represent a stage in rural communities in Eastern Nigeria when new improved rice and corn seeds or new cocoa varieties are brought to the notice of the local farmers.

(2). **Interest**: At this stage the individual is motivated about the new idea. He seeks more information about the new idea which he believes will help him compare it with old practices to which he is accustomed. He demonstrates his interest in the idea and wants to learn more.

(3). **Evaluation (mental trial)**: In this stage the individual evaluates the practice, technique -- whether he could use it in his own situation or not. He compares the advantages of the new idea over other alternatives available to him.

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and finally decides whether to accept or reject the idea.

(4). Trial: The individual tentatively tries out the new practice or idea, accompanying his action by acquiring information on how to do it.

(5). Adoption: This is the stage during which the new practice is fully integrated into an already existing or on-going operation.

The average time between initial information and final adoption has been known to vary considerably according to people, place, and practice. For, not all people will adopt new practices at the same time; nor is final adoption always permanent adoption. Furthermore, information sources may vary in their functions, for example, the different adoption processes would require different information methods as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Trial</th>
<th>Adoption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mass media:</td>
<td>Mass media,</td>
<td>Other farmers</td>
<td>Salesmen</td>
<td>Other farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers, Magazines,</td>
<td>Other farmers, various</td>
<td></td>
<td>Other farmers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio, and Television</td>
<td>agricultural agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td>County Agent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The nature of the new practice would often affect the adoption rate. Some of the important characteristics of the new idea affecting rate of adoption are as follows:

(1). Cost: New practices which call for more expenses are often adopted more slowly than those with less expense. Practices and techniques involving high initial cost seem


to be more risky; thus retarding their adoption. This point should be borne in mind when introducing new practices to Eastern Nigeria. For any new practice to be tried at all, it must be fairly cheap to purchase or to operate.

(2). Complexity: New ideas which are simple and easy to understand and use are more easily tried and accepted than the more complex ones.

(3). Visibility: Practices in which the results are easy to see are more readily accepted than those with less visible results. In Eastern Nigeria, for example, look-trials conducted on farmers' plots by extension workers often resulted in more cooperation and adoption than trials of practices verbally related to farmers.

(4). Divisibility: Practices which can be tried on a small scale, such as the look-see trials on farmers' plots mentioned above, are often more likely to be accepted than those which cannot be split and tried on a small scale.

(5). Utility: If the new practice shows a major improvement over the existing methods, it has more chances of being accepted. A farmer in Eastern Nigeria, for instance, could easily accept or adopt new seed variety if he felt that its yield was higher than that of his old variety.

(6). Group Action: There are certain practices which need group adoption, and there are others which need individual adoption. Thus, while adoption or acceptance of new ideas, practices, or techniques such as fertilizer trials, new seed varieties could be regarded as individual adoptions, the building of new schools, bridges, roads, health centers, pipe-borne water, maternity homes, and the opening of same could be termed group adoption.

The above points could serve as guidelines to the rural development agent in choosing his goals and objectives.

Recognition and Application of the Concepts of Culture, Social Organization, Role of the Innovator, and Cultural Bias to Rural Community Development

The concept of culture shows how customs are linked with one
another, and how a change in one way affects many others, or how one well established custom may prevent or retard change in another. Thus, when the nature of customs and the fact of their linkage is well understood, a development agent has a primary frame of reference for planning and directing his program of change. This frame of reference, often spoken of by social scientists as the "concept of culture," is simply the understanding that all people everywhere behave in accordance with patterns which they have learned in the process of growing up in society and which make sense to them as an over-all design for living.28 This understanding of customs as learned behavior makes people aware that change involves some degree of unlearning and of new learning. Once this is fully understood and realized, change agents can find help in guiding change through using processes of suggestion and of learning.

A social organization is a set of customs in terms of which people cooperate; it is a part of every culture. The social organization consists of recognized groups of individuals who are accustomed to act together for certain purposes and who abide by certain codes of behavior. The codes frequently consist of rights and duties which the group expects its members to abide by and which are the basis of their cooperation. The social organization of the people, like their culture of which it is a part, constitutes an interrelated

whole, and changes in one section will have greater or less repercussion on others. In introducing a new idea, then, appropriate recognition must be given or accorded to such social organizations as may exist, since they may be potential channels of communication and cooperation and, therefore, a starting point for programs.

The application of the concepts of culture and social organization provide rural community development agents, as it were, with maps of the terrain in which they are working.

A new technique is always introduced by someone -- extension agent, technician, administrator, or native leader. Any one of them, though loosely, is known as an innovator. The innovator is also a part of the change situation, and his role as a factor must be assessed.

An innovator may be a native or a foreigner, but whatever the case, his actions and activities must be evaluated with reference to the culture and social organization of the people. The actions or activities may be in conflict with the customs of the people with whom he is working. Thus, the history of the relations of the change agent's ethnic group with the people among whom he is working may be an important basis of favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward him, regardless of his own individual characteristics. His attitudes toward local customs, not only the techniques that he is trying to change but also other customs not closely related, will be observed and will influence his relations with the people. Thus, his success or failure may be very largely a result of the perception of him held
by the people he is trying to influence.

The fourth and last concept is that of cultural bias, which shows how identical behaviors in two different societies may have quite different meanings. In any program of change, therefore, the agent should bear in mind that the culture in which he grows up predisposes him to certain views and values. Setting aside such preconceived views and values is necessary to succeed in introducing change.

The four concepts discussed here appear to be primary for use in guiding change programs. They constitute vital means for appraising a situation, for planning steps in initiating change, and for discerning causes of success or failure.
CHAPTER VII

CONTINUOUS APPRAISAL AS A BASIS FOR
CONSTANT ADJUSTMENT IN PROGRAMS

Change programs often induce and introduce change, not only in practices but also in social relationships and attitudes. Since it is not possible to predict what all of these changes will be, and since some of them will be chain reactions, constant analysis is essential to ensure continued adjustments. If a setback develops at either the top or the bottom of the lines of communication, or within them, that fact should be considered immediately. If it becomes apparent that lines of communication are not adequately carrying through from top to bottom or from bottom to top because of blocks, quick rectification is essential in order to forestall discouragement or failure.

The rural community development expert's role in this case is, therefore, constantly to observe, analyze, and understand these processes. To do this, he should refrain from occupying an administrative position; he should, instead, be free to study all segments of the total process of change and made responsible for doing so. If his position is an administrative one, he will almost certainly be restricted to one segment of the process and, therefore, not be able to make the observations and recommendations of which he is capable. He should, however, be a staff member, free to communicate and advise with all responsible administrators and technicians, including those
in the highest authority. In such consultation he is the specialist who should be depended upon for an understanding of the beliefs and attitudes that lie hidden behind present practices and which of these it will be difficult and which easy to change. He should also know to what extent change is being accepted and blended with traditional knowledge. His analysis must be precise and, especially, sufficiently current to portray chain reactions and keep the program in continuous adjustment. By no means the least of his contributions should be a continuous appraisal of the extent to which the knowledge and desires of the people at the bottom of the channels of communication are traveling upward and being interpreted to technicians and administrators.

Since the specialist is only a member of a team of workers, it must be kept in mind that this team will include not only outside technicians but all the highest authorities and best technicians of the Region and the leaders of the rural community groups that change programs are designed to serve. Because human relations are dynamic, the specialist has learned that his chief task is to study people and programs in action. To do this effectively, therefore, he must learn what the human relations, attitudes, and practices are before programs are launched and what desired changes are contemplated. The rural specialist must analyze constantly what has happened to these human relations, attitudes, and practices in the process of change. Such an analysis is his greatest single contribution to the other members of the team on which he works. 29

29Spicer, op. cit., p. 293.
CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY

The main concern of this study was to analyze rural community development and its implications in Eastern Nigeria, with a view to finding effective ways of stimulating, helping, and teaching the rural people to adopt new methods and to learn new skills. Consideration was also given to the possibility of helping the rural people to adapt their way of life to the changes they accepted or have had imposed upon them, while ensuring that as change occurred, it did not destroy the people's spirit of community.

The inhabitants of the rural communities of Eastern Nigeria have for many decades continued to practice their traditional methods and skills with little or no sign of the impact of modern change. Wherever some meager changes did occur, such changes created more new problems than the old ones they were meant to solve. Most changes upset the people's traditional way of life without providing them with adequate alternative ways for dealing with the negative effects further created by such changes.

The Eastern Region of Nigeria, located in the southeastern part of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, had a land area of 29,484 square miles and a population of well over 14 million people. The climate ranged from tropical to sub-tropical with cool to hot temperatures and sparse to heavy rains. The vegetation and soil ran according to the topography and rainfall -- running from very good to
very poor.

The rural communities of Eastern Nigeria were mainly farming collectivities of from a few hundred to a few thousand inhabitants. These communities could neither levy taxes nor make legal decisions of major significance. The populations were often not literate, and leadership patterns were usually poorly developed. Rivalry, competition, and suspicion frequently limited cooperation among the people. Moreover, basic technical services were poorly developed, and sometimes lacking completely. Thus, even if the rural communities defined their needs, they could not often get the outside support that they wished.

The government of Eastern Nigeria, however, had a definite policy of helping those communities that demonstrated adequately internal or local self-help. It could not at any rate be said that this government policy was fully and appropriately explained to all the communities involved. Diffusion of new ideas was slow and ineffective as a result of lack of adequate communication between the Regional government and the local communities. Rural families and local church organizations usually played important roles in helping to disseminate new ideas and practices and, occasionally, could also help to impede change. Government agencies -- the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Health, Local Government, Agriculture, and Education -- all contributed immensely toward the development of the rural areas. They primarily executed government development policy without prior consent of the rural people concerned. Basic decisions affecting such
communities were thus made from outside, and usually most local inhabitants did not even know how or why such decisions were made. Furthermore, many organs of these government agencies somewhat retarded change instead of promoting it. For instance, the customary court system, an organ of the Ministry of Justice, usually upheld traditional ideas and values to the detriment of modern change.

Rural community development in Eastern Nigeria, therefore, could be described as being liable to many varying factors, some of which could promote or retard change in the communities. Such factors as communications media, county agent or extension worker, social characteristics and personality orientations of the people, economic, cultural, social, and psychological traits, were only a few of the possible long list of factors involved.

In order to make rural development in Eastern Nigeria a success, it would be essential to work within effective principles and methods as stated below:

Discontent with existing conditions in the community must initiate or sanction the development of a change agency; such discontent must be focused and channeled into organization, planning, and action with respect to specific problems; the discontent which initiates or sustains community organization must be widely shared in the community; the development agency must involve leaders (both formal and informal) identified with and accepted by major subgroups in the community; such development agency must have goals and methods of procedure of high acceptability; the agency must develop active and
effective lines of communication both within the agency and between the agency and the rural community; the development agency must seek to support and to strengthen the groups which it brings together in cooperative work; moreover, such an agency should be flexible in its organizational procedures without necessarily disrupting its regular decision making routines; the agency should develop a pace for its work relative to existing conditions in the rural community; such an agency should seek to develop effective leaders, and in addition, must develop strength, stability, and prestige in the community.

To enhance such rural development principles and methods as listed above, community goals must be so chosen as to include broad, intermediate, and operational goals. Barriers to goal setting, such as imposition, over-abstraction, over-aspiration, lack of awareness, premature decision-making, and inadequate resources must be taken into consideration and countered by a development agency.

Furthermore, there must be a creation or stimulation of some pre-conditions that should be instrumental to rapid rural development and adoption. For example, the rural communities must be given some power to tax themselves whenever necessary; the Regional government must allocate funds toward the development of its rural areas; technical services in health, agriculture, education, and the like must be well developed and made available.

A rural development agency could speed up change in these rural areas by working through existing channels, such as educational institutions -- schools and churches, adult education centers -- and
by agricultural extension education, office calls, meetings, and the like.

It would be necessary, in order to speed up change in these local communities, to use appropriate communication methods. This should be a combination of spoken words and visual aids. Such primary, displayed and projected visual aids must be used as effectively as possible to create necessary impacts in the minds of the local people.

The community development agency, moreover, must know the adoption processes and the communication methods used to bring them about in order to be in a good position to evaluate and determine the people's reaction and response to change. Such agency must, in addition, know such factors as cost, complexity, visibility, divisibility, utility, and group action which often tend to limit change and adoption.

The development agency, in order to succeed in Eastern Nigeria, must work within the limits of the concepts of culture, social organization, role of the innovator, and cultural bias. These four concepts constitute vital means for appraising a situation for planning steps in initiating change and for discerning causes of success or failure.

Analysis of such causes should give answers to the following questions:

Have the cultural linkages been discovered and utilized in the procedure?

Has work been carried on through the existing social organization or have social organizations been set up which conflict with those previously in existence?
How are the innovators' purposes and ways of behavior regarded?

Have the innovators or change agents misinterpreted the responses of the local people through cultural bias?

Have the needs that are felt been obscured by opposition to methods of introduction?

The answers to such questions as these would provide a diagnosis which might then be a basis for action in ways determined by specific situations.

Finally, the importance of continuous appraisal as a basis for constant adjustments in programs could not be over-emphasized. Change programs would not only induce and introduce change in practices and techniques but also in social relationships and attitudes. To know in advance what all of these changes would be is impossible. Constant analysis would, therefore, be essential to ensure needed adjustments and required pin-pointing of areas or spots that might lead to failure or disappointment. The role of the rural community expert, agent, or agency in this program evaluation would be to constantly observe, analyze, and understand these processes, and to make adjustments accordingly.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


