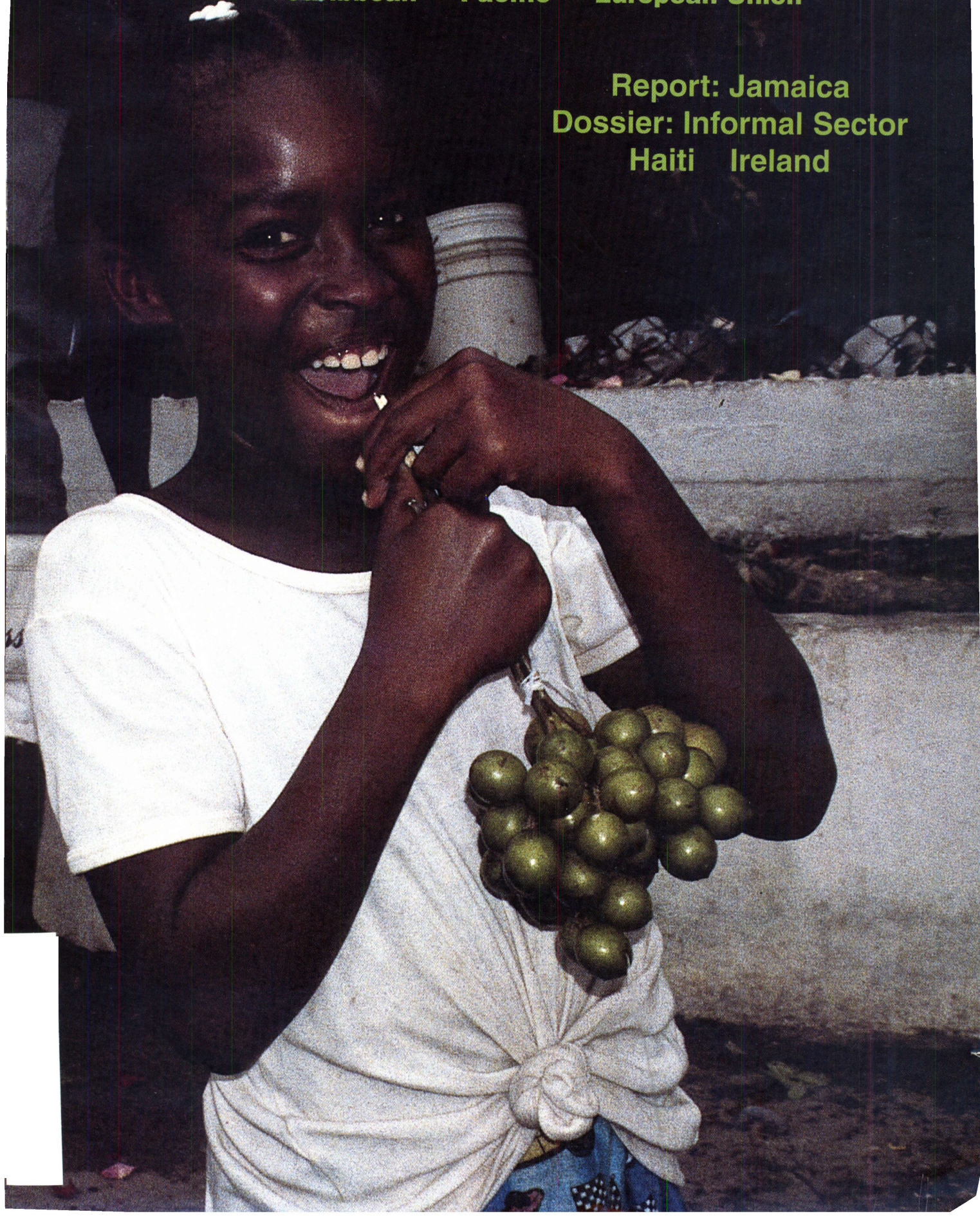


the Courier

Africa - Caribbean - Pacific - European Union

Report: Jamaica
Dossier: Informal Sector
Haiti Ireland





Jamaica is the third largest island in the Caribbean Sea. Jamaicans consider their island "well blessed". And it is. The tropical climate, natural beauty and fertile soils have fostered tourism, agriculture and manufacturing as key economic sectors and products like coffee and rum that are recognised as the best. Jamaica's charismatic and gregarious people have earned a global reputation for significantly influencing the worlds of music, sports and contemporary culture. But despite its blessings, Jamaica still grapples with problems facing most developing countries, in particular, how to overcome them and take a place in the global economy.

COUNTRY REPORT : Jamaica

DOSSIER : Informal Sector



Everywhere in developing countries the informal sector is for many people a source of income and an answer to the lack of suitable employment caused by economic difficulties. In all these countries, many activities are developing on the edges of what is called the formal sector, reflecting the dynamism and the creativity of the population. If this phenomenon grows over the following years to become an irreversible reality, it will always be difficult to analyse and regulate.

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The ACP-EU Courier

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December 1999 - January 2000

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Thierry Michel

The story of a tragedy

by Katy Ndiaye



At the launch of his latest film, *Mobutu, King of Zaïre, The Courier* had the chance to meet Thierry Michel, the Belgian documentary film-maker who has just completed his fifth documentary on Africa. In pursuit of the facts behind the escalating humanitarian crisis in Somalia, studying X-rays in a hospital in Guinea or conducting a

study in three acts of Zaïrean society, Thierry Michel deals with a multi-faceted Africa against a backdrop of mismanaged development. He analyses its causes and consequences, and, far from adopting a fatalistic standpoint, his films are intended as food for thought, a basis on which to build a new kind of society.

Thierry Michel's latest film, *Mobutu, King of Zaïre*, is surprising and delighting both critics and the public. Premiered in Belgium during the spring of 1999, it has recently been nominated to be shown at the New York Film Festival and the Documentary Film Festival in Los Angeles. Looking back over African history from independence to the present day, *Mobutu, King of Zaïre* chronicles the reign of the Zaïrean dictator. It is a tragedy, the sad story of the Zaïrean people who for 35 years lived under the yoke of Mobutu Sese Seko.

Thierry Michel gradually builds up a strikingly accurate portrait of a dictator drunk with power. Who was Mobutu? How did he progress from being a timid journalist covering the 1958 Universal Exhibition to a cor-

poral in the army of the new Congolese state under the orders of Patrice Lumumba to become Zaïre's "Father of the Nation"? Entering from the wings at the time of independence he moved to centre stage to play a leading part in his country's destiny, and his own.

Mobutu, King of Zaïre does not concern itself with the details of the uncomfortable relations between Belgium and Zaïre since independence. The film shows a Zaïre embroiled in global geopolitics from the end of colonialism in Africa to the fall of the Berlin wall, from the Cold War to the passing of the African dinosaurs and the tumultuous expressions of hope for democratisation throughout the Dark Continent.

The whole film centres on Mobutu's personality. Using archive film, interviews with the dictator, and the eye-witness testimony of his close associates and collaborators, and even his friends, the director sketches the various faces of Zaïre's former leader. We see a sophisticated Mobutu meeting the press or surrounded by his political friends; a father weeping for his dead son; a nationalistic Mobutu, the Bantu chieftain haranguing the crowd at political meetings to the greater glory of the authentic Zaïre; and, finally, Mobutu as Head of State, on official visits all over the world, with Mao Tse-tung, Jacques Chirac, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Richard Nixon or George Bush.

Mastery of the subject

Drawing on the recollections of privileged witnesses of Congolese independence, such as the CIA head of station in the Congo at the time, Thierry Michel shows that Mobutu was able to seize power and keep it, thanks to his Western

friends who gave him the political and economic support he needed. A master of diplomacy and political strategy, Mobutu had evolved a lobbying system that resolutely looked for support outside the African continent. His game plan switched between provisional alliances and alliances of opportunity, playing off the Americans against the French, the Chinese against the Americans if they seemed too strong, or the Israelis against the Arabs. He allied with anyone who could help him, dividing both his opponents and his friends. In the aftermath of the Cold War, Mobutu was discarded by history. Abandoned by his Western allies and isolated within Africa, he fell from power.

As a chronicle of the African continent, *Mobutu, King of Zaïre* explores a dark chapter in African history back to the first days of intoxication following the achievement of self-determination. Those years in the history of Congo Zaïre also reflects the history of French-

speaking Africa, from independence through the coming of the one-party State, the autocrats and the dictators. Though the destinies of these countries and leaders have been as many and varied as the countries themselves, the story of Zaïre embraces all the elements of the African tragedy.

This man of limitless pride, the child of a



Thierry Michel

cook who rose to the highest circles of power, Mobutu became a traditional chieftain, perverted the attributes of that title, and justified all his anti-democratic actions and decisions as being part of a self-styled return to traditional African values which had to be restored and preserved from an imported, imposed Western culture. This was "authenticity". But it was far from the "negritude" of Césaire and Senghor: the arguments advanced by the supreme authority on authenticity are in fact no more than a lavish homage to his own glory. It must be admitted that Mobutu encouraged African song and dance (in his own honour), and deliberately disregarded the critical arts, such as theatre and cinema - anything that could intellectually provide a conscience, a critical view of the world or an analysis of events through art and culture.

The former dictator personifies that generation of African heads of state who were forged and moulded by colonialism. Survivors from a past age, they fluctuated between the seduction and rejection of Europe. In Mobutu's case, becoming Head of State meant becoming one of the grandees, playing a part similar to that of the former colonists. Thierry Michel's film emphasises this aspect of his character: we are shown, for example, the mimicry and striking

A cook's son with limitless pride, left, Mobutu became a traditional chieftain by climbing to the highest circles of power





▲ The end of a reign ... with Nelson Mandela in the awkward role of mediator

▼ The archive film shows a dictatorial Mobutu who was a master of crowd manipulation



identification between Mobutu, King of Zaïre, and Baudouin, King of the Belgians. Thierry Michel has mastered his subject. He has scrutinised the psychology of Mobutu's character in minute detail. Throughout the film's 130 minutes, the dictator stirs up powerful human feelings and sometimes even makes us take another look at ourselves. Thierry Michel admits that he was "somehow seduced by the character". To crystallise the image of the dictator, he at times resorts to empathy and identification, though such moments are immediately followed by a return to the more distant historical standpoint and to the context of Mobutu's misdeeds and crimes: summary executions, massacres of Christians, the Whitsun hangings - it's a long list.

Describing his character, the director calls him an expert in manipulation. "He manufactured his own destiny, seizing opportunities and alliances from all those who helped him, all those who made Mobutu. His charisma allowed him to impose himself on a whole nation for decades. He was a great man, a coward and a traitor. In terms of theatre, an interesting character who makes you think."

A professional interest

Unexpectedly, the film has an element of comedy. The audience finds itself laughing at certain scenes. Different audiences says Thierry Michel, laugh differently, and not at the same sequences. People don't laugh the same way in Africa and Canada, in Belgium and Switzerland. In Africa, people laugh because humour is a form of defence - they laugh at themselves. During the screening, one of the witnesses, Sakombi Inougo, created an outburst of hilarity among those present, playing the clown to deflect attention from the part he played under Mobutu. At other times, the laughter that breaks through is a kind of catharsis, a relief from the tragedy of images too difficult to bear.

On leaving the screening, one feels that the director understands Africa to perfection. And indeed *Mobutu, King of Zaïre* is his fourth film on Africa, and the third dealing with Zaïre. The Belgian director's interest in the country has nothing exotic or fleeting about it - it is, first and foremost, professional. He says that he pursues his craft with passion in a country where there is need, if not urgency.

Thierry Michel's first contact with Zaïre occurred during the early 1990s, at a crucial time in the country's history, when it was trying to shake off the shackles of all those years of dictatorship and contempt for human rights to establish a new world. Thierry Michel empathised with what Zaïre was going through, and his three films *Zaïre: The Cycle of the Serpent*, *The Last Colonists* and *Mobutu, King of Zaïre* are the result.

Africa is a source of enormous cultural and human wealth, and Thierry Michel feels that the continent can teach Europe some lessons about relationships with birth, life and death, despite crisis, poverty and war. There can be no doubt that Thierry Michel's offering is rich in meaning for people in both Africa and Europe.

Katy Léna Ndiaye is a freelance journalist specialising in development issues in Africa and Latin America

The revival of civil society

by Thibault Grégoire

Haiti is still one of the world's poorest countries, and undoubtedly the poorest of all in Latin America. In many sectors, "development" is still synonymous with rehabilitation, hence the importance of involving all players - including civil society - in the process.

As if mimicking its physical geography, Haiti is a care-worn democracy. Sharing the island of Hispaniola with its neighbour, the Dominican Republic, Haiti is regarded as one of the world's poorest nations as it nears the end of the century in a precarious situation. After years of dictatorship under Duvalier, senior and junior, and their infamous *tontons macoutes*, democracy was restored in Haiti in 1987 and consolidated by the election in 1990 of the highly charismatic Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Sadly, his administration was short-lived, and he was forced into exile (in the United States) the following year, after a *coup d'etat*. The next four years saw the country subjected to an embargo on the part of the international community. It was not until 1994 that Titid returned to Haiti, supported by the US Marines, just in time to complete his term and to ensure a legitimate handing-over of power to René Préval. Since, however, the country has been experiencing further political crisis - a void in government spanning two years (from June 1997 to late 1998), the lack of a functioning parliament and, finally, continually postponed legislative elections.

Apparently sometimes on the verge of collapse, Haitian civil society has been carried along by events and has achieved a measure of evolution. Fifty-year-old community associations, peasant-farmer groupings and other organisations were severely repressed during the dictatorship, and the advent of democracy therefore witnessed a logical reaction: civil society was seen to burgeon, particularly in rural areas. Persecuted once again after the coup d'etat, which brought about its break-up, civil society is now attempting a revival, although it is experiencing



The decoration on Haitian buses often contains messages of hope

difficulties particularly as regards management capabilities. Certain donors - principally the European Union - are providing important support to help Haiti overcome its problems, and such moves are being matched by the actions of the international NGOs, which are engaged in a "transfer of skills".

European, Canadian or other NGOs have stepped up their intervention in Haiti since the 1950s, in an attempt to make up the shortfall in public services, essentially in the areas of health and education, and particularly in rural areas. They have acquired the position of essential agents, a fact confirmed recently during the four-year embargo. During that period, the NGOs were the only channel whereby international support could reach Haiti. The period of the emergency now past, some of these NGOs in Haiti itself have embarked upon a closer partnership with local NGOs. In this way, the international non-trading community is providing support to national NGOs, helping them in turn to work towards the rein-



Veterimed will now be working more in the field of animal production

forcement and organisation of civil society in their own country. In Haiti, such organisations are known as "intermediate" NGOs. Most of them, according to a recent report from the RESAL (European Food Security Network), originate either from international NGOs which have been progressively decentralised, or from local NGOs via which inward funding is channelled. Some of these NGOs are doing their utmost to involve aid-recipients in the development process. One such Haitian NGO is Veterimed, which was created in 1991 and specialises in the sectors of health and animal production.

From health to production

Haiti has very few areas devoted to intensive animal-rearing. Indeed, almost 95% of the nation's animal production is based on traditional methods, namely some 700,000 families which, to supplement agriculture, own one or two cows, fifteen or so goats, and perhaps some chickens. For the majority of peasant farmers, an animal represents reserve capital, an investment in the event of a monetary surplus, an asset which must naturally be safeguarded against the scourges of anthrax, swine fever or Newcastle disease. Given that there are only 17

vets to cover the whole country, Veterimed is devoting itself to training veterinary technicians capable of administering vaccines or simple treatments.

As Michel Chancy, the NGO's director, explained, "It is the peasant farmers themselves who are requesting training and they are also choosing those of their number who will receive such training". This training is, in fact, ongoing, with seminars on topics ranging from minor surgery techniques to pharmacy management, and including animal nutrition, being staggered throughout the year. A thousand veterinary technicians have so far been trained and, at the same time, they have been organised into Intervet, their own network.

Mr Chancy continued by stressing that one very important development is the fact that the Agriculture Ministry looks set to give these veterinary technicians some form of accreditation, whereas they used to be regarded as mere quacks. Moreover, although, in the past, Veterimed was entrusted with conducting vaccination campaigns, it is now the veterinary technicians who are shouldering the responsibility for this, working completely autonomously. The NGO is now

active in the area of animal production, which is more complex than that of health. A programme to increase the numbers of local breeds of pig has been set up and the use of acacia tree products in animal nutrition is being investigated.

Cobblestones in shanty towns

Although the Haitian peasant-farmer community is relatively well-organised, civil society in urban areas is much less structured. Haiti is in the grip of galloping urbanisation; for example, over half the population of the capital, Port-au-Prince, lives in shanty towns, where corrugated iron, stagnant water and general detritus relentlessly accumulate. Urban services are totally lacking in such districts, which are increasingly becoming towns-within-the-town, with all that that implies in terms of lack of organisation and disorder. Some areas, such as Cité Soleil, have already degenerated into ghettos, where outsiders fear to tread.

It is principally in the shanty towns of Port-au-Prince that the GTIH (Haitian Intermediate Technology Group) is working. A genuine intermediate NGO, it is strengthening an associative movement which was already in existence, although, usually, on an informal basis. Its support consists of the provision of appropriate technology for the projects submitted to it for consideration by local associations. Such projects might involve a clean-up operation, the installation of drainage, or paving. More than half of funding is spent on infrastructure work, the remainder on training in management, community development and sociocultural aspects. According to its director, Philippe Becoulé, "the task facing the NGO is twofold: firstly basic construction work and secondly providing the support for local associations, on condition that the latter are receptive to such help". The NGO's work also involves monitoring grass-roots groups in the preparation, execution and evaluation of their projects, providing, amongst other things, a loan

service. Partnerships between local district committees, particularly as regards the exchange of experiences, are also being promoted, as are arrangements involving the local authorities.

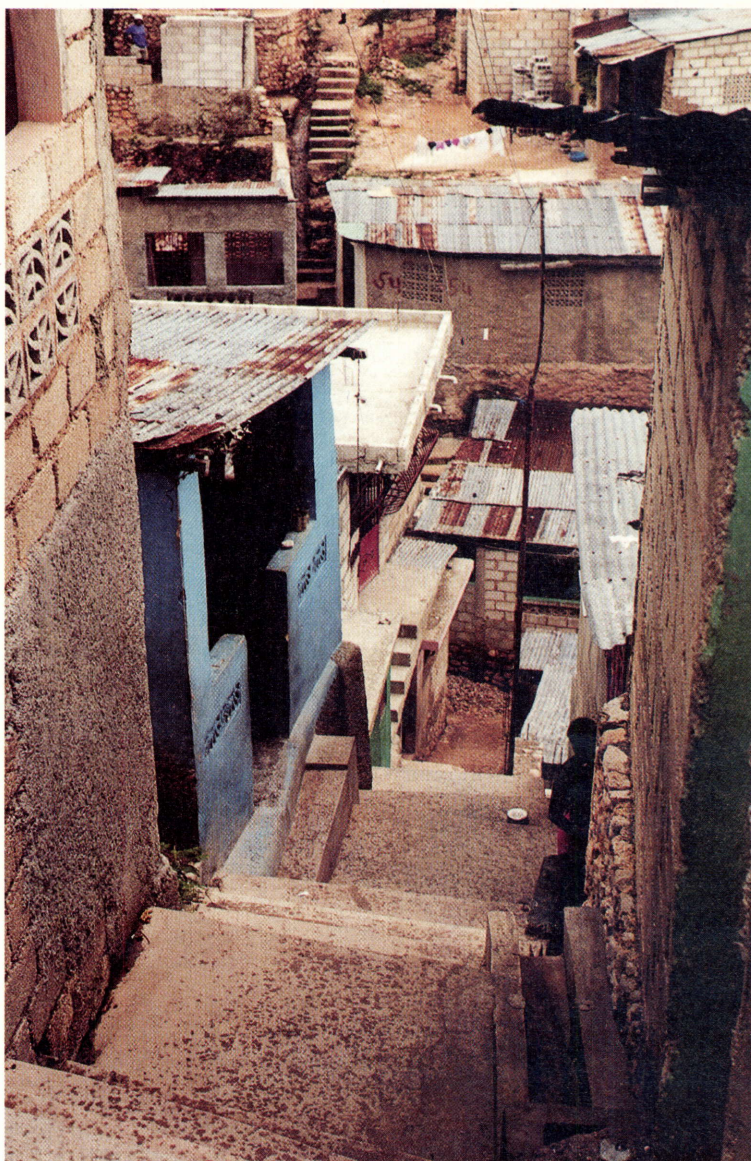
This latter aspect is particularly complex in so far as although Haiti is Latin America's poorest country, the shanty towns around Port-au-Prince are similar to those of any other major town or city in the region except, however, for the fact that public institutions are much weaker. We were told that it was not until 1995 that a decentralisation process was set up, and an extremely slow one at that. This means, therefore, that institutional partnerships are practically impossible, simply because local power does not really exist. The process of decentralisation has to be initiated first, and the lack of an institutional intermediary between the NGO and local associations cancels out any training impetus.

There are other NGOs in Haiti, particularly of the "intermediate" type, just as there are other operations to support civil society on the part of several NGOs, both international and local. These initiatives are sometimes in the form of a partnership and sometimes with one side providing what the other needs. Veterimed and the GTIH are simply examples that stand out. Donor countries also provide support, and in this connection a particularly dynamic project is worth mentioning: this is the PAIL (Local Initiative Support Programme), which is involved in the decentralised cooperation process instigated in Haiti by the European Union.

The project - merely a pretext?

The result of deliberation on the part of an informal core-group of people and organisations, the PAIL's aim is to become an improved micro-project programme. According to Jorge Rodríguez, the programme's leader, the real aim of the PAIL is to identify the population's concerns and its genuine needs whilst strengthening civil society and legitimising the State in the eyes of its citizens. "Ultimately, the project is more of a pretext, although it does have a direct effect on people's living conditions. Above all, we aim to promote the creation of groups and associations which really represent their members, and teach them how to negotiate, how to manage internal conflicts, how to take joint decisions, etc."

Specifically, the programme finances a series of local mini-programmes set up, after consultation, by a group of local people (from villages, local communities, associations, grass-roots groupings, etc.). In 14 areas in the country, everyone sits down at the same table, with the same concern - how to benefit the community. Thus, the programme is active on two levels, since it hands responsibility over both to the State and to local associations. In such an approach, Haitian NGOs also have a highly specific role to play: that of "social engineer", i.e. the role of mediator, of link between the population and representatives of the State. In other words, monitoring this process of organising civil society "from the bottom up".



A paved street in a Port-au-Prince shanty town

One of these "engineers" is Concert Action, an NGO led by Anthony Eyma, who commented, "We are working in the Côtes de Fer locality, where there are some 70 local associations. Our first job was simply to list them all. Then we picked out those which were most credible, using extremely stringent criteria. Eighteen associations were selected on this basis". Concert Action will train and supervise them throughout their chosen project "by constantly encouraging the beneficiaries to take over responsibility themselves", Mr Eyma continued. This is to be achieved principally by these associations contributing 5% of expenditure.

Concert Action involves what is in fact a dual transfer of skills: the NGO already consists of Haitian executives who used to work for Inter Aide, a French NGO. By founding Concert Action, they continued their work and thus allowed Inter Aide to take a back seat and concentrate on project management. The second form of skill transfer arises from its activities in the field of decentralised cooperation.

The ACP-EU Joint Assembly

When I turned on the radio in my hotel room in Nassau, Bahamas, on the morning of the 29th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly, the station was Love 97. Among the pop tunes and the snappy talk, its DJ also mentioned "the critical meeting" that was taking place in his country. Proof that the ACP-EU negotiations are discussed by more than just those directly involved but at all levels in the countries most directly affected.

The meeting (11-15 October) resumed its examination of the question of future relations between the European Union and the ACP states, and the new partnership now under negotiation. It also resumed discussion of the general report by Fernando Fernandez Martin (EPP Spain) on poverty alleviation. An expert hearing was also planned on the regional situation and cooperation in the Caribbean.

In his opening words, co-chairman **John Corrie** (British Conservative MEP) urged the delegates to find a way out of the current impasse. "It is the role of the Joint Assembly to come up with concrete proposals to break the deadlock in the negotiations." He said that there was as yet no agreement on trade, Stabex and SYSMIN, and good governance, and he was aware that ACP countries felt good governance to be an indirect way of applying pressure if they displease EU donors, and that "developing countries are worried that the EU is shifting attention away from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific towards problems closer to home."

Corrie indicated that the next EDF fund in real terms is unlikely to match the level of the 8th EDF and that this is "not unconnected with perceptions of imperfection in governance..."

"Getting resources for any crisis in Africa is far from easy. But the EU must never forget our colonial past brings with it a moral duty. We must not ignore the plight of the world's poorest just because our attention is currently focused on the refugees in Kosovo."

That every question has two sides was clear on each issue.

On trade, ACP speakers were stressing their needs and asking for special consideration and understanding, whereas EU speakers, while expressing their understanding of the problems, also required demonstrations of commitment from the ACP countries to good governance.

John Corrie ended his measured though - to some - controversial speech with an injunction to the EU to "get its act together" and was firm about an oft-repeated sentiment throughout the meeting - that "this is the most critical session that the Joint Assembly has ever

held...no agreement as yet exists on certain the issues...the situation could be catastrophic and may well mean no ACP-EU convention after February 2000. This is a crisis in the making."

Kirsti Lintonen from Finland expressed disappointment with some aspects of the July negotiations in Brussels, principally good governance and trade. Ms Lintonen stated that the "most difficult stage of the negotiations had been reached" and stressed that although some felt that the February 2000 deadline for agreement on Post-Lomé negotiations was not binding it was however essential for legal reasons connected to a WTO waiver that a decision should be reached.

ISSUES

Poverty alleviation

Corrie: "It is at the root of all development policy and the root of most conflicts. Education is the basis of all success and extends to cover the status of women, primary health care and so on."

Fernando Fernandez Martin (Spanish Partido Popular MEP) author of a major report on the fight against poverty: "over 3 billion live on less than \$2 a day and around 1.3 billion survive on under \$1."

"Every day 35,000 people die of hunger and when I finish this sentence two more will have starved to death....put simply if Africa received the same attention as Kosovo, many problems would be in the process of being solved...over 30 years, the gap between rich and poor has doubled across the world..the next round of world trade talks in Seattle must ensure that global free trade does not leave the poorest countries isolated and marginalised."

Future of ACP/EU negotiations

Rapporteur: **Glenys Kinnock**

A resolution on this report was adopted with some 30 amendments, but was surrounded by controversy. The EPP, upset that their amendments regarding REPAs were not included, requested a split house vote, hoping to defeat the resolution on the European vote. The resolution was nevertheless adopted unanimously on the ACP side, and with a majority of 26:20 on the EU side.

Trade

Corrie: "The ACP needs to build economic capacity, skills base and competitiveness...the private sector must be involved in all future investment .. a transitional period shorter than 10 years is not realistic."

"Trade arrangements ...need to be adapted to the rules of the WTO and requirements of an increasingly integrated global economy."

Later, he told me that "liberalisation of trade is a major problem. I think the WTO is a very dangerous

Good governance is a question of principles rather than of precise rules carved in stone, and must be seen as an ongoing process. It is not synonymous with democracy

John Corrie,
Co-Chairman, UK

weapon. If you base your prices on the USA who have the lowest production costs in the world because they are subsidising by the back door, and say that the world price of grain is £60 a ton, you can't grow it in Europe for £60 a ton and I really do feel that WTO will destroy world trade. For developing countries it is a hundred times worse. Waivers means that we will bring in world prices, but we will allow a country not to do it for the next 10 years. In that 10 years you will have to bring yourselves up to that level - this is the same as Britain did when we went into Europe, and we will have to do the same with Poland and Hungary and so on."

Philip Lowe: the EU was formally committed to retaining protocols which would be reviewed in 2004. WTO rules should be used to prevent unfair competition against Caribbean producers and EU governments must control the activities of multinationals on their own market by making use of their own competition rules.

The Commission will seek ways of supporting Caribbean rum, and appreciated the importance of the sugar protocol. Some arrangement beyond 2004 would be needed. EU would provide technical assistance to producers later this year.

Finland: New trade arrangements are needed beyond simple liberalisation. They wished to allay ACP fears - the EU is ready to help set up regional trade groupings, the size and composition of which are to be decided by ACP.

Serge Clair: ACP countries - particularly those who do not attract foreign investment - need access to favourable loans. He also encouraged the EU disposition to help rather than penalise.

"Non-reciprocal trade preferences, for example, which have made a significant impact on the process of industrialisation of many of our countries, are among those features destined to disappear.

"Although we have accepted the reality that in the brave new world of liberalised world trade, non-reciprocal preferences cannot be maintained indefinitely, we do assert that our countries will need all the necessary time to adapt to the new global trade environment and integrate into the global economy...certain countries are burdened by several handicaps related to their geography as well as their physical and demographic limitations. Adjustment efforts for these countries may therefore have to be envisaged with a greater degree of flexibility....The importance of product protocols cannot be sufficiently emphasised."

Global Health Threat:

Wijkmans (MEP, Netherlands): Less rhetoric and more action is needed, for instance concerning the HIV epidemic. It is a crisis of development, and prevention must be a priority. More money for research is

needed, more openness and discussion. As well as HIV, malaria is a killer but low on the list as there is no market for a vaccine except in the developing countries: WHO is working on a vaccine at present.

Corrie: "South Africa has seen a 25-fold increase in the number of reported malaria cases, with cities like Pretoria and Durban now hit. Milder winters and an influx of migrants from countries where anti-malarial programmes have all but collapsed have contributed to this.

"11 people a minute are infected with HIV, and the life expectancy has declined by 10 years in the countries hit hardest."

Good Governance

Good governance was mentioned by many of the speakers. There are two perspectives, one, from the EU side, that it is a development *sine qua non*, but on the ACP side, a wariness was clear, and countries indicated that they suspected it could be used as a punishment: if they did not comply with the EU perception of the issue, they would be penalised.

Corrie: "The real problem is the horrendous corruption in most of the governments. Good governance means rooting it out. ...there is no doubt that Europe has had enough of corruption and nepotism etc. We are not going to throw money down a black hole. We have put \$45 billion into Africa and we are beginning to say that unless we get good governance and some guarantee that this money will be properly spent, [they] are not going to get it.

We have reached the point where we are getting a lot tougher than we have been in the past. A lot of people have become very rich thanks to Europe, so there is much tighter control. The good areas are pleased to go ahead with it, and the bad areas aren't."

He agreed that peer pressure within regional groups would help. "It is happening...If Europeans try to dominate there's much wrong with that. We have got to encourage these countries to police themselves and others for their own benefit....There is a realisation among developing nations that if they are going to succeed they have to get this thing right. If we have a joint assembly for members then we can do that.

He says he is pushing regionalisation. "If you can bring the southern African countries together for example, you can deal with them as one region. Where it looks as if it's going right, you help them and if it looks as if it's going sour you withdraw your help.

"The IMF has just withdrawn help from Zimbabwe because they said they were spending 50 million a month on the war and it turns out to be 120 million. Somehow we have to overcome that. If the mentality continues that you can get what you want by just taking it, then we will never win this battle."

Our countries will need all the necessary time to adapt to the new global trade environment and integrate into the global economy...

Serge Clair
Co-Chairman,
Mauritius

RUM, BANANAS, SUGAR

The Story so Far

Rum follows bananas:

Caribbean economies under threat

Rum is an agro-based manufacturing activity where the ACP might hope to compete in the global economy. In the Caribbean the industry directly employs over 10,000 people (many more indirectly). Rum is the third largest traditional export earner after sugar and bananas. Jamaica and Guyana, the biggest producers, are also the region's poorest countries (excluding Haiti).

ACP trade negotiators argue that, unless special measures are put into place immediately, their rum producers will lose their access to the EU market within six months. This is because of a unilateral agreement made between the EU and the US in 1997 to liberalise their rum markets from 1 January 2000 (the zero-for-zero deal). With Caribbean banana producers already facing great uncertainty over their future access to the EU market, and sugar producers preparing for a decline in guaranteed prices, the socio-economic fabric of the Caribbean seems increasingly vulnerable.

The EU has made clear that it does not intend to maintain the ACPs' preferential market access, nor to provide any transitional arrangements for ACP rum producers. They claim that ACP countries should allocate money from the Lomé Convention's National or Regional Indicative Programmes (NIPs/RIPs) to enhance the competitiveness of their rum industry. ACP rum producers reply that, while such support has in theory been available under the rum protocol for 20 years, it was not implemented.

The West Indies Rum and Spirits Producers Association is therefore calling for a temporary Euro 5 million budget line in the European Union budget to provide transitional technical and financial assistance to traditional ACP rum producers. This would enable small producers to sustain their current efforts to prepare for a free rum market, until the EU and the ACP agree on the nature of any longer-term support.

European Centre for Development Policy Management

Kirsti Lintonen, Under-Secretary of State for Finland:

"On good governance and the non-execution clause, the EU naturally remains ready to seek an overall compromise. But we attach particular importance to the inclusion of good governance as an essential element in the next Convention. Firstly, because it is a precondition for equitable and sustainable development, just as much as respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law. And secondly because some aspects of good governance are not covered by the existing essential elements - for example, transparency in public administration or in the management of budgetary resources; accountability; preventing and combating corruption. Lastly, good governance should be an essential element in our cooperation because it can make that cooperation more efficient and effective."

Debt Relief

Prime Minister Ingraham:

Debt relief is a vital issue - perhaps unused EDF funds could be directed to alleviate this under the HIPC initiative. Access to concessional loans is also a necessity.

Serge Clair: "a suggestion has been made to utilise the unallocated funds from past EDFs for the alleviation of the debt burden within the HIPC initiative...[which] will need the agreement of both the ACP and EU sides."

Kirsti Lintonen:

"Debt relief is a crucial concern for many ACP countries...the EU is planning to make a significant contribution to the enhanced HIPC initiative. We are proposing that unallocated funds from the European Development Fund should be earmarked to discharging past ACP debts to the European Community. We are also suggesting a substantial contribution to the initiative as a donor."

Other main points

● Delegates called for **East Timor** to join the ACP-EU Joint Assembly.

Euro MPs called on Member States to "recognise the State of East Timor and establish diplomatic relations as soon as possible."

Arlindo Cunha (MEP Portugal) urged the Assembly to "help the world give birth to the first new state of the new Millennium"

● **Cuba:** The only Latin American country without a cooperation agreement with the EU. It wants to join the ACP but won't accept membership on any terms or any interference in domestic affairs, and it did not want the principle of good governance to be used to impose terms: "There is not an internationally-agreed definition of what is or supposed to be good governance. We are told it is a matter of values and I ask 'whose values?'"

● **Great Lakes region**

There was a minute's silence in memory of the rebel slaughter on 12 October in Burundi, including UNICEF representative Lis Manuel Zuniga, from Chile, and Head of Logistics at PAM, Saskia von Meijenfeldt from the Netherlands, and seven Burundians. The murders were condemned by MEPS and ACP delegates and deeply regretted by the Burundi representative.

All parties were called on to "observe strictly the general principles of international humanitarian aid and human rights."

● **Violation of Lusaka accord condemned.**

Philip Lowe promised assistance for Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in DRC to cover the restoration of the legal system and national dialogue, the rehabilitation of former soldiers, environmental measures, transport links and health and sanitation provision.

● **Sudan:** Amid concerns expressed by several MEPs about the continued killings and arrests, Sudan moved to reassure the meeting that progress was being made. The country adopted a multi-party constitution a year ago with elections planned for 2000. The ceasefire was renewed on 12 October for three months. Southern Sudan can choose autonomy in a referendum provided this does not lead to the incorporation of northern parts of Sudan into the south.

John Corrie accepted an invitation to make a fact-finding mission to Sudan in the near future.

● **European conflicts**

Finland: "Our presidency coincides with a busy time for the EU in the external field. As well as issues far away from Europe such as East Timor, we are having to cope with continued conflict on our own continent."

Speeches

● **Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham**

The ACP and the EU have a shared colonial past. The future is dominated by technological advancement which should be used for the benefit of ACP countries.

ACP countries are ill-prepared for a single world market, and need to be eased into it with flexibility and transitional arrangements. A "one size fits all" policy regarding economic development and trade is not appropriate, and would relegate several countries to permanent under-development.

The services sector is included in discussions on a new Convention - this is welcome but investment, aid and technical assistance are still necessary. The private sector should be brought in to play a larger part and have access to capital. He also advocated institutional strengthening, informatics research and development and human resources training for the service sector.

Investment in people

Ingraham thanked the EU for 300,000 Euros to help repair the damage. He talked of world trade, and maintained that massive new investment is essential and new sources of finance are necessary.

● **William Allen, Minister for Finance and Planning**

"In the global economy, the WTO has arrived to mixed feelings among many small countries, such as the banana exporting countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean, which have seen little to make them believe to date that this development has been particularly advantageous to them...Lome IV and its predecessors were conceived when it was accepted that the developmental abilities and requirements of many countries needed special attention and treatment. There is now, unfortunately, a real danger that all will be expected to follow a single developmental paradigm, and only very special cases of particular geo-political importance will be treated differentially. This ...seems to suggest that good governance, sound macroeconomic policies and trade openness resolve all issues, as if every country is starting from the same position and as if the playing field is level...many small developing countries may find it difficult to exploit the opportunities which globalisation is presumed to bring about.

"There is no doubt that for many countries, the EU-ACP relationship under Lome IV has been of great importance in providing economic and financial benefits not available from any other source and unavailable from any other relationship. As a result our economies are sounder than they would otherwise be, our administrative capacity is greater than it would otherwise be, our infrastructure is more extensive than it would otherwise be, our international debt is lower than it would otherwise be and in the poorest ACP countries the EU-ACP relationship has been a concrete step

in continuing efforts toward the alleviation of poverty.

"Among the ACP countries we recognise the need to ensure that there is the strongest possible support for democracy, recognising that this can only be achieved by the fullest transparency and accountability on the part of governments."

● **Commissioner Nielson**

There is a new impulse in the Commission towards a policy framework at EU level which could include the adoption of minimum requirements to promote the integration of persons excluded from the labour market as well as incentive measures to promote cooperation between Member States in combating and preventing social exclusion.

Lack of sincerity in the implementation of reduction policies in developing countries represents a problem for public support in donor countries.

The EU seeks from ACP a **firm political commitment to poverty reduction and sustainable human development strategies** - it is essential to ensure that public opinion in Europe supports the EU-ACP partnership.

A proper balance is needed between economic and social development considerations.

Gender: participatory approaches are needed, and to open up partnership to actors other than governments.

Good governance: a conclusion is required before the end of the year.

The EU supports **REPAs** (Regional Economic Partnership Agreements). Also a phased approach providing support for strengthening regional integration and budgetary support for fiscal reforms.

Other subjects discussed:

Rum, natural disasters, tourism, WTO, children's rights, information technology, mineral resources, immigration, and at the last minute, sympathy for the death of Dr Julius Nyerere.

Three priorities presented to parliament in early September :

● **Europe must have a stronger voice in international fora with a view to ensuring that development issues are high on the agenda.**

● **Community aid must be made more effective, by means of improved methods and procedures both within the commission and in the framework of relations with our partner countries.**

● **Poverty eradication must be at the heart of Community development cooperation policy; this calls for an appropriate allocation of financial resources, a focus on capacity building, stronger emphasis on the gender issue and a proper balance between economic and social issues.**

Gearing up for globalisation - the ACP's stance on trade - before Seattle

by Caroline Ofoegbu

Globalisation continues to gather pace. The recent conference in Seattle may have announced a false start to the World Trade Organisation's "Millennium Round" trade negotiations but most accept that greater multilateral free trade is inevitable.

According to John Horne, Trade Minister for St Vincent and the Grenadines

"For developing countries, including the ACP, Seattle clearly made the point that greater account must be taken of their

needs for economic security as they enter the global trading arena." Before the Seattle trade talks, *The Courier* spoke to Sévérin Adjovi, acting President of the ACP Ministerial Council. Drawing on the ACP Trade Ministers' Declaration adopted on 26 October, he set out the stance that will be taken to steer the ACP through the imminent international negotiations likely to affect their trading and development status long into the 21st century.

The Stakes

The world trade negotiations still have to be thrashed out in the light of the collapse of Seattle. The expression "It never rains but it pours" could be applied to the preparations the ACP must undertake in the coming months to protect their development and trading status in various international arenas of equal importance.

First is the new trade and aid accord that will succeed the current Lomé IV. It is hoped that these negotiations, started in September 1998, will be concluded by February 2000, when the current Lomé IV expires. Trade, built largely on preferential access to EU markets for primary goods, is a central pillar of the EU-ACP relationship. In a multilateral free trade regime, there is no place for such preferences. The question facing ACP and the European Union is what trade regime should replace it? What is sought is a system that continues to protect ACP trading interests, satisfy WTO rules and promote development, particularly in the 39 ACP least-developed countries (LDCs).

Regional integration and greater intra-ACP cooperation are part of the answer. Then there is the forthcoming 10th session of the U N Trade and Development Conference (UNCTAD X) to be held in Thailand next February for 77 countries in the ACP and Latin America. Once again globalisation, trade and development aid will be on the agenda. One of the main issues will be the failure of developed countries to meet the UN target of giving 0.7% of GDP in development aid.

Before Seattle, Mr Adjovi took up the discussion:

what was the objective of the trade Ministers' meeting?

There is a fair degree of urgency with regard to defining and resolving outstanding issues. We discussed the negotiations to define the post-Lomé IV

arrangements, our position with regard to the WTO negotiations in Seattle, UNCTAD X and intra-ACP relationships.

why have you drawn up this Declaration?

The Declaration sets out the position we will take in Seattle. Ultimately we would like to prepare a joint ACP-EU Declaration based on this document.

what are the key contentions?

The key contentions that we face within the multilateral trade talks are closely interlinked with the trade issues under discussion within the ACP-EU cooperation negotiations.

The declaration serves to re-emphasise that development issues should be at the core of future WTO negotiations. There are a number of objectives that should be embraced in this context. Firstly, priority should be given to issues of implementation especially those relating to imbalances and deficiencies in the existing agreements and to the commitments made by developed countries to developing countries. Greater coherence and synergy is required.

The rules of this multilateral trading system need strengthening. It developed out of what has been a club mainly for developed countries. Developing countries are the new boys on the block and up to now we have had very little input in shaping the rules. The full extent of our financial, socio-economic or trading needs must still be fully addressed. A framework permitting us greater participation in global trade would help to ensure a more equitable distribution of the gains. Then there is the question of capacity, which also must be addressed, as well as easier accession and notification. The arbitrary imposition of trade remedies such as sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures, anti-dumping and countervailing duties against

products coming from developing countries are often nothing more than effective barriers to the trade of these countries. This is another issue we shall raise.

What is your principal objective?

Smooth and gradual integration of ACP countries into the global economy. Everyone recognises that the preferential system cannot last for ever. There are benefits to be gained, providing our special needs are taken into consideration. From the EU, we are looking for the appropriate mechanisms and resources to strengthen our capacities to meet these future challenges. This is why we want STABEX and SYSMIN retained and indeed improved to help our mining and agricultural sectors.

What is the biggest challenge?

The WTO negotiations pose an immense threat to the cooperation relationship between the ACP and the EU. To prevent a major rupture, we believe it essential that ACP and EU ministers initiate the necessary steps with the WTO to ensure that the waivers permitting ACP exports to enjoy preferential access to the EU market be extended beyond this date. We want time to finalise our negotiations concerning alternative trade arrangements. If this can not be achieved formally, at the very least we (i.e. the EU and ACP) should be looking for some sort of gentleman's agreement on a common front to present at Seattle.

Obviously other issues have been addressed related to other sectors. Intellectual property rights, technological developments, the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) the environment, food security and rural activities are all issues with serious ramifications for our future development.

Is this position feasible given the number developing countries apart from the ACP that have cooperation arrangements with the European Union?

The European Union's cooperation relationships with other developing countries are based on characteristics similar to those found within the EU-ACP relationship. Given the greater demands placed on the European Union particularly its resources it is essential that the future ACP-EU co-operation framework be finalised as quickly as possible. Available funding which is already limited could also be used in future to aid countries like Kosovo. We still do not know how much will be in the future EDF budget. Our priority must be to ensure that the North/South relationship encapsulated by ACP-EU cooperation is assured in its content and understanding. Once we have more budget details, I am sure that this will greatly facilitate the finalising of the Post Lomé arrangements.

What are the ACP Countries doing to strengthen their own economic and trading capacities?

It is clear that if we wish to have a stronger position in the world trading system then we must move to strengthen intra-ACP cooperation and the tools to facilitate trade among ourselves. Regional economic cooperation and integration is becoming increasingly important. The European Union believes that regional economic partnership agreements should be central to future ACP-EU relations. Since the first summit of ACP Heads of State and Government in Libreville, the ACP Secretariat has been mandated to undertake a study in close collaboration with regional and sub-regional organisations, to determine the feasibility of establishing ACP free trade areas. This report should be ready for the regular session of the ACP Council of Ministers in 2000.

What is the state of play concerning the proposed Regional Economic Partnership Agreements proposed by the European Union?

We have already indicated that REPAs could be made to work to the benefit of ACP countries. Agreement on the implementation timeframe has always been the main contention borne largely out of concern for what would be acceptable to the WTO. But we are making progress. Previously, the ACP did not want to start negotiating REPAs until at the earliest 2006, ending in 2010. It is now felt that we could start negotiations in September 2002 with completion in 2008. The transition period could also begin in 2008. We are dealing with countries with extremely fragile economies.

Do you think it will be possible to retain these preferences till 2008?

Yes, even the WTO recognises that special provisions can be retained for less-developed countries and small economies.

The Millennium Round is also being dubbed the Development Round. Is the ACP seeking to coordinate its position with other developing countries in order to lever concessions?

The ACP is a major block in itself. Of course it would be advantageous if we achieve a common front with other developing countries. But many of the issues we are seeking to address are relevant for them also. The ACP Trade Declaration is a position shared by all members. That is a major achievement and source of strength when you consider that even within the ACP, members have achieved varying levels of development. Their economic interests are not always the same. A common statement of 71 countries backed by the European Union should present a powerful argument in Seattle. The WTO is a members-based organisation. The members decide the rules by which multi-lateral trade operates.

Next issue: at Seattle itself.

The great outdoors

Bahamians are becoming more concerned about their environment, and more aware of its tourism potential, and tourists' demands are changing. People want to go fishing, watch birds, dive into blue holes, and the Bahamas are equipping themselves to cater for all these interests



Bahamas Ministry of Tourism

Think of the Bahamas. What comes into your head first? Lush white beaches? Coral? Sunshine, fish and flowers? Or casinos, hotels, cruise ships and all the trappings of travelling in luxury?

For most people an image of the natural beauty of the islands comes before one of their exploitation, which is as it should be. To avoid it being a two-dimensional playground, all surface and no substance, the contents for this potent cocktail need to be preserved and managed so that they last and develop. For a country that derives up to 60% of its income from tourism what is at immediate issue is making money now; making money later and keeping it coming in is the next stage.

Eco-tourism is very much on the up, all over the world, and in its infancy in the Bahamas. It means many different things to different people, but its fundamental principle is neatly summed up in the slogan "take only photographs, leave only footprints."

The government is awake to the implications of over-use of resources, and October 10 – November 10 1999 was designated Eco-tourism Awareness Month. This was not just another half-hearted attempt to pay lipservice to a fashionable concept. On a jitney (one of the public buses which take you anywhere on New Providence Island for \$1, with good humour and lots of

loud radio) a discussion between a priest and a business man involved in tourism replaced the usual loud music and the (admittedly captive) audience were listening. The theme for the month was "Restoration, Preservation, Maximising economic growth". There was litter clearing, cleaning and beautification of Fort Charlotte, marine/reef and environmental education in school, key clubs, youth groups and the media, sponsored by the enormous new Atlantis Hotel. An environmental policing programme was introduced in primary schools, and a presentation was held on October 13 by the Bahamian National Trust on replanting after the hurricane, proper pruning and saving trees. A workshop was conducted by Jeremy McVean, the General Manager of Comfort Suites and chairman of the Bahamas Hotel Association's Environment Committee on environmental systems for hotels.

Ecotourism - the Ministry's view

This had all been set up by Angela Cleare, who is in charge of the Ministry of Tourism's Eco-tourism initiative. I visited her in her office in the centre of town, and asked her what was happening in the Bahamas.

She told me that they are concentrating on four key islands, Abaco, Andros, Eleuthera and Bimini. Also Inagua in the far south, with its colony of flamingoes.

"Eco-tourism to us is about the preservation aspect,

with culture, with the natural environment. And of course there must be some kind of educational component.”

Advertising this diversification “is our biggest challenge. Most people think of Nassau and then go home. But we have got to get the message across that we have 365 species of birds, which are the birds the discerning birder wants to come and see: we have the Kirtlands Warbler, which is found only in Michigan, and the only place they come to winter is the Bahamas. We have three endemic species too. We are running accredited birdwatching training courses through the national Audubon Society, the Bahamas National Trust and the Ministry of Tourism who bring in experts to teach. As a result, we have properly-trained guides in Abaco, Andros and New Providence, and they are moving into Inagua in February next year.”

She was keen to talk about the “fantastic blue holes in the ocean for divers: three books have been written about the ones in Andros, which are really first class. Our caves too – they aren’t really developed as a tourist attraction. We are not ready to market it fully yet. We will start promoting it next year. Training programmes are in place, we have something on our web site. We want to put the basic things in place and then invite people to come and see them.”

Employment

One important reason for encouraging eco-tourism is that, like its big brother general tourism, it offers employment to local people.

“We are concerned that with the traditional visitor experience a lot of money goes out of the country because hotels etc are owned by foreigners. Ecotourism is usually owned and run by locals. Small people are now getting the same incentives as foreigners. A lot are unemployed, some live on remote

islands, and we are showing them that they can make a living from these things “

Seminars are being held on the islands, and local government has been alerted. Grants will be offered by the Bahamas Development Bank and the government has put together loans of 5 – 8% which will soon come into effect.

Environmental sensibility

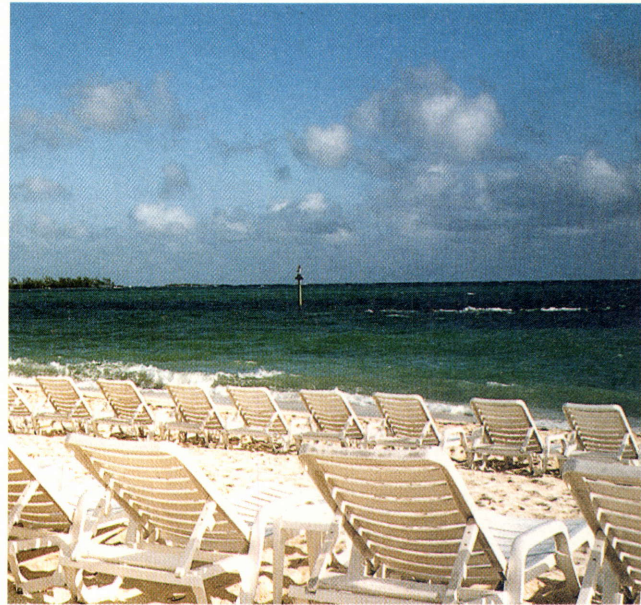
I asked her how Bahamians felt about their environment.

“The sensibility is growing. People used to look at the birds but never realised there was any value to them. Our training programmes are changing that - they have been a big eye-opener. Then people used to throw garbage into the blue holes. We have begun telling them about biodiversity, and letting them know the value of these places, and we find that they are now taking care. Lectures are well attended – there was one at the Bahamas National Trust the other day, about Native Plants. People listened and went home with the intention of using native plants, because these are the ones that are going to be standing after the hurricanes.”

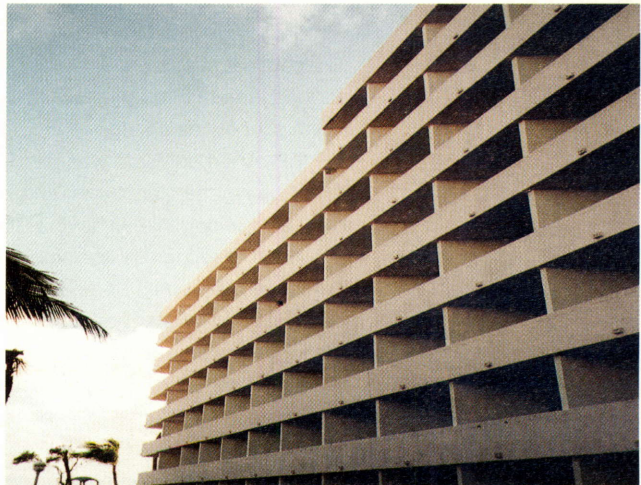
There are programmes in schools nowadays too – the Ministry is going to help with funding for programmes that are “more fun”.

Keeping up standards

“Standards,” says Angela Cleare, “are improving in leaps and bounds. This government came in on that platform and they are getting stricted, although they are the first to admit that it is not yet as they would like it to be. But a manual will soon be introduced for hotel work over the next five years. We have also run the Bahama Hosts Programme since 1978, which is a training programme to try to teach people the basics about their country. It is now some 58 hours with exams every day. Lecturers are brought in from all over the



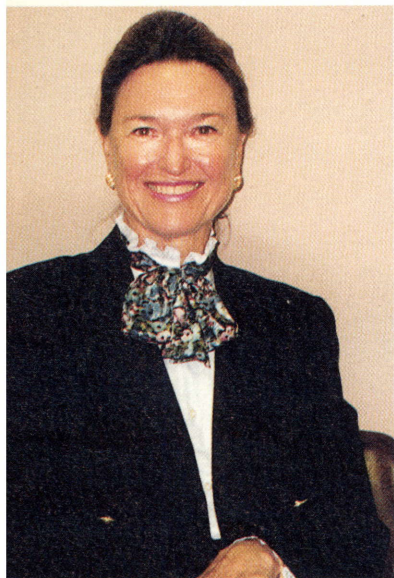
Traditional tourism in the Bahamas. But things are changing...



community – there is even a taxi driver course. Bahama Hosts is heavily subsidised by the Ministry of Tourism (people pay \$50), and it has always got results – we never have complaints about graduates of this course. They are true ambassadors for their country.”

So what about ecotourism in the Bahamas in the next millenium?

“Standards and quality will improve. We are also involved in technology – we move with the times.” And the times they are changing. The Bahamas have always taken tourism seriously, but



Ambassador Lynn Holowesko, Chairwoman of BEST, the Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Committee

now there is no doubt that they feel the same about eco-tourism.

Environment and the law

Angela Cleare is the practical end of environmental concern in the Bahamas. Lyn Holowesko, the Chairman of BEST – the Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Committee, is concerned with legislation. BEST operates from the Prime Minister's Office, and is a body that advises government on policy, and then arranges for it to be carried out through its board and member agencies. These board members include "directors of agriculture, fisheries, the chief hydrologist for water and sewerage, environmental health, tourism and so on. Every ministry

out to play a role in the protection of the environment, so rather than have a ministry, we recognise that we all have a responsibility."

The Committee began in early 1995, although without serious funding; "we have just accepted a grant from the Interamerican Development Bank to examine our mandate and determine what we need to review environmental legislation."

Educational efforts have for the last 20 years been managed largely through NGOs, who are including it into the school curriculum.

"UNEP asked us what was the one thing they could help us with in the Caribbean, and we said environmental education. We all have a marine environment, and a need to recognise its value. Also small land masses with pressures of development, and a great many of us have water problems – we are more similar than dissimilar, and a common Caribbean education programme could be very useful.

"Awareness at national level began in 1990 due to a significant celebration of Earth Week organised by the National Trust. It's been growing since then."

The problems

What does she see as the environmental problems of the Bahamas?

"The Bahamas is pretty pristine, outside the more developed islands to the north. We are largely a marine nation, and our problems are as a result of that. They are related to improper methods of coastal development. Problems with fresh water are more severe in some islands than others for example – we have been barging water from one island to another for a number of years."

Like Angela Cleare, she is enthusiastic about all the islands have to offer.

"We try to provide an eco-touristic experience. There is shark diving, night diving, snorkelling, bicycling and . There are tiny bonefishing camps, which

have simple accommodation, and tourists are really immersed in the local community."

Bone fishing, for the uninitiated, involves the hunting and capture of a small game fish which lives on shallow water flats in the mangrove areas.

"We have spoonbills, and herons," Lyn Holowesko continued. "All sorts of shorebirds. Paradise Island has been doing birdwatching redevelopment of the eastern end of the island. On any of the islands they will always be able to find someone to take you birdwatching."

Ecotourism is only six or seven years old. "Once it was only Nassau and to some extent Freeport, but now people look for different things. We have what the market is looking for but we haven't marketed it yet."

If awareness of the environment is not at the front of the agenda in the Bahamas it is through no fault of BEST or the ministry. Much has been going on. An Environmental Impact Assessment is being carried out. They also hosted the first Conference of the Parties to the Biodiversity Convention.

"People here read, watch and listen to US media: the public has been bombarded ever since the environment became an international issue."

The Bahamian National Trust

Another jitney ride, this time to The Retreat, the Headquarters of the Bahamian National Trust, established by an act of Parliament in 1959. It is a collaboration of the private sector, scientific interests and the government, "dedicated to the conservation of the natural and historic resources of the Bahamas for the enjoyment of its people".

On Village Road, the bus stopped to let me off at the gates of the offices which stand in 11 acres of gardens containing one of the largest collections of palms in the world – 176 rare and exotic species of palm, representing 92 genera, more than half of the total number known to exist. The main building is 150 years old and was bought in 1925 by Arthur and Margaret Langlois, who dedicated themselves to their garden. In 1975, Arthur Langlios donated half the property value and Sir Jack Hayward bought the other half; the lot was given to the BNT and opened by Britain's Prince Philip in 1985. It has many volunteers – including garden guides and an 84-year old warden in Inagua National Park who has retired but "won't quit" – and a membership which has grown to more than three thousand. Staff is now up to 16, increasing from 2 over the last two years. It is funded by membership fees, donations and also receives \$15,000 annually from government.

Its main fields of action are National Park Management, Wildlife and Habitat protection, Historic Preservation, Conservation Education, Policy Planning

and Strategy Development, and Research. There are 12 National Parks and protected areas throughout the country - a total of more than 320,000 acres. Rand Nature Centre, Peterson Cay and the Lucayan National Park are the main priorities for the future. The Trust wants to encourage more visitors and strengthen infrastructure in the 20,500-acre Abaco National Park, created in 1994, the home of the endangered Bahama Parrot. Each park has its own characteristics: Union Creek Reserve - the first land Columbus saw on his journey to the New World - is a bird sanctuary and a breeding site for the Green Turtle; Pelican Cays Land and Sea Park has under-sea caves, coral reefs and fish, plant and bird life; Exuma Cays was created in 1959, the first of its kind in the world, and is known for its outstanding anchorages, and marine environment. It has its own game warden and is a protected replenishment zone, considered the first marine fishery reserve in the wider Caribbean. In close cooperation with the Audubon Society they have brought the West Indian flamingo from near extinction to a colony of about 50,000 on Inagua, with its now repopulating other Caribbean islands. And so on. The Trust is negotiating with the Bahamian Government to open two new parks in New Providence: Wilson Harrold Park, a wetland rookery for egrets and herons, and a marine park in the west. "People here have realised that we are going to be built all over - it's not been intentional but it has happened," said Lyn Gage, the PRO and education officer.

The BNT is also working to preserve historic sites and places of interest, many of which have been eradicated. A national register of historic buildings has been compiled and laws drafted. A video



series has been produced and a ruined 18th-century artillery emplacement in Nassau Harbour is being restored. The Historic Preservation Committee has been set up to raise awareness in the Bahamas, and to save the outer façade of older buildings. Balcony House was bought by the central Bank and is managed by the Department of Archives. It is now a living museum, restored to its former elegance with expert guidance.

At close quarters

Eco-tourism companies offer kayaking, mountain biking, bird-watching, blue hole diving, dolphin watching, bush safaris and nature treks. I contacted Carolyn Wardle of Pedal and Paddle, on New Providence, who for the last three years has taken groups from two to eight people for full or half day tours which require a bit of elbow grease, and give her clients a chance to have a look at the scenery and wildlife without making a noise or polluting the atmosphere. Lean, brown and fit, she is

an excellent advertisement for the outdoor life, although she makes it clear she isn't in it for the money - "if anyone wanted to get rich they wouldn't do this!" I joined her and two others on a three-hour bike ride through the pine woods and mangrove creeks. It was hot, but manageable after the downpour of recent Hurricane Irene, and together we pedalled the few miles to Adelaide Village, which was founded in the early 19th Century by freed slaves. It was an excellent antidote to hotel living, and we saw and heard birds, and the swell of the ocean, but few cars. It was by no means one of her most strenuous trips - she takes people on the tours they request, and they range from easy to very hard work!

Camping at present is not allowed in the Bahamas, so a day like this one, offered by a small number of companies, is an excellent way of seeing the country and its wildlife from close quarters without making your presence felt.

The peaceful palm garden at The Retreat, Headquarters of the Bahamas National Trust

Carl Bethel Bahamas Minister for Economic Development

“If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”

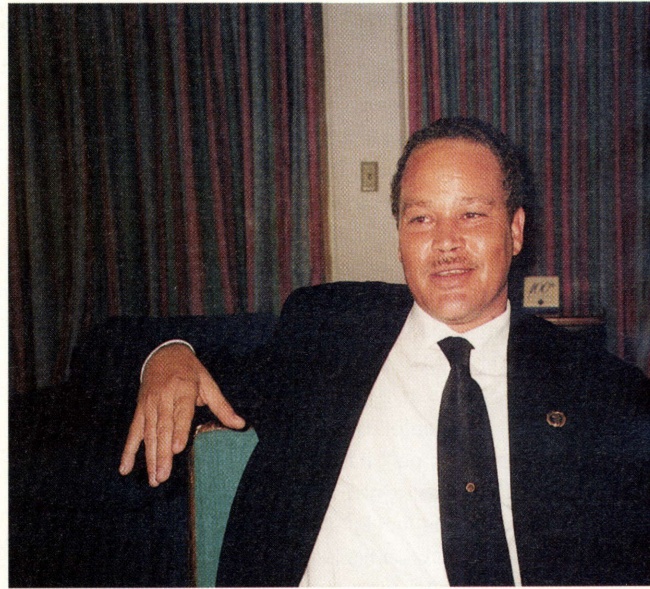
How long have you been in office?

I was elected an MP in 1992. This is my second go at it. I was elevated to the Cabinet in March 1997. We are administratively under a larger ministry - the senior minister - but we have a direct responsibility for our portfolio and we are accountable for development banking. Unlike some other junior ministers who are really directly under the minister and must be the shadow of the minister, we have been allowed a great deal of autonomy.

The British Queen is still Head of State - are people happy about this?

There is a lot of schizophrenia on this issue in the Bahamas. The younger generation I don't think really care. In some cases they are actually opposed to a continuance of the monarchy but the history of the Bahamas is such that it would not be wise or easy to break with the monarchy. Two key islands at least have people who are descendants of the settlers - the loyalists - and they still feel a very strong sense of cultural connection with Britain. In the Abacos, and the Cays - Man of War Cay, Green Turtle Cay - there are people who can trace themselves back to the widow whose husband was killed fighting for the British and she came and with her two sons set up this whole town, and they have all these lovely loyalist-style houses and so on. It is a part of their culture that they feel very very deeply.

You have a consensus of opinion too which is often better not to disturb. If it ain't broke don't fix it. Do I care personally? In my heart of hearts I feel that hereditary principle is an outdated concept. But the monarchy is a nice symbol, harmless in the Bahamaian context. I think there will be a time when there is a sufficiently strong national consensus which will allow us to give expression to what we know to be the ideal. But we have to get all



Bahamians to feel comfortable with that. It would be wrong for the centre to express its views against the deeply-held conviction of the peripheral parts of the Bahamas.

What do you get from Britain? What would you lose?

I wouldn't imagine that we would gain or lose very much but that's not the point. There's no other angle - nothing material, although its British tradition is a good talking point - one could say selling point - of the Bahamas. The tourists love all that. All Bahamaians are extremely nationalistic - they're proud of their country. Of everything that makes up our country including our history, our traditional connection with Great Britain, and we're proud of that too! And the bandsmen love to starch up those jackets and parade and wear those pith helmets! We take our military drills from Britain. We send our police there. When we have a difficulty in the force, as we do now, and need technical assistance, we go straight to Scotland Yard. And we have been receiving assistance from them.

Drugs?

The government has come down very heavily on this. We have been collaborating with our neighbours - particularly the United States - to deal with this problem. It's working.

Education

During the late 19th century, the British established the foundations of the Bahamas, admirable education system...More than 95% of the population is literate.

School attendance is compulsory up to the age of 16 (up from 14). Some 80% of the school are government-run. Most independent schools - called "colleges" - are affiliated with a church body. Students work towards earning the Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education in each subject. All students wear uniform, and each school district has its own colours.

There are four bodies of higher learning. The University of the West Indies has a campus in Nassau...it has a Center for the Hotel and Tourism Industry. The government-run College of the Bahamas, with two campuses in Nassau and one in Freeport, offers advanced level certificates, diplomas and degrees in the arts sciences, humanities and banking and finance. The Bahamas Hotel Training College provides training in hospitality fields. The Industrial Training Programme offers training in trade skills.

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You no longer get offered "Coke or Smoke?" in the streets of Nassau. We don't have a big drug problem here, although there are more first time users, as in many other countries.

Immigrants?

We have naturalised over 30,000 in the last 20 or so years and estimates are as high as 60,000 Haitians and Jamaicans. As fast as we have moved Bahamians out of the ghetto in come others unlawfully. That's the sort of area where we need help.

Custody - there was a prisoner with chains round his ankles being taken through the streets...

Yes. Our court system is still essentially using the infrastructure left by the British. We don't have as yet a new court building on the drawing board. Until there is, there are no holding cells for the prisoners in the supreme court, as there were in the old days, underneath the cellars. We thought that was unhygienic and so on, and there had been some breakouts in the past so prisoners considered to be dangerous have shackles on their feet to prevent them running away.

Is health care free?

For public patients, which is just about anybody who doesn't wish to pay for a private room The only cost is a \$10 one-off registration fee, and then you can be treated on the public wards. All children are wards of the state. We have special children's wards where any child who is ill can be admitted and get the best quality care we can offer. Those who can pay for private care in a private hospital are welcome to do so: mainly bahamians who have the necessary insurance cover.

How do you encourage people to stay put and not migrate to Nassau?

Inward migration to the urbanised centre is always a problem. Nassau and Freeport are the boiler rooms of the Bahamian economy and you can hear the giant sucking sound of able-bodied persons coming from the Family Islands to work.

Can you keep them in the Family Islands?

Yes and No. For example there's now

full employment in certain Family Islands as a result of the efforts made by the Bahamian people (with the help of the Government) to bring about development. Abaco has full employment and people are leaving Nassau and returning there. It is very rapidly becoming the third city in the Bahamas. Businesses have moved branches there and there is a very good agricultural fisheries sector and a quite well-balanced tourist sector - not large-scale like Nassau but there are a lot of second homes, condos, time shares. Club Med which opened in San Salvador three years ago has resulted in full employment there. People are doing very well.

Harbour Island in the far north of Eleuthera is still very trendy. But on Eleuthera proper several resorts fell on hard times 15 years ago and we've not been able to resuscitate it. It is a very depressed economy.

In parts of the island of Andros people live at subsistence level and in South Andros proper the economy is not good.

Internal transport?

Internal transport is not being well-promoted. Every island is serviced from the centre at least once a week by a mail boat, subsidised by the government, but they tend to be rather scrubby boats and the trip takes a long time. Recently Bahamians have started to invest in fast ferries. They call them Bo Hengys, which means Brother Henry!

It costs \$140 by plane between islands. A Bo Hengy will cost \$90.

Hotels seem expensive. Are they government-owned?

The Radisson Cable Beach Resort is the only remaining government-owned hotel on the island of New Providence. We had five or six, but we sold them.

As soon as we can have someone to buy the Radisson - on appropriate terms - they can take it. It is too big to turn into condos or timeshare units and the impact on the employment level in Nassau would not be appropriate for us. Room rates are somewhat higher in the Bahamas than they should be but that has a lot to do with the upward pressure from the Sun International investment [Atlantis, a South-African financed hotel on Paradise Island].

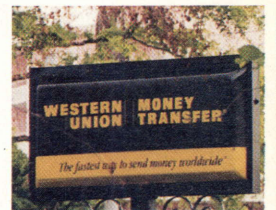
Sylvia Howe

Banking and Finance

The Bahamas, specifically Nassau, is one of the world's principal international financial centres. In 1997, over 400 banks from 36 countries were licensed to do business within or from the Bahamas. Almost 200 banks had a physical presence in the islands. Together they manage more than \$200 billion in assets. Financial services annually contribute about \$200 million to the economy (about 10% of GDP).

Financial markets are regulated by the independent Central Bank of the Bahamas. The system primarily serves as a tax-planning haven and place of asset security for wealthy individuals and corporations. Assets are protected from foreign creditors; financial records cannot be subpoenaed or released. However, the FNM government has made sweeping changes in banking laws to help the US DEA and the and the US Internal Revenue Service combat money laundering, and Bahamian-held assets are no longer secure from US federal agencies. In 1997 the government began aggressively positioning the Bahamas as a premier offshore insurance centre.

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Ireland Aid: bucking the trend

Dorothy Morrissey examines Ireland's swift progress up the donor league table



Villagers map their local water sources and discuss options for meeting sanitation needs (Ireland Aid-supported project, Gwanda district, Matabeleland, Zimbabwe)

Pauline Conway

"The rich world is not living up to its moral obligations"

These are the words of the EU's new Development Commissioner, Poul Nielson, on the generally low levels of aid to the developing world from the OECD countries.

The United Nations set the aid target at 0.7% of GNP, but few countries are reaching this. Worryingly, aid flows are dropping; they reached an average of only 0.23% in the DAC member countries in 1998. Aid flows first began to fall off in the aftermath of the Cold War, when Third World countries were of less strategic interest. There are now perhaps other influencing factors, such as "donor fatigue" - people are questioning the value of aid. After years of assistance, wars, poverty and strife appear to continue unabated. There are competing demands on the public's purse, and war or catastrophe in one area - Kosovo as an example - may deplete resources available for assistance elsewhere. A more prosaic reason for EU Member States' declining aid may have been adherence to European monetary union. Strict budgetary restrictions were imposed, leaving little spare cash for development aid, which

may not always be seen as the top political priority.

An exception to this trend is Ireland. Over the past five years Ireland's official development assistance (ODA) has increased by an average of 20% per year in real terms. This is the most rapid growth of any of the OECD countries. In 1998 Ireland's development assistance reached 0.31% of GNP, almost double the 1992 level. This year ODA looks like reaching a record 0.35%.

1999 marks the 25th anniversary of the Ireland Aid programme, set up in 1974. Then the total amount spent on aid, both bilateral and multilateral, was £1.5 million, or 0.05% of GNP. Twenty-five years later, the figure is £178 million, an increase of almost 120%.

This growth, while impressive, still falls far short of the UN target of 0.7% of GNP. But, according to Ireland Aid's annual report for 1998, "Ireland slipped into the upper half of the donor league table in 1997 having overtaken the DAC average two years earlier". Signs are good for continued future growth, and the country has set itself the ambitious target of 0.45% for

2002. Officials admit it may be difficult to reach the figure by then, but the commitment at government level is impressive, with cross-party consensus for increasing the amount of money allocated to development assistance.

OECD endorsement

Ireland Aid was given a strong endorsement in an OECD review (DAC Peer Review) held in June this year which stated that Ireland Aid... "sets high standards for its official aid programme...its rising budget is a reflection of Ireland's commitment to reducing poverty in developing countries, and the potential for further growth is supported by Ireland's strong economic performance, coupled with solid political and public support." The review also praised the focused nature of the programme, where, in bilateral aid the country concentrates on six "priority" countries (Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Lesotho). About 60% of the bilateral funds are spent on these six countries, and the OECD believes that this approach has been successful.

It also praises the partnership approach which Ireland Aid has developed. This ensures that the objectives are realistic and determined with the local authorities in the countries concerned. Ireland Aid has built up a set of area-based programmes driven by local objectives and local people, and where the number of Irish people involved is minimised. The focus is mostly on poverty reduction, education, and health.

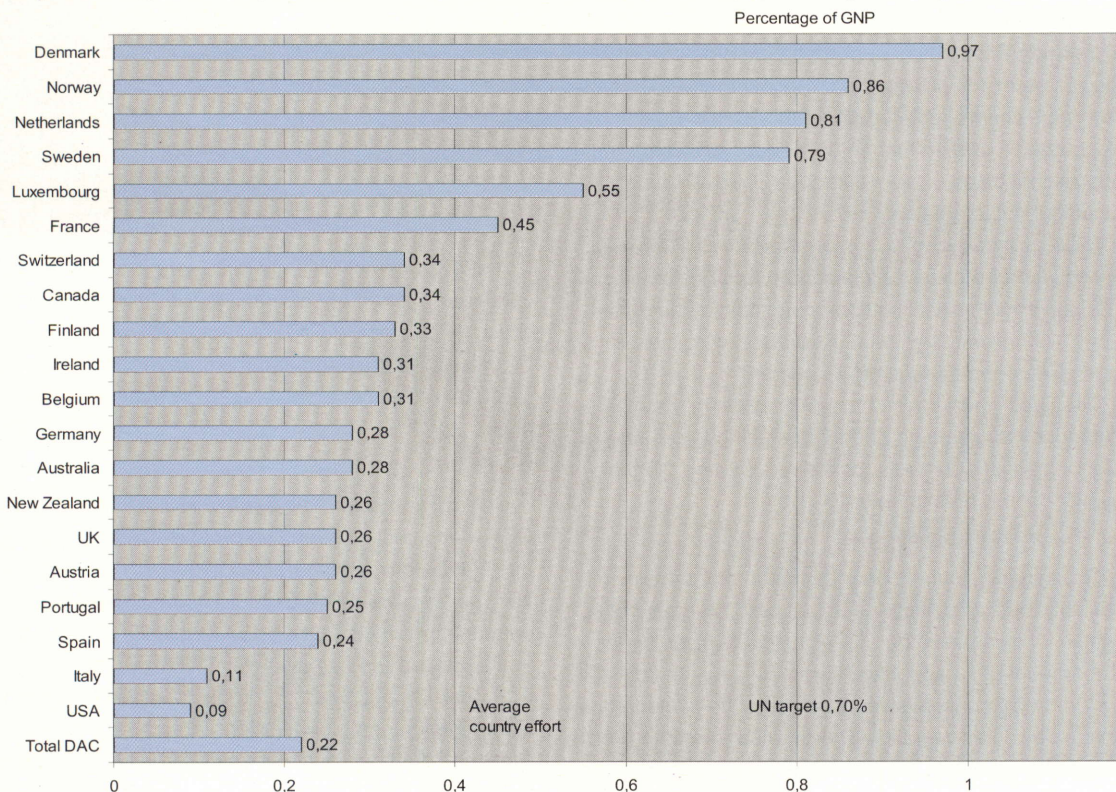
Experience of famine

A range of factors may help to explain the increasing generosity of the Irish in their development assistance. From a religious perspective, there has always been a tradition in Ireland of sending missionaries abroad, and while religion may be less central now, it has always had strong popular support, and motivated people.

Ireland has had direct experience of chronic food shortage: the Great Famine took place between 1845 - 1848 when the potato, on which a largely impoverished population depended, was destroyed by a blight. It is estimated that one million people perished, while another million emigrated to escape starvation. Memories of this catastrophe were stirred by its 150th anniversary, which took place between 1995 - 1997.

Ireland was also the only colonised country in Europe. The country is in relative terms newly independent, an experience within living memory, and shared with countries in the developing world.

Irish NGOs have also a long tradition and are extremely strong. One of them, *Concern*, goes back to the Biafran war, through Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia. Their publicity campaigns have been able to keep the particular historical influences alive in Ireland, and they have stimulated popular support. These historical factors may account for the strong private generosity in Ireland, with people giving amounts of between £30 - £50 million a year. Such private generosity means that the government must at least match it. Ireland Aid maintains strong links with the NGOs, through grants and co-financing, and also channels part of its humanitarian and rehabilitation budget through them.



Source: OECD



Carol Lee

"We are pleased that a lot of our concerns about loosening the conditionality for debt relief and strengthening poverty alleviation have been taken up"



Galloping GNP

Ireland's economy is performing extremely well at the moment; it is among the strongest in the EU, leading to the country being dubbed the "Celtic Tiger". Such rapid increase has an underside, stretching the operational basis of the Ireland Aid programme, and making it vulnerable.

"GNP is increasing at a phenomenal rate, and it is difficult to keep pace", explained an Ireland Aid official. "We have had to deal with very substantial increases from 1992 onwards without equivalent increases in staff and general structural resources."

The DAC review points this out, advising the Irish authorities to give high priority to staffing levels and organisational structures for the programme, so that quality can be maintained.

GNP - a moving target

So, increases should be within the programme's capacity, but calculating the actual percentage is not so simple. This is based on a GNP estimate given by the Department of Finance, and some suggest that this can be extremely conservative. (There may be some temptation to downplay very high growth rates given the potential macro-economic impact, notably in stoking inflation).

A second complication is that there is a new European system of calculating GNP, the effect of which is to increase GNP by up to 10%. Each EU Member State has adopted this new system, and for some there will be a consequent drop in their ODA level.

Multilateral aid

Until Ireland joined the EU in 1973, all its multilateral ODA was spent through two organisations, the UN and the World Bank, which Ireland joined in 1955 and 1957 respectively. The EU quickly became the main channel for the country's multilateral ODA. Payments to the EU are made in two ways, firstly to the European Development Fund (EDF) which finances the EU's development cooperation with a group of 71 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP) under

In 1994, when Ireland Aid support for Sidama region in Ethiopia began, only 10% of school-age females were attending school. By 1998, over 90 primary schools had been constructed and the participation rate for girls increased to almost 30%, above

Computer upgrading course for staff at Kibaale District Council, Uganda, right, where Ireland Aid is helping the district administration to build up its management capacity

Ireland's ODA, selected years 1974-98 (£m and %)

	1974	1978	1984	1988	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Total ODA (£m)	1.5	8.4	33.2	32.4	75.2	96.8	112.1	124.1	139.6
Bilateral aid	0.2	2.7	13.3	14.3	39.5	55.8	71.6	80.9	86.8
Multilateral aid	1.3	5.7	19.9	18.1	35.7	41.0	40.5	43.2	52.8
Bil'l as % ODA	13.0	33.0	40.0	42.0	51.0	56.0	60.0	63.0	62.2
ODA as % GNP	0.05	0.13	0.22	0.18	0.24	0.28	0.30	0.31	0.30



Carol Lee

the Lomé Convention. The EDF is financed directly by Member States and is separate from the EU budget. A contribution is also made to the development cooperation part of the EU budget, which is spent on food aid, humanitarian assistance and aid to other developing countries.

Concern about debt

All of Ireland Aid's development assistance is in the form of non-repayable grants. Ireland Aid is not therefore in a position to cancel debt, but the issue of debt relief is central to policy, probably influenced by the vociferous NGOs. As shareholders in the World Bank and the IMF, albeit quite small, Ireland Aid is in a position to wield some influence, by drawing attention to the issue and asking for more sensitivity and transparency.

Ireland Aid holds the view that the HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries) initiative has not been successful, and are looking for more flexibility with more countries being allowed to qualify. The whole debt relief mechanism initiative underwent a major review this year, and Ireland Aid had a substantial input, making two submissions to the World Bank and IMF.

"We are pleased that a lot of our concerns about loosening the conditionality for debt relief and strengthening poverty alleviation have been taken up", we were told.

Reservations about ESAF

When the government decided several years ago to contribute to the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Fund (ESAF), criticisms were voiced and the money was frozen. Ireland Aid was concerned about ESAF programmes which it believed were not always consistent with development needs. This year, a decision has been made to make a major contribution to ESAF as part of a debt relief package. Ireland Aid acknowledges that progress has been made, and there have been in the meantime two reviews of ESAF. But it continues to urge the IMF to be more sensitive to what the NGO community in these countries is saying, and to take account of the basic social needs of the poorest countries.

The DAC review has had a very positive effect, and its recommendations are being taken to heart. One of these was that Ireland should continue to consider joining the African Development Bank. The success of the Irish economy means that some of the expertise that has been developed both in the private and policy sector could be put to good use.

"The idea of economic reform is in principal a good one. Countries do have to make structural changes and impose discipline. But we believe that any mechanism has to benefit poverty alleviation and not hamper it."

Human rights and international cooperation - a new approach

by Antoine Noel*

The renewal of the Lomé Convention signals an opportunity to strengthen the European Union's multilateral cooperation with the ACP countries. This is a logical background against which to deal with the issue of human rights, democracy and the state of law in Africa. The resurgence of conflicts in Africa and the inability of the international community to dissuade those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes from seeing through their criminal plans does more to deepen pessimism than reinforce determination for order.

Context

The globalisation of the economy and the issue of human rights are leading the majority of African countries towards a process of often fragile democratisation, and towards a need, both restrictive and inevitable, to adapt to the globalisation of commercial and financial markets. Yet, for a number of countries, impoverishment, the collapse of national cohesion and the development of ethnic and clannish identity, together with the embezzlement of national resources, are potential triggers for an erosion of national institutions. A government thus weakened, overly partisan or even non-existent is powerless to break the vicious circle of impunity from crimes leading to an increase in barbaric acts, this in turn causing yet more violations of human rights. Such a state of affairs can only lead to disaster and an anarchic system of seizure, exercise and retention of military, economic and political powers.

A global approach will have to be taken to solve the continent's problems, priority being given to the reinforcement of national authority and the efforts to prevent the worsening of socio-economic conditions and conflict situations. It has to be acknowledged that government is at the centre of the human rights issue. Only those governments in control of a territory and maintaining order are in a position to meet their democratic prerogatives and ensure respect of human rights.

The role of support organisations

The United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) have legal authority in the field of human rights. The European Union, which has demonstrated its immediate interest in the global development of Africa, is anxious for peace and security and remains committed to respect for human rights. It has gained unique experience in its work particularly with the Central European and Eastern European countries,

through its global approach to problems, with a focus on security, economics and above all humanity, encompassing human rights, democracy, the State of Law and protection of minorities. This approach may inspire and help shape cooperation between Europe and Africa.

The OAU has an *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*. It has also been equipped since 1993 with a *Mechanism for the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts*. In spite of this, the paucity of this pan-African organisation's resources is hindering the development of these two essential tools.

The United Nations institutions in charge of human rights and the protection of specific groups of people have a mandate to support and the mechanisms to establish law, as well as to monitor and oversee the application of governmental obligations. Compliance with the legal instruments of human rights does not present any particular problem in Africa. Difficulties tend rather to arise in the execution of governmental obligations and respect of the law by its agents and representatives. The UN, because of its structures, does not seem to be in the best position to deal with the complex and multiple causes behind the failure of governments to carry out their obligations. The individual mandates of the various agencies and the financial independence of the most important of these means that the contribution of the system to a specific country generally remains little more than a series of unconnected contributions to different sectors, with little synergy and still less political value. The Directives of the Secretary General of the United Nations relating to strengthening the links between various UN organisations for the purpose of improved coordination are likely to help reinforce this global organisation's potential for action.

The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have for their part cultivated professional expertise in the area of human rights, which puts them in the vanguard

of vigilance and assists them in the implementation of the majority of projects in this field.

Attending to the execution of governmental human rights obligations, building on the authority of human rights groups and preventing the escalation of internal conflicts are key areas to be explored.

Reinforcing national authority

An internal legal system is not merely a list of standards to be followed. It is an entire procedure, a set of rules representing substantive law in a community and cohesion of society. Africa, currently engaged in a process of democratisation, is finally turning its back on autocratic regimes and in many cases the single party system. The former personalisation of authority had its basis in a mythical view of traditional society and of the chief, drawn from the history of pre-colonial Africa.

Human rights have their foundation in an international legal system. The transition of society from autocracy to democracy can therefore only follow from a voluntarist policy by governments and civil society on the one hand, and outside support on account of the scale of the challenges to be overcome on the other. In the absence of moves in this direction, the fear is that human rights will exist in form only. A sub-regional pilot project could determine the current status of human rights in the countries in a particular sub-region, as well as the obstacles to be overcome in ensuring their application.

Article 1 of the *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights* states that **"The Member States of the Organization of African Unity, parties to the present Charter, shall recognise the rights, duties and freedoms enshrined in this Charter and shall undertake to adopt legislative or other measures to give effect to them."**

From the viewpoint of this Charter, the cornerstone of human rights in Africa, and of the other obligations of the State in this

area, what are the practical measures for implementation, or the measures, procedures and guarantees in favour of respect of the law or even the political, administrative, jurisdictional, social, cultural and economic obstacles? This information is essential before governments can take decisions, human rights groups take action and outside support be organised.

Human rights for all

The African human rights groups are the foundations for the defence of human rights. They are essential for the inclusion of civil society, but in most cases do not have the necessary human and physical resources at their disposal to carry out all their functions. The European Union needs to consider supporting projects to increase their distribution, information and training potential and to assist in their functions of monitoring and mediation.

Preventing the worsening of conflict situations

Two examples illustrate the limitations of prevention. In Somalia, one of the largest humanitarian missions in reaching and keeping the peace of the post-cold-war period failed to resolve the conflict and was unable to assist in the reinstatement of political institutions. In the Great Lakes region, the calculated genocide of 1994 led in 1996 to a new tragedy in Kivu, hastening the destabilisation of the region. The most important consolidation measure in the prevention process relates to political decision-making. There is as yet no reliable regional instrument for analysing the historical, geopolitical, social and economic background to internal conflicts in Africa to support this.

Nor is there a suitable monitoring mechanism in place for early decision-making to prevent the worsening of socio-economic and conflict situations. The EU in consultation with the OAU and the UN should consider making a contribution towards such a regional mechanism. Any programme aim-

ing to defend human rights in Africa requires a long-term approach and bears the seeds of a two-speed Africa.

Recent missions to gather information in the Great Lakes region, in southern Africa and in the Horn of Africa once again revealed civil society's commitment to increased democracy and a greater level of integrity in administration and the handling of national resources. For an Africa engaged in a process of change, human rights are the key to the establishment of a fairer and more peaceful society. On the other hand, for those countries in the grip of widespread internal conflicts, the powerlessness of those responsible at a national level is only matched by their bitterness in response to the inability of the OAU and the UN to do anything to help solve their problems. In situations of extreme violence it is impossible to provide an effective guarantee of human rights. There nonetheless still exists a "right of solidarity" for countries in difficulty which would require a great deal of thought and sub-regional cooperation.

How then can the protection of minorities and a fair system of power-sharing be guaranteed, when democracy has yet to be established but is ultimately inevitable? How can democracy and national cohesion be reconciled? How can Government and Nation be reorganised? The democratic debate of issues essential to the community is part of African tradition. In days gone by, when wisdom and custom failed to maintain peace, security and justice, Africans would meet and use dialogue to move forward - such was the nature of the African constitution, an unwritten law to support social cohesion.

***Director of the regional office of HCR for Africa from 1982 - 1985. He took part from 1994 - 1990 in the Meeting of Ministers and the Conference of Heads of State and Governments on the OAU. He has dual nationality: Ethiopian and French. The views in this article are those of the author**

A global village of six billion

by El Bachir Sow*

The place is Sarajevo in Bosnia and the date is 12 October 1999. It's a girl. Humanity has just celebrated the birth of the six billionth human being on the planet by mondiovision. Now there are six billion of us, and there should be about nine billion of us by 2050. The world population has doubled since 1960 and should increase by 43% between now and the middle of the next century. It took us 1804 years to reach a population of one billion, but only 12 years to increase in number from five to six billion. This is a huge leap forward, which cannot leave individuals, couples, society and states unaffected.

The increase in our numbers is certainly partly due to the development of medicine and to the greater attention given to population changes in countries' political programmes. What is more, there is now a global consensus on what needs to be done. One hundred and sev-

enty-nine countries recognised that population and development are indissolubly linked at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo (Egypt), in 1994.

Those who place all their hopes on birth control are no longer in favour. Now the intention is to adopt a more global approach that aims to promote the wellbeing of individuals and communities partly by means of birth control, certainly, but also by combating poverty, ensuring universal access to education, reproductive health, access to primary health care, respect for the rights of women, etc.

The problems of population growth have also become pressing as an important aspect of globalisation, which is the new religion that has been voluntarily accepted or imposed throughout the global village. The recent steep rise in poverty observed in Indonesia is undoubtedly due to a financial crisis, which has certainly been exacerbated by the uncontrolled circulation of capital, and the effects of the adjustment policies implemented in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s have not always been favourable. It cannot be denied that they, together with the devaluation



of the Cfa franc, have helped to impoverish millions of people, destabilise health care systems, increase malnutrition and increase infant mortality and the number of deaths during childbirth.

The iron law of the market

When applied to the Sahel (Western Africa) or the Caribbean, the

iron law of the market and the "considered advice" of the Bretton Woods institutions have frequently pushed communities into a position of absolute insecurity and accentuated the marginalisation of the Third World as a result.

Statistics repeatedly confirm the fact that the countries of the South are poor and densely populated, while those of the North are rich and have many fewer inhabitants. Almost five out of the six billion people on our planet live in developing countries. According to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the world's population is increasing at a rate of 78 million per year, which is almost equal to the total population of Germany. It has doubled since 1960. The developing countries account for over 95% of population growth, which has slowed down or ceased altogether in Europe, North America and Japan.

Those inhabiting rich countries are smaller in number, but they consume more, live longer and have greater opportunities to obtain education for themselves and their children, obtain medical care, etc. Their rights, and in particular those of women, are more likely to be respected.

In the South, three-fifths of the population lack the con-

ditions necessary for basic hygiene: access to clean water, adequate accommodation and modern health care services are still luxuries there. Fewer children attend primary school. Regarding the rights of women of all ages, a revolution is still necessary. A black and white picture is revealed at first glance. Things are more complicated than they appear, however. Physical wealth can sometimes destroy the hope that is kept alive by those living in poverty.

The countries of the North are certainly rich, but their populations are ageing. Their women have fewer children (1.6 per woman on average as against 5.5 in sub-Saharan Africa) and the rise in life expectancy (between 70 and 80 years) is increasing the proportion of old people. The proportion of the total population of Europe accounted for by the over 60s is expected to increase from 21% today to 34% in 2050.

Europe is ageing

There is much discussion of the question of ageing in the West and Japan. It will certainly be necessary to find workers who are able to keep the wheels of the economy turning and support pension funds over the next few decades. Some people are sufficiently confident to predict that ageing will result in a general drop in the standard of living. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) expects per capita income to drop by 10% in the United States, 18% in the countries of the European Union and 23% in Japan between 1998 and 2050. This warning has already been taken in by the politicians, some of whom have changed their views on immigration, as has occurred recently in France. As growth is resumed and the number of old people increases, many Europeans are hypocritically calling for a resumption of the immigration of workers and the improved integration of immigrants under certain conditions.

Most immigrants of this type come from developing countries, whose populations are dominated by young people as a result of the strong natu-

ral growth rate of the population (of the order of 3% a year in sub-Saharan Africa). This is far from being a handicap. The existence of a very large number of young people in a community is not an inherently bad thing at a time when the number of births is decreasing. Quite the reverse. Studies have shown this and the performance of some East Asian countries has provided ample proof of it. By becoming part of the active population, these young people contribute to economic development. The countries of Asia have derived great benefit from this "demographic dividend", to use the term favoured by experts. Africa could match their performance over the next 20 years. The UNFPA suggests that if they are to do so, the countries of Africa must reinforce their systems of education and health care, without forgetting about reproduction aspects, and adopt different support policies, by taking more vigorous action against poverty, for example.

Drop in the African birth rate

Moreover, contrary to received ideas, the birth rate is actually falling in the developing countries: it has dropped from 6.2 children per woman

in 1950 to just under 3 today and is expected to fall to under 2.1 by 2045. Over the past 50 years, the birth rate has fallen very rapidly in Latin America (from 5.9 to 2.7), Asia (from 5.9 to 2.6), less rapidly in northern Africa and the Middle East (from 6.6 to 3.5) and much more slowly in sub-Saharan Africa (from 6.5 to 5.5).

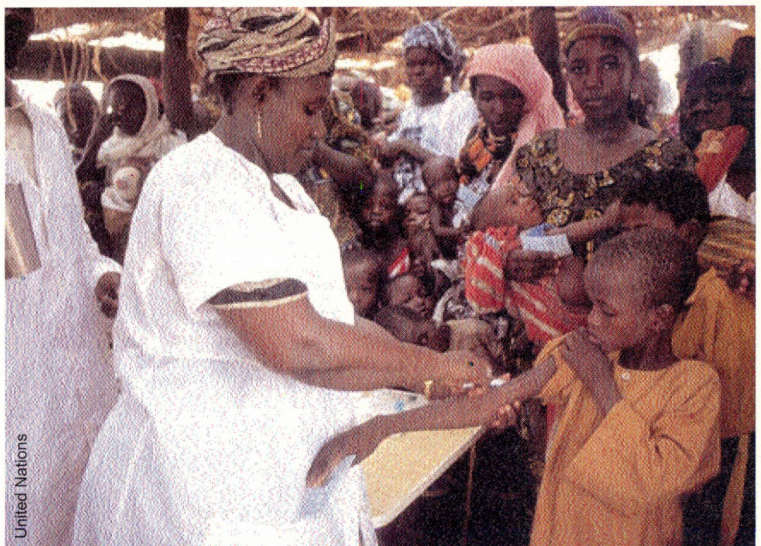
In the case of sub-Saharan Africa, the bare figures do not reveal everything. They frequently fail to reveal to the uninitiated the efforts that have been made to reduce the birth rate by those involved in development, governments, communities at a primary level and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs).

Until recently, population experts despaired of ever seeing sub-Saharan Africa gain control of its birth rates, but now they accept that the transition is well under way. The number of children per woman is starting to fall and this decrease is even sharper in urban areas.

At the ICPD in Cairo in 1994, the international community recognised that the emancipation of women and the satisfaction of educational and healthcare needs, including reproductive health, are indispensable for the flowering of individual abilities and

Banizoumbou's choice

Banizoumbou is 70 kilometres from Niamey, the capital of Niger, right out in the bush. The first dispensary is 35 kilometres away on foot. Doctor Djibo and his team come regularly to a village of about 100 people



to vaccinate children and take care of pregnant women. The women and men of Banizoumbou have chosen to have fewer children, so that they can educate them, and keep them healthy



United Nations

In 1994, the Cairo Conference launched a new approach to population. For the first time, people did not speak only in numbers, but also of sustainable development and the rights of women. Although there is still lots of work to do, principally to reduce female and child mortality, the concept of healthy reproduction has become accepted

balanced development.

Five years after Cairo, the international community examined the progress achieved at an international forum held in the Hague, in the Netherlands, in February 1999. This was followed by a Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly from 30 June to 02 July 1999, which identified the key measures that are necessary for progress to continue.

Between the Cairo conference and the forum in the Hague, each state and government moved forward at its own pace. Almost half of the countries redesigned their population and development policies, the rights of women were reinforced and political and legislative measures intended to promote equality between the sexes and emancipate women were adopted. Efforts were also made to become more involved in reproductive health programmes. Fifteen African countries banned female genital mutilation (FGM).

Explain, listen, understand

It is difficult to make definitive statements about this type of activity, but the real progress achieved also reveals the scale of what remains to be done.

Almost everywhere, and in Africa in particular, the passing of legislation will have to be followed by efforts to explain, listen, understand, preach by example, persuade and also to enforce the legislation. Like other measures intended to affirm reproductive health rights, such legislation frequently contravenes customs and even religious convictions on occasion. The resistance encountered by governments, NGOs and women's groups in their fight against female genital mutilation provides eloquent proof of this. Nor will it be easy to persuade men to become

involved in reproductive healthcare programmes in male-dominated societies.

In both these cases, as in others, a large number of policies and programmes that have been put into place by dedicated men and women in an attempt to break down taboos and create conditions in which these programmes and policies can flourish.

In so far as they relate to the mental and physical wellbeing of individuals, health and reproductive rights remain a central preoccupation of those responsible for framing policies, allocating resources, advocating measures, etc.

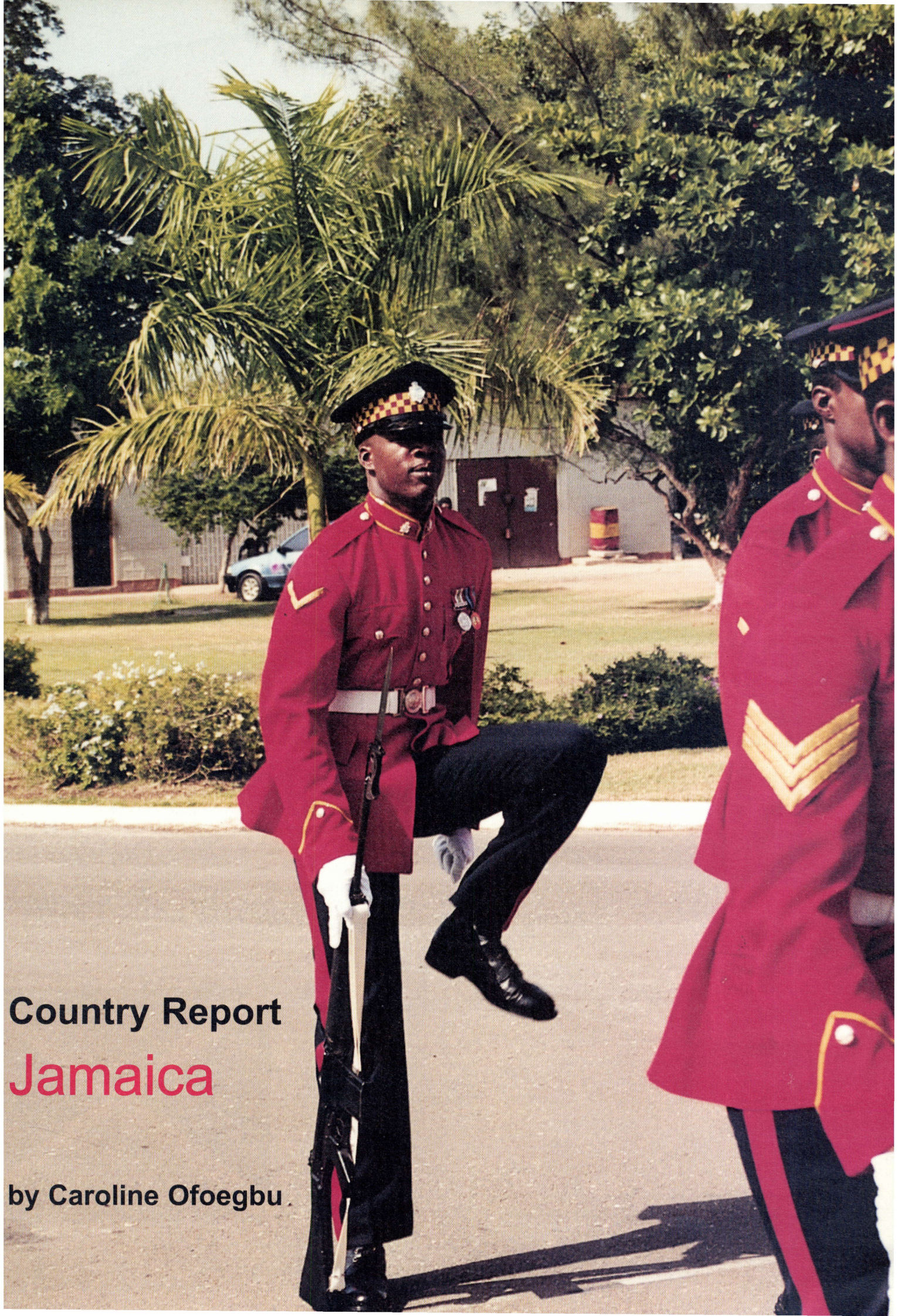
Almost 600,000 women die each year as a result of pregnancies in the developing countries; an additional 70,000 die each year as a result of abortions carried out under dangerous conditions; millions of women have no access to modern contraceptive meth-

ods and therefore have no control over their own fertility; two million girls and young women are exposed to FGM; sexually transmitted diseases are rife; and, as in the case of sub-Saharan Africa, Aids is draining the life blood of communities and contributing to the reduction in life expectancy in many African countries.

A UNFPA document records that at the Cairo Conference, it was estimated that 17 billion dollars per year would have to be devoted to population and reproductive health measures up to the year 2000, about two thirds of which (11.3 billion) would have to come from developing countries and one third (5.7 billion) from international donors. In 1997, the developing countries were spending about 7.7 billion dollars per year, most of this amount being spent by five big countries (China, India, Indonesia, Mexico and the Islamic Republic of Iran). In 1997, international assistance stood at less than 2 billion dollars.

Insufficient funds are being provided, and the need is immense, especially in Africa. Without more money, there will be more undesired pregnancies and abortions and increases in the number of deaths during childbirth, infant mortality rates and Aids, which will continue its work of destruction. These are just words, but think of the tragedies to come. The countries of the North and South can help to avoid many of them. The generosity of the former, which is not always disinterested, and the firm commitment of the latter, will make it possible to pursue relevant and coherent policies. What we must do is act now.

* Editor-in-chief of *Le Soleil*, the national daily newspaper of Dakar, Senegal

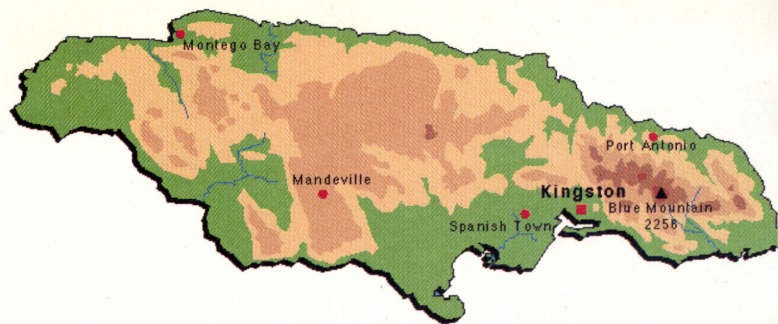


Country Report
Jamaica

by Caroline Ofoegbu

PROFILE

Jamaica



General Information

Area	11,424 km ²
Population	2,576,200 (1998 estimate)
Population Density	213 per km ²
Urban Population	55% (estimate)
Capital	Kingston
Other principal towns	Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, Spanish Town
Official language	English
Other languages	Pidgin English
Principal ethnic groups	Blend of African, European, Arabic, Chinese, and East Indian origins
Religions	Predominantly Christian (80%), minorities: Judaism, Islam, Quakers, Hinduism, Rastafari

Economy

GDP per inhabitant	US\$1560 (1997 estimate)
GDP growth rate	- 3.2% (1998 estimate)
Rate of inflation	8.7% (1998, average annual)
External debt	US\$3.9 billion (1997)
External debt as a % of GDP	81% (1997)
Currency	Jamaican Dollar (JMD). Approx 39.94 to the Euro (Sept 99)
Main economic sectors	Agriculture, bauxite/alumina, manufacturing, construction and installation and services
Main trading partners	USA, Canada, UK, Norway, European Union (excluding UK), Caricom and Latin America

Political structure

Head of State: Queen Elizabeth II of England represented in Jamaica by Governor General appointed on the recommendation of the Jamaican Prime Minister

Political system

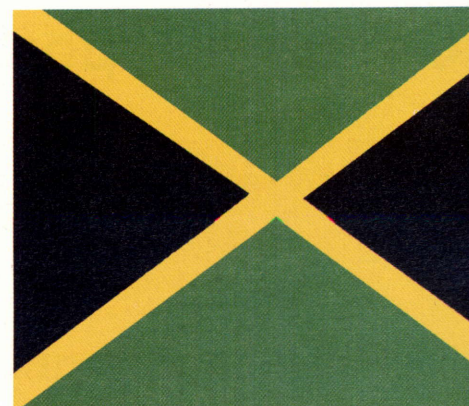
Representative democracy: the Prime Minister (the executive) chosen from the majority party in the House of Representatives, heads a cabinet of 11 or more ministers. The Parliament is bicameral with a House of Representatives (60 members), directly elected for five years, and a Senate (21 members) appointed by the Governor General. The Prime Minister recommends 13 of the Senate nominations and the leader of the opposition nominates eight.

Main Political Organisations

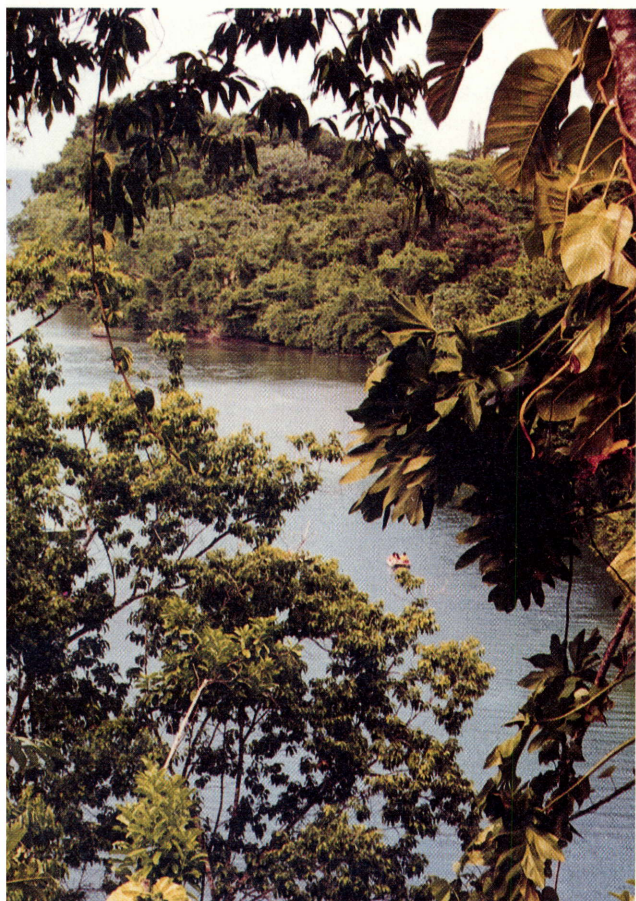
People's National Party (PNP), Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), New Democratic Movement (NDM). Current composition of the House of Representatives: PNP, 50 seats; JLP, 10 seats. Next national elections are due by December 2003.

Social Indicators

Life expectancy at birth	72.2 years
Infant mortality	24.5%, under fives 11% (1997)
Adult literacy rate	85.5%. Women, 89.6%; men 81.2% (1997)
Enrolment in education	683,868 (1995)
Population with access to drinking water	81.2% (1998)
Population per physician	14 doctors per 10,000 (1998)
Human development index	0.734 (82nd out of 174)



The land of water and wood



Every August, Jamaicans celebrate two milestones in their history: emancipation from slavery, and Independence. They also take time to remember Marcus Garvey, a national hero who championed black dignity and freedom. Being the season of reggae festivals, stars like Beenie Man and Anthony B, the nation's best, take to the stage inviting the world to revel in their music. For the last 37 years Jamaica has been striving to achieve stable self-governance and an economy that will sustain these liberties for future generations.

At 256km long with an area of 11,000km², Jamaica is the third largest Island in the Caribbean and the largest English-speaking one. This tropical island is home to 2.5 million Jamaicans of African, European and Asian origin. More fortunate than some of its Caribbean neighbours, it has a more diversified economy. Traditional agricultural production including sugar and bananas accounts for no more than 8% of GDP but its role in food production for both domestic consumption and export markets, employment creation and the alleviation of rural poverty makes it important. Services are the real engine of the economy, accounting for 60-70% of GDP, due largely to tourism. But

other services are developing, in particular financial services, telecommunications, and entertainment.

Jamaica has favourable living standard indices. Health risks are more associated with modern life, smoking, alcohol, etc. than chronic epidemics. Adult literacy levels are at 85%. The University of the West Indies makes Jamaica a centre of learning for the rest of the Caribbean. 95% of the island is electrified and sanitation levels are good. Urbanisation is developing rapidly. Montego Bay is quickly catching Kingston up as the island's second city. The signs of conspicuous consumption are there. American TV is received by the multitude of satellite dishes dotted everywhere, cell phones abound and the number of cars has tripled in the last five years.

The word, whether written, spoken or sung, is an integral part of Jamaican self-expression and creativity. The island's media would benefit a nation twice its size: three major daily newspapers, a dozen radio stations and three national TV channels. Switch on the radio and there is no lack of chat show hosts willing to let the average Jamaican vent his views.

Social norms are not liberal. God-fearing and community-orientated, Jamaica has the largest concentration of churches anywhere in the world. Men are still largely dominant in professional life; there is a dearth of women, despite many being highly educated. Social class and shade of skin are still tacit criteria.

Homosexuality is not tolerated. Commonly seen as a foreign phenomenon, it is still outlawed and reviled in popular culture. Members of JFLAG, a gay rights group, seeking a legal and social framework, operate anonymously for fear of reprisals.

Jamaicans abroad

The 2.8 million Jamaicans living abroad have helped put Jamaica on the map by acting as a conduit for their culture and achievements, particularly in sports, music and the arts. References to Miami or New York as the 21st postal district of Kingston underline the strong mutually-beneficial links ex-patriots still maintain. Remittances to family back home represent a net annual boost of US\$600 million to Jamaica's balance of payments. On the negative side, the deportation of Jamaican criminals, from the United States in particular, is affecting crime rates. The issue is under discussion with Janet Reno, the United States' Attorney General.

A dual society

Jamaica has two societies, one rich, the other poor. According to the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), in 1997 the top 20% accounted for 49% of all national consumption while the bottom 70% enjoyed only



Church on Sunday, above. Jamaicans are God-fearing and community orientated. Down town West Kingston, below - another urban reality



38.8%. Jamaicans living below the poverty line account for 32% of the population. Nowhere is the contrast more stark than in Kingston. Smart affluent suburbs with names like Beverly Hills sit at the base of the Blue Mountains surrounding uptown New Kingston, the commercial heart of the city. The mansions and villas there could sit easily in their Californian namesake but for the roadside vendors. Downtown West Kingston presents another urban reality, that of poverty and exclusion. Inhabitants of the inner-city ghetto communities occupy high-density dwellings (yards) with limited access to amenities and services. Here life or "the runnings" is heavily determined by an unwritten code, exercised by the accepted leader commonly known as "the Don".

Crime

Excessive inequality in wealth and privilege, rapid urbanisation, rising unemployment particularly among the youth, and drugs are all cited as underlying causes for Jamaica's worsening crime rates. The death penalty has not reduced the murder rate, which exceeded 1,000 in 1997. Group conflict, domestic violence and inter-personal conflicts are the main causes.

Bad press about violence also undermines economic confidence. The three-day protest in April against a 30% tax increase on fuel that resulted in 144 major road blocks, nine deaths and 152 arrests cost Jamaica millions in property damage and also in lost tourism receipts as countries warned their citizens to keep away. Shock was also registered internationally at the death of Rose Leon, a leading post-war Jamaican political figure, as a result of a house break-in.

Grappling with governance

As a young nation Jamaica has experienced a fair measure of inconsistency in its economic and political management. At independence, Jamaica was the gem of the Caribbean, enjoying strong growth, with GDP averaging 5% annually. Michael Manley's drive as leader of the People's National Party (PNP) towards

"the commanding heights of the economy" in the 1970s suffered serious setbacks. Some significant social reforms were introduced, but the era was marked by a massive flight of capital, the migration of 25% of qualified Jamaicans and economic contraction.

With Edward Seaga at the helm of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) in the 1980s, the course was set in the opposite direction. Active steps were taken to rebuild strained relations with the United States and the Bretton Woods institutions, and economic liberalisation and structural adjustment were embarked upon. Excessive opportunities for external borrowing initially delayed the implementation of sufficient reforms needed to restore sustained growth. From 1987 to 1990 economic growth averaged 4%. At the same time the financing of Jamaica's balance of payments deficit by overseas borrowing created a foreign debt of US\$4.6 billion, 8% of GDP.

Back in office since 1989, the PNP have stayed on much the same course. Lower inflation, enhanced international competitiveness, improved public finances and adequate international reserves are all key objectives. Reforms have included liberalisation of trade, price and exchange controls and reform of the system of indirect taxes. Import tariffs ranging from 5-35% were established, most quantitative restrictions and trade monopolies were eliminated and privatisation was introduced. The cost of such rapid liberalisation was a decline in GDP to less than one per cent. In the early 1990s, a sharp currency depreciation coupled with a surge in prices pushed inflation to a peak of 80% in 1991. Since 1995, macro economic policy has focused heavily on achieving price stability as a pre-condition for sustained growth. The current inflation rate is 5.6%, mainly due to restrictive monetary policies. International reserves are healthy and greater stability has been achieved in the foreign exchange system.

Debt

After 15 years of structural adjustment programmes (from which Jamaica qualified in 1996) the greatest blight on the

economy remains its national debt and fiscal deficit. A debt stock amounting to more than 120% of GDP and a debt service requirement (which Jamaica has always met) of more than 62% of the annual budget is choking the country. Worsening domestic debt has compounded external debt requirements. International shocks provoked a collapse of the financial sector. Due to an inability to borrow funds on external markets, the government increased its internal debt at very high cost to rescue the sector. The Financial Sector Adjustment Company (FINSAC), has cost the government more than US\$2 billion.

Omar Davies, Minister for Finance, explained, "FINSAC was a necessary defensive measure intended to protect depositors' savings, insurance policy holders and pensions." Created for a finite period, its tasks were to end panic, reconstruct enterprises and rebuild assets for disposal. "Intervention in the insurance sector is already completed and 75% of the work in the banking sector is done."

At present, debt management policy is largely dependent on external loans. A drastic reduction in the external debt stock enabled the Government to raise US\$200 million on the international markets in 1997. However, this year efforts to raise US\$250 million failed. "The international climate was not good" explained Mr Davies. "The funds would have cost more than initially anticipated so we withdrew."

No Growth

Stabilising prices, controlling the money supply and reducing inflation have constrained economic expansion. "Over the last 15 years there has been little of the growth needed to stimulate enterprise" explained Peter Moses, President of the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ). Bank lending rates of 24-40% are still prohibitive. Government bond issues to mop up

liquidity, offered at high rates of return in the short and medium term, have diverted funds away from banks and capital investment. For Moses, reducing interest rates to 12-15% at the risk of increasing inflation to 10% would be worthwhile if it stimulated growth.

"Consolidation means unemployment and people transferring to the informal sector, which minimises further the collection of taxes".

Poverty Alleviation

Some 300,000 Jamaicans qualify for welfare assistance including food stamps. Self-reliance and employment generation are central to the government's poverty alleviation programmes (worth JD3 billion). Local communities receive direct funding to help them raise the standard of their social infrastructure. Employment generation is also targeted with programmes like "Skills 2000" which aims to provide recipients with the skills and the means to set up in business. Similarly "Lift Up, Jamaica", a short-term programme announced in the last budget, will create jobs for 74,000 young people aged 17 - 30.

In a global economy

Globalisation has conditioned efforts to make Jamaica's economy more efficient. As a buffer to external shocks, regional integration and trading partnerships offer some respite. A founding member of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), Jamaica is preparing for the introduction of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy at the end of 1999. Since the formation of NAFTA, (North American Free Trade area) exports to the United States, Jamaica's principal trading partner, have been affected. The European Union is currently



Beyond the millennium

Peter Moses:

Leadership is critical. New blood inspired with optimism is needed. Jamaica has so much potential. We must make the transition from bananas and sugar to an independent future. The solution to crime is not increased policing and use of the army but expansion of the economy and employment of young people

Jamaica's major export market accounting for 38% of domestic exports. Preferential access and trade protocols under the Lomé Convention make the EU the market for 80% of Jamaica's sugar exports, virtually all of its bananas and 40% of all alumina. The sugar and banana protocols have an estimated net worth of some 55-65 million Euros.

Jamaica's relationship with the European Union is taken seriously. According to Mrs Palmer of the PIOJ, "Cooperation with the European Union has been critical for Jamaica both in terms of trade and aid worth 160 million euros over the last 10 years."

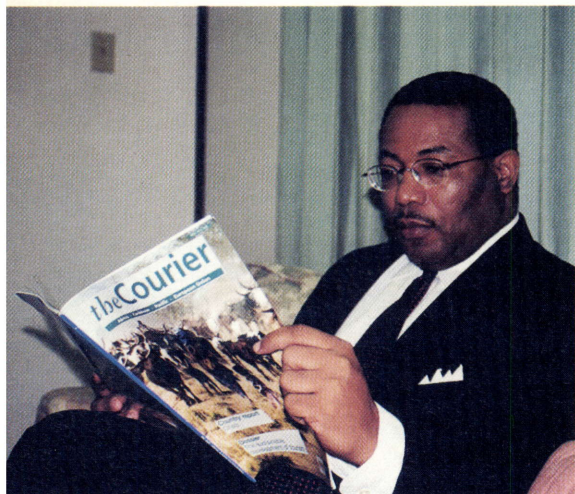
Post-Lomé negotiations and the WTO's "Millennium Round" are also being carefully followed. Jamaica's sugar and banana exports with fixed quotas and prices to EU markets are already under pressure. WTO rulings have already called for modifications to the current banana regime and the pricing system for sugar. The main contention is the preference Jamaican bananas receive over dollar bananas from Latin America and the system of selling licences to other producers to fill the remainder of quotas. Wesley Hughes, Director of PIOJ explained that reform of the sale of licences was in progress. Through the EU Banana Support

"Hardships are there but the land is green and the sun shineth."

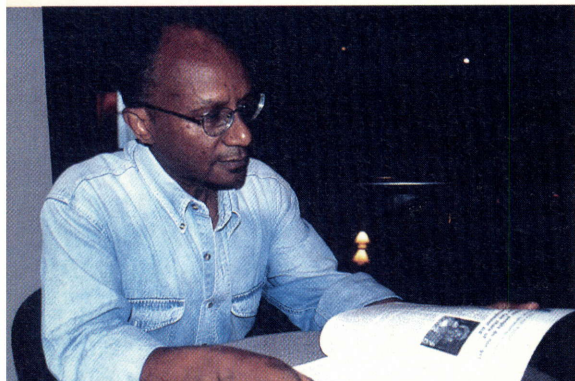
Beyond the millenium



Omar Davies: As Finance Minister, restoration of growth and a fiscal surplus are my targets. For society, reduced crime levels are essential. If young Jamaicans are to believe they have a future in Jamaica, stability is critical.



Anthony Hylton: We all aspire to economic prosperity, peace and social stability. To achieve that for Jamaica, integration is the key objective but in a manner that ensures stability and economic viability



Trevor Monroe: Jamaicans have immense potential: they are talented, have energy, creativity but if we do not find a way to come together, the country will have failed

Programme, efficiency, quality and acreage under production is improving. On plantations like the St Mary's Banana Estates, techniques practised in Latin America are being implemented to raise competitiveness.

Ensuring favourable conditions for Jamaica and the ACP in the post-Lomé arrangements is the brief belonging to Anthony Hylton, Foreign Trade Minister. As co-chairman of the EU-ACP working group on trade, the key issues are the nature of the new trading relationship and the time allotted to implementation. Assuring certainty for investors in traditional sectors in the medium term is critical. Referring to Jamaica's bauxite/alumina sector he stressed the importance of SYSMIN in future arrangements. Following reduced export earnings due to falling world commodity prices in 1998, the explosion at the Kaiser's alumina refinery would entail losses of US\$15 million this year for Jamaica. "SYSMIN is specifically designed for this type of situation where a whole sector faces extreme challenges."

Deepening Democracy

Trevor Monroe, independent Senator, trade unionist and university professor believes "Jamaica will either deepen its democratic processes or fall into anarchic manifestation". Of the 12 general elections held in the last 60 years, many have been tainted with high levels of malpractice, voter polarisation in garrison communities and intimidation. Rewarding voters with "scare benefits and spoils" has been common practice. CAFFE, the Citizens Action Group For Fair and Free Elections, set up in 1997, takes credit for helping to improve the 1997 general elections and the more recent local government elections. For Alfred Sangster of CAFFE, success was due to the highly visible presence of CAFFE monitors, improved police conduct and a general consensus following the 1993 elections that enough was enough! Use of electronic voter identity cards is planned for future elections.

Voter turnout is nevertheless declining, it was less than 40% in the local elections.

"Indifference shown in elections is

also indifference towards the political system," stated Mr Sangster. "Many people felt that voting would change little." Jamaicans seem to be questioning their institutional framework.

"Lack of accountability is turning citizens away from the elected leadership. Increasingly, non-elected community leaders hold more sway. Lack of faith in the justice system and the police has led to street protests. Even the rescue of the financial sector was seen by some as government reward for mismanagement".

Mr Sangster is not alone in such views. The fuel tax protest was "a case of the savagery of violence being in tandem with economic discontent" said Peter Moses, Chairman of the committee established to find solutions. Lack of economic expansion, lack of youth development and exclusion, rather than gas prices, were the real causes of the protest. For Trevor Monroe, the answer lies partially in greater transparency and avenues of redress: "we have a Police Complaints Authority but nobody knows where or how to appeal to it."

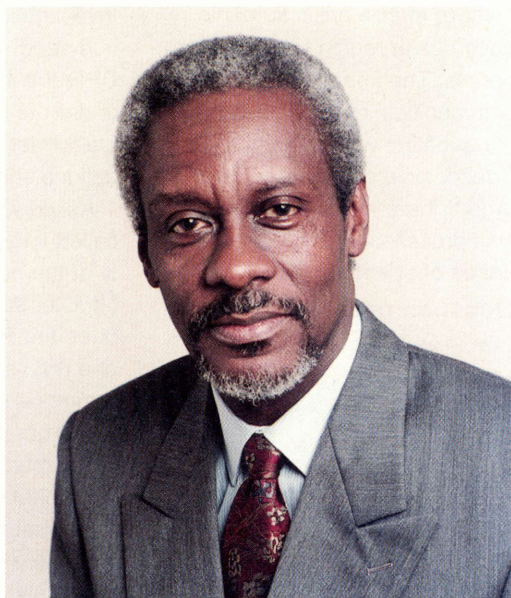
Not oblivious to public sentiment, the Government held a major Round Table Consultation in January to address many of the problem areas. Legislation is currently in progress to reform the constitution, create a Charter of Rights and put in place anti-corruption mechanisms.

Analysing the Jamaican experience, Professor Rex Nettleford argued, "37 years is not a long time in the history of any nation. Jamaica still has many rivers to cross, both as a nation and a society. It is amusing that anyone might think that independence would automatically correct everything. The United States, 90 years after independence, experienced one of the bloodiest-ever civil wars and Jamaica is still striving to define itself and find its purpose". Throughout their history Jamaicans have found hope in their despair. Optimism and fervent belief in their capacities for survival and redemption have shaped their character and inspired their culture.

PJ Patterson Prime Minister

Getting to Grips With Law, Order and the Press

PJ Patterson and his PNP Government, in their third term of office, have a mandate to lead the country until 2002. They have the responsibility of guiding Jamaica into the 21st Century. This is not an easy task. Daily, the associated problems of poverty, unemployment, a weakening social fabric and crime and violence, have to be tackled in parallel with preparations for transition into the global economy. Watching is a lively press corps that demands to be kept informed. Jamaica's media befits a country twice its size, with three TV stations, 12 radio stations and three major daily newspapers. *The Courier* had two opportunities to watch the Prime Minister drawing on his skills as a trained lawyer and seasoned politician to defend his policies to the press.



The Monday Post-Cabinet Press Briefing

On mid-Monday afternoons Jamaica's media gather at the Prime Minister's state offices to be briefed on the Cabinet's weekly meeting. The opportunity to question the Prime Minister directly on the week's most burning news issues is an occasion few miss. That particular August Monday afternoon, the story everyone wanted concerned the enforced removal of 32 street people, many of whom were described as mentally ill, from Montego Bay, one of Jamaica's major tourist destinations where many of the parish's local government councillors and mayor belong to the PNP. Rounded up by force, the street people were allegedly deposited by truck at a bauxite company mud lake in the parish of St Elizabeth, some 80 miles away. Almost one month after the event (which occurred on 15 July) and the subsequent removal of five police officers from front-line duties, the press had gathered to hear from the Prime Minister what progress had been made in identifying those responsible and what measures, criminal or civil, were envisaged.

Warming up the Press

Maxine Henry Wilson, Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, opened the briefing with a series of announcements about annual

reports recently published, new amendments to the Land Bonds Act, further reforms of the court system to reduce the Supreme Court's backlog of cases, a new pay plan for certain sectors of the civil service as well as the award of various public sector contracts. The press took notes respectfully. But with the Prime Minister's entrance, interest levels surged. Microphones were switched on and TV cameras started to roll as everyone prepared to get the story they had really shown up for.

Briefing the Press

In his brief, Mr Patterson referred to reports discussed that day in Cabinet, one prepared by the Police Commissioner on the status of the investigations, and another by the government departments involved in the Inter-ministerial Task Force on Homelessness. He promised to send the completed file compiled by the newly-created Bureau of Special Investigations plus the 29 collected statements to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) by Friday for a ruling on what breaches of civil and constitutional rights had occurred and who was criminally responsible. Subsequently, he assured everyone, relevant sections of the file would be passed to the Attorney General, to determine whether civil proceedings and administrative sanctions would be applied to public officers.

“Irrespective of category there must be a seamless process in ministering to the needs of street people”

The Prime Minister acknowledged State responsibility in assisting the plight of street people whether they are homeless, mentally ill, youths or drug addicts. In an outline of proposed integrated measures he highlighted the provision of a temporary overnight shelter in each parish and the establishment of mobile crisis teams in each health region to assist such people. The importance of the communities' role in dealing with this problem was also stressed. “Irrespective of category” he urged “there must be a seamless process in ministering to the needs of street people”.

Question time

At question time, the Prime Minister, unflustered by the onslaught, fielded pointed questions with dexterity and some measure of wit, giving considered and measured responses. He also proved himself more than capable of needling the press about the accuracy of their reporting and even offered to help one journalist spell the word “seamless”.

Asked whether politicians in the parish were involved in the affair, the Prime Minister replied that while no one in the political administration of the council was directly implicated, the full answer would have to await conclusion of the investigation.

As to the complicity of Montego Bay's business community, the Prime Minister explained that this was a matter for the police, though it would be for the DPP to rule on first and second degree involvement of accomplices.

Another question posed was “Why had an independent commission not been set up to investigate the matter?”. “If criminal offences are committed it is for the police to investigate them” answered the Prime Minister. “A commission of

inquiry would have further delayed the investigation, derailed responsibility from the police to another body and risked giving those arrested the possibility to claim that it was prejudicial to their rights because of pre-emptory publicity.” He further explained that the newly-created Bureau of Special Investigations was still a police body and still accountable to the DPP, the independent office under the constitution responsible for deciding whether criminal actions should be brought or not.

Asked whether the affair had called into question the credibility of the police force, the Prime Minister stressed that it had been the Police Commissioner and not he who had decided to remove a number of senior officers from the case. This was done specifically to remove any perception that the outcome of the investigations might be adversely influenced.

In reply to the charge that action on the matter had only been because of media pressure, the Prime Minister declared that he welcomed the interest that the press had shown (“freedom of the press is a good thing”) but he questioned whether exaggerated reports of alleged drownings in the mud lake indicated professionalism or sensationalism.

The Prime Minister concluded by reiterating the importance of all concerned, Government, the communities and civil groups, working together to tackle the problem. With that he swept out leaving behind a press corps busily preparing to file the story in time for the evening TV/radio news and the morning press.

Talking to *The Courier*

A few days later, *The Courier* was granted an exclusive interview with Mr Patterson. Giving a more general appraisal of development and progress in

Jamaica, some of the themes touched upon in his earlier press briefing were raised again.

Shattering a 40-year-old electoral pattern

Giving the interview from within the confines of his state office, Mr Patterson opened by explaining how he and his party had changed the history of electoral politics in Jamaica. Since 1944 the two main parties have alternately enjoyed two terms in government but he explained: “The election victory of my party in 1997 set a new political record and shattered the barrier of two consecutive terms in office.” In his view this victory was attributable to “our willingness to listen, our preparedness to respond, our identification with the citizens of the country in every walk of life and the participatory model allowing for greater citizen involvement that we have tried to build. We have also delivered in a number of areas, education, better health care provision for developing the physical infrastructure, the provision nationwide of water and modern communication systems. We also have a very efficient organisation”.

37 years of independence

On August 6, Jamaica celebrated 37 years of independence. *The Courier* asked what lessons had been drawn from this experience and what challenges still existed? The Prime Minister had no difficulty in highlighting ways in which Jamaica has successfully been assertive both at home and internationally despite the relatively small size of the nation. “On the international stage, for example, we have made significant contributions, in the fields of music and sports. At home, we have built on our democratic institutions to ensure that successive governments have operated in accordance with the

mandate of the people and have only been removed by the mandate of the ballot box".

He went on to explain "The act of independence, however, is merely the key that gives the right and the freedom to become a nation and to shape your own future. The problems which previously existed and which are inherent in a colonial society do not simply disappear overnight. The eradication of poverty, social inequalities, the change from a dependent economy to one which particularly in today's competitive world is able to survive and prosper are all part of a process that requires time and meticulous work. The challenges that face us now are to complete the process of economic transformation and social renewal."

"A prerequisite for growth and prosperity in any country" he added, "must be a framework of social order and discipline at every level. Indiscipline contributes to crime and violence. In this respect, the entire nation has to make a contribution: the government, the security forces, the media, the churches, the private sector, NGOs, entertainers and community leaders."

Crime and Violence

The Courier broached the subject with Mr Patterson against a background of press reports of 557 murders in the first eight months of the year and a major outbreak of civil disorder in April due to an overnight increase in fuel tax. Asked whether the high levels of crime and disorder were provoking a growing sense of disillusionment in Jamaica the Prime Minister gave a three-tiered response.

"Firstly, present levels of crime and violence are too high, but they have on occasions in the past been higher. Secondly, crime and violence, motivated by the contest for political turf is no longer the case today thanks to

deliberate efforts made by this administration to diffuse the political tensions that in the past often resulted in armed conflict. Thirdly, Jamaica is not the only country grappling with the problems of rising crime and violence. The phenomenon exists in both developed and developing countries. With increasing urbanisation it tends to be increasingly concentrated in our cities." Drugs and "their distribution and use" were also to blame as well as the glorification of violence in films and popular entertainment.

Restoring confidence

Outlining measures to restore confidence, the Prime Minister stressed the Government's responsibility. "As I made clear, the Government on behalf of the state, has a clear responsibility for the maintenance of law and order. The principal people for ensuring this must be the security forces. It also requires a justice system that is fair, expeditious and which inspires popular confidence. "But", he added, "while the state, the security forces and the justice system have leading responsibility, the whole of society must be involved. If the communities and the security forces do not relate to each other you get conflict and not the partnership that is necessary for effective solutions."

Communities also have an important role to play

The Prime Minister recounted his recent activities to demonstrate his efforts to mobilise communities across Jamaica, "Within the last few months, I have been meeting with community leaders across the country. Last month, I met with those in our principal cities and parishes. Last week I saw those in Southern Jamaica. Tomorrow I will meet community leaders in Western Jamaica. Community



Maxine Henry Wilson briefing the press on the results of the Cabinet meeting

leaders are of the utmost importance. It is they who determine what is and what is not acceptable. If they refuse to permit criminal wrong-doing, to harbour people with criminal propensities then such people cannot take refuge within their communities."

International support

In a final comment, Mr Patterson focused on Jamaica's relationship with the European Union. No stranger to international affairs, and indeed "one of the founding architects of the Lomé relationships", he appreciated the development programme funding provided for Jamaica over years by the European Union even if "at times" he may "have wished that the process were less cumbersome". He called for greater "flexibility in the design of those programmes thus allowing for a tailored approach to the needs of particular countries in the ACP". Rather than just looking at "cold statistics" he called on donors to examine ways in which they could "really contribute to enabling a country or groups of countries to achieve the necessary self-reliance and self-sustaining growth".

"Calling on the JLP sooner rather than later"

The Rt. Hon Edward Seaga

In August, Edward Seaga, one of Jamaica's elder statesmen, celebrated 40 years of unbroken parliamentary service in Jamaica. He spoke to *The Courier*, as the leader of the Opposition, outlining why he believes Jamaicans will be calling on his party to govern again and "sooner rather than later". In 1959, aged 29, he entered the Legislative as a member of the Jamaican Labour Party. In 1962, after Independence, he became the member of Parliament (MP) for Western Kingston, which includes the notorious ghetto community, Tivoli Gardens. In 1974, he was appointed leader of the JLP party and leader of the Opposition in Parliament. With posts in four Cabinets under his belt, Mr Seaga became Jamaica's fifth Prime Minister in 1980. In a career, where he has tackled most policy areas of national importance, he is now fighting for the adoption of a Bill of Rights.



Why has the JLP lost the last three general elections?

Our electoral system is riddled with fraud and corruption. Only after seven years do we finally have approval for a new electronic voting system whereby only the person holding the voter card can vote having first been identified by his finger print. It should be in place within the next 12 months and the government has promised not to call any elections until then.

There was also clever manipulation of Jamaica's qualification for the World Cup. A first for Jamaica and also the entire English-speaking Caribbean. This generated a wave of national fervour where people forgot their problems. The '97 elections were held within four weeks of this.

The two-term syndrome often mentioned concerns the

election of the Prime Minister. Michael Manley stepped down early in 1992 and handed over to Patterson, thus breaking the pattern. But while PNP have won three times consecutively, Patterson has only been elected twice as Prime Minister which respects this syndrome.

The JLP has also experienced some internal dissension, party members have resigned or have been asked to resign which has registered heavily with the public.

Has the JLP capitalised on the current dissatisfaction?

The last poll showed JLP only four points behind the PNP. The next poll should show us running even.

Wide-scale business closures and downsizing caused by eight years of stagnation means that the private sector, on whom we depend for sustenance, has little funds for

political opposition parties for campaigning, public relations or organising. This represents a major handicap.

Are tribal politics still practised in Jamaica?

Less overtly in recent years. But this government remains a past master of such politics. *Lift Up Jamaica*, worth 2.5 billion Jamaican dollars, is a major new project-based social programme. These funds should be evenly distributed across the board but that will not be so. Elected political representatives will have these funds at their disposal. Thus, in fact, it is a nice way of victimising your opponents and their constituencies.

What would the JLP do to improve law and order?

When we were in government, crime and disorder were not problems. Jamaica has seen only two periods of substantial crime reduction: the late 1960s and the late 1980s. In both periods the JLP was in office and both were periods of economic boom. When the economy deteriorates, crime increases and when the economy improves, crime decreases. Thus after eight years of stagnation of course we are experiencing record levels of crime.

How would the JLP strengthen the economy?

Firstly, you have to get the fundamental macro economics right. The current policies are inappropriate. For years, the average increase in money supply of over 30% and foreign exchange policies have put pressure on the Jamaican dollar. Government's fiscal policies have produced a deficit which currently represents 9% of GDP.

I presented alternative policies twice in Parliament to legislate for the control of the money supply, tying it to the available foreign exchange, the net foreign reserves, as a bench mark, because you cannot have more base money in the system than you have in the equivalent net foreign exchange. Thus, policy would not be left simply to the minister in charge. However these proposals still await debate in the Parliamentary committee.

What are the ideological differences between the JLP and PNP ?

The PNP are repentant socialists and reluctant capitalists. They don't understand the capitalist system they are obliged to operate. They are not accustomed to working with a market-driven system. The JLP has never changed its position. We have always advocated a market-driven economy, sufficiently buoyant to deal with the social problems that arise.

What are your opinions on the proposed Bill of Rights?

As the author of that Bill of Rights, I must have a good opinion of it. I proposed it to the Parliamentary Commission and drafted most of the articles. We need to list people's rights in a legal form. The Charter of Rights that I presented to Parliament was not debated. The government promised its own Charter. There is very much watered down and was even condemned as such at a

recent symposium. The human rights representatives complained "we must not make the good the enemy of the best". I want all our proposals included in the Bill of Rights. I also want a considerable improvement to the human rights section of our constitution. Currently the government can set aside our human rights on the pretext of public interest or maintaining public order. Our bill only allows this in cases of public emergency or for reasons which "can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society". Private parties committing human rights' offences can also be charged. At the moment, our constitution states that only State violations are prosecutable.

37 years of independence - what lessons have been learned? What challenges still persist?

The great lesson to be learned is that where you take one step forward and another step back decade by decade there will be no developmental progression. Emerging as a new nation in the 60s alongside the likes of Singapore and Mauritius we were all at roughly the same level. Now, they enjoy significantly higher standards of economic performance, while Jamaica is hardly better off. After significant growth in the 1960s, we lost 20% of GDP in the 1970s. The World Bank informed me after my election in 1980 that Jamaica was the second worst economy in the world. But we turned things around. By the late 1980s, Jamaica enjoyed boom conditions, yet the 1990s have again brought stagnation. In any political system the challenge is to always ensure that there are appropriate policies in place to permit continued growth.

After 40 years do you envisage handing over to someone else?

Not before I have seen a reform of the constitution passed. Our system of national governance is an area where I have still to contribute. I've introduced a number of reform bills to strengthen Parliament, to prevent it being hijacked by the executive and to strengthen human rights. These will take a little time. Beyond that I cannot say.

What are your aspirations for Jamaica and the JLP in the 21st century?

We cannot entertain any glorious visions. We end this millennium battling for survival. Noble ideas of a highly-educated population and high levels of medical care in the next century all depend on how well the country can put its house in order. But there are no signs of that yet.

The JLP stands ready as always in past times of uncertainty. At the time of the first universal adult suffrage elections, at Independence and following the PNP's 1970s' adventures with radical socialism, which caused 25% of all Jamaicans to migrate, on each occasion the people turned to us to govern. Unfortunately they quickly forget after we have put things right.

Do you think JLP will be called on to lead the country again?

Sooner rather than later. Or it had better be sooner than later otherwise there will not be much left.

The JLP has never changed its position. We have always advocated a market-driven economy, sufficiently buoyant to deal with the social problems that arise

"Jamaica needs a new system of Government"

Bruce Golding, President of the National Democratic Movement

Bruce Golding used to be a major figure in the Jamaica Labour Party. As party Chairman, many considered him a future successor to Edward Seaga as leader of the JLP. In 1995, he left to form the National Democratic Movement. The Movement proclaims itself a new political force in Jamaican politics that does not only want a change of management style in governing Jamaica. In their 10-point Covenant with the people, the NDM promises to change the systems of Government rather than who manages them. Speaking to *The Courier*, Bruce Golding put emphasis on NDM's goals for more effective constituency representation, greater transparency and the elimination of tribalism.



You were formerly the Chairman of the JLP party and now you are President of the NDM. Why?

I resigned from the JLP party in September 1995 having already resigned as Chairman in March. The NDM was launched at the end of September 1995.

I left the JLP because I was not prepared to waste any more time pursuing something that I thought was decadent and incapable of changing the course on which Jamaica was moving pretty rapidly. Credibility is still an issue. I was once a part of the very system I now condemn. But I have answered the accusations without embarrassment or regret. I am totally committed to the NDM.

What kind of changes are you looking for?

NDM's position is that until we change the system of government, abuse will continue along with economic stagnation and crime and disorder.

Jamaica's fundamental problems concern governance and the system of government. In Jamaica, the

system adopted from Britain has been vulgarised. The principles of accountability and probity that support the Westminster system were either never adopted or have long been abandoned. Power is concentrated too heavily in the hands of the Prime Minister. He appoints Ministers and the leadership of the civil service more or less. He has the power to dissolve Parliament. Though accountable to Parliament, with 50% of MPs in his Government there is not much accountability at all.

Thus government becomes contemptuous of people's individual rights and the public interest. They do only what is necessary to secure re-election using short-term feel-good programmes. Ministers commit grave errors and they do not feel compelled to resign. The country is constantly torn apart by a tribalism that is supported by Government resources. Supporters of the ruling party get the jobs, supporters of the Opposition must wait until their party is in power to get the jobs.

Ordinary Jamaicans feel exploited by government yet powerless to do anything about it. They sense the injustice of the system. Our mission is to effect the kind

of changes that transfer power from the government back to the people. That is why we want to tie representatives to their constituencies.

How will you do this?

Essentially we want to ensure that Members of Parliament devote themselves to representing their constituencies, the particular geographical areas and the people that elected them and not just maintain loyalty to the party,

We are proposing that five % of the Annual budget be used for constituency development projects allocated equally among all constituencies. Currently, the constituencies of Government MPs are far better-looked-after than those of opposition MPs. We would like to rectify this. A consultative committee in each constituency would monitor expenditure and report to Parliament annually. So if a parliamentarian was less than transparent in the expenditure of funds then he/she would be called to book.

We also propose to introduce under the Constitution a new independent Prosecutor General with exclusive responsibility for investigating corruption among public officers elected or otherwise with powers to impeach them.

So Jamaicans lack confidence in the government?

Initially, there was faith in the traditional political system and its practitioners (i.e. JLP and PNP). We used to have very high turnouts for elections, rarely below 75%. Jamaicans of my generation grew up excited about the future. Everything could be achieved in Jamaica which is why few were eager to migrate. Children were constantly doing better economically than their parents.

Today, Jamaicans have lost that hope. They're backing out. Recent election turnouts have diminished. Roughly 50% of the potential electorate didn't even register to vote. In 1997, of 1.56 million eligible voters, only 750,000 voted. People have seen their life savings disappear before their eyes, they have seen family members disappear before their eyes, cut down by government bullets. They have seen the hopes that they had for their children just vanish. When going to the supermarket you cannot just presume that you will come home safely. Even our children are not safe. Ours is the difficult task of trying to re-engage this potential electorate.

Has forming NDM weakened the Opposition by splitting it?

Our presence at the last elections did not change the level of support given to the JLP. Both the JLP and PNP hold about 20% of the electorate, die-hard supporters who will never abandon them. The NDM currently holds about 7%. But we are targeting the 50% of voters who opinion polls say for the last six or seven years have been uncommitted to either party.

Jamaicans may like your political aims but doubt your ability to win an election?

That is our biggest problem which requires lots of persistent ground work. If we remain consistent with the message, committed to our mission of effecting changes, then gradually confidence in the correctness of our cause will emerge. I think that we are getting there. Attitudes are shifting from simple dismissal to impatience. People now ask 'Why the hell don't you do something to ensure that you win?' My answer is 'Come and jump on board and help us?' We are optimistic that forthcoming polls will also reflect this.

What are your future goals?

We have just completed our conference, elected all our officers for next year and are currently working out our strategy. A lot of work at the community level is required. This is the real block-building of the organisation. We should have done it prior to the 1997 elections but we were just not ready. By the end of December we will have selected our 60 constituency candidates.

We plan to enlist the support of Jamaicans overseas in the US, Canada and the UK. We feel strongly that they should be allowed to vote in elections from wherever they reside. As Jamaica's largest source of foreign earnings (US\$600 million) they should have a say in electing the government running the country.

The NDM has established itself. Regardless of our existing support, we are nationally recognised. People have views about us. Now we need to go out and canvass support. Strong differentiation from the other two parties is the key. Their support is rooted in loyalty, not rationality. NDM has to win each and every vote on the basis of reason, issues and the electorate's confidence that we won't betray them.

The Covenant of the National Democratic Movement

declares that within its first six months it will ensure:

1. The rooting out of corruption and leading towards transparency and accountability
2. The impartial awarding of government contracts
3. The reduction of crime and violence
4. The elimination of tribalism
5. National Plan for Economic Advancement
6. A politically-independent Bank of Jamaica
7. Effective constituency representation

By the end of Year One:

8. Increase the quantity of education and training
9. The abolition of income tax; to be accomplished over five years, beginning in the first year.

By the end of year Two:

10. Fundamental change to/of System.

Under the proposed Constitution, the Prime Minister will appoint the most talented and professional Jamaicans as Ministers of Government, regardless of their political affiliation. Members of Parliament will not be appointed Ministers but will devote all their time to their constituencies.

Manna from the mountains

by Rainer Schierhorst*



Sustainability, poverty alleviation and agriculture - a contradiction in terms?

The parishes of Portland, St Mary, St Thomas and St Andrew accommodate the largest concentration of poor rural small holders in Eastern Jamaica. The Eastern Jamaica Agricultural Support Project (EJASP) with six million Euro of support from the 8th European Development Fund (EDF) awarded in June 1999 will target these communities. Support for these parishes, some of the island's poorest, will provide integrated initiatives designed to increase agricultural production in parallel with increased protection of the produce base - the land. EJASP is the successor to the Morant-Yallahs Agricultural Development Project (MYADP). This unique three-year project (the only donor-supported agricultural project of its kind in Jamaica) targeted farmers with holdings of less than two hectares. It is in the catchment area of the Morant and Yallahs Rivers which spans St Andrew's and St Thomas' to the east of Kingston. The objectives were to provide the supports needed to permit them to develop sustainable farming and husbandry practices, to increase output, improve marketing and increase profits. Another goal of these poverty reduction measures was to encour-

age young people to stay on the land instead of migrating to Kingston. Improved production was also to be matched by improvement of the long-term sustainability of the much-degraded farmland. Here is an overview of how the MYADP has worked to overcome this alleged contradiction: production and protection!

Cash cropping in St Thomas'

Over the years Mr Smith has faced the problem of finding a market for his goods, a hurdle which most farmers in St Thomas' encounter. But since 1996, he has been able to market his spring onions, string beans, cantaloupes and bananas, thanks to the MYADP. "Yeah mon, glad for it!" approved Mr. Brown, a fellow farmer.

The problems

Leslie Grant, national director of the MYADP with Chris Baker, EU technical assistant, and the staff of the Government's Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) set out to address most of the major problems facing small-scale farmers in this region and have had a good measure of success. The high concentration of small-scale farmers accounts for much of

the severe environmental degradation affecting the Yallahs and Morant valley watershed. Other problems were also highlighted in a 1997 socio-economic survey: expensive and unreliable farm input supplies, inadequate marketing channels and credit facilities, insecurity of land tenure, poor road access, lack of water for irrigation and generally poor crop and husbandry practices leading to low output.

"The key to addressing these problems" explained Chris Baker, "was to focus on crops and livestock with already identified markets and provide support to mitigate the major production and marketing obstacles." Thus, seven components were developed: technology generation and validation; extension and community education; small livestock development; agro-forestry; small-scale irrigation; marketing; land titling and road rehabilitation.

Project beneficiaries must be active members of farmers' or community groups whose activities depend on participatory decision-making processes.

A serious drought in 1997 was not a good start, but since then the project has blossomed and proved highly beneficial to the development of small farmers. 31 farmer associations, 14 goat breeder associations, five producer marketing groups and three agro-processing groups, as well as over 1,350 farming families, have benefited.

Agro-forestry on the steep hillsides has helped to replenish large deforested tracts and overcome the effects of erosion and gulying, using coffee, mango and mixed fruit trees inter-cropped with carrots, legumes, gungo peas and corn as short-term cash crops. Skills' training has also been used to encourage a different approach to agricultural development down on the floodplains.

Mangoes, George and Lion King

In the lower elevation areas, the project has also achieved a lot. Mango production, though profitable, is extremely market-led. Grafting onto existing mango trees has accelerated production of specific varieties thanks to expertise provided by RADA and the EU. Farmers like Mr Hall in Llandewy can now ask (and get) anything from JMD90 to 130 for one dozen mangoes for export.

The thriving goat breeders' association in Heartease is one of the 14 associations which are being supported by the Project. With key inputs and training as well as the efforts of Nubian bucks like George and Lion King who are provided to the farmer groups on a revolving basis, some 300 graded Nubian kids have been produced, upgrading the quality of the herds, and the farmers' profits. Curried goat in Jamaica has acquired the status of a national dish.

Lorna Pennicoat, the treasurer of the Heartease Goat Breeder's Association, one of the many women benefiting from the Project, emphasised that the Project "has motivated the farmers to get back to farming and help to revitalise the area as a whole". She concluded that the Project has been "a big, big help in the valley".

Tamarind Balls and Juices

Sue's Cottage Industries is a women's agro-processing group located in Lloyds. President is Yvonne Lee, Sonya Cruickshank is Secretary and Patricia Crossdale, Treasurer. For the last 20 years the group has been producing tamarind balls and fruit juices for sale primarily to local school children. Assistance from the MYADP has enhanced their operation with packaging and marketing knowhow to the extent that they are selling produce nationwide and have doubled their turnover (currently over JMD 60,000 per month). On the basis of local marketing intelligence they have limited their fruit juice production to June plum and guava because more exotic flavours such as passion fruit are believed by man and boy alike to have a weakening effect "on their nature"!

Feeder Roads

Finally, after some delays, the 25km farm and feeder road programme which focused on drainage structures and surface grading, was completed in June 1999. Since then, the project has started working with farmers along these roads to improve their tree crop production.

The Phillipsfield Irrigation Scheme

Everton Anderson, better known as "English" because of his childhood spent in Brixton, London, is one of the small-scale farmers working a smallholding on the Yallahs flood plain and involved in the Phillipsfield Irrigation Scheme supported by the MYADP. Luckily, the irrigation knowhow



English irrigating his crops in Phillipsfield



Cultivation on Jamaica's Blue Mountains



Making tamarind balls



The mountains of Morant Yallah

of the older farmers remains on tap. The field distribution system provided by the project - pipes, sprinklers and fittings - means that English and other farmers can siphon enough water from the national irrigation water supply to irrigate at least 0.2 hectares of land. Extension services and the key input through the Domestic Food Crop and Marketing Project are also provided. A Producer Marketing Group has been established in the Yallahs area to develop linkages between farmers and buyers in Kingston and abroad to ensure that fruit, vegetables and flowers grown under the Phillippsfield Irrigation Scheme and

surrounding areas can find markets readily.

Seen very much as a pilot project, this scheme will be continued, with funding of a further € 2 million euros. 46 farmers are expected to join the successor project.

The future East Jamaica Agricultural Support Project will follow market-driven sub-project approaches to poverty alleviation in rural areas. Via multi-faceted sub-programmes, the highest-priority needs of the participating rural farmers will be addressed. Market information systems and business management training will still be constants but other supports may include tree seedlings,

improved seeds and other farm inputs, improved breeding stock for animals, producer marketing stores, agro-processing units, farm roads, irrigation equipment etc. To be selected, farmers, groups applications will have to prove that technically and economically they can achieve an IRR of at least 15%. Women farmers who represent some 20% of all farmers in the region and will be given special attention.

While success rates are difficult to determine ex-ante, the MYADP has shown that growing tree crops, annual vegetables can be very profitable.

The first EJASP annual work programme will commence on 1 January 2000. The assessment of what has been achieved so far is that with continued support, benefits for participating farmers can be realised on a sustainable basis, eventually proving that sustainability, poverty alleviation and agriculture on Jamaica's hillsides is not a contradiction in terms.

* Rural Development Adviser
EU Delegation

Jamaica - EU Cooperation 1990-2000

Lomé Convention	EDF 7 (€ million)	Focal Sectors	EDF 8 (€ million)	Focal Sectors
National Indicative Programme	49.70	Infrastructure, Trade and Investment Promotion, Rural Development	60.00	Poverty Alleviation, Infrastructure (Roads and Water Supply)
Regional Funds	8.50	Human Resources (UWI), Agriculture and Tourism Development	10.50	Human Resources (UWI), Tourism Development and Environment
Sysmin	70.11	Road Rehabilitation	0.00	NB: Due to falling Bauxite revenues, Jamaica may apply for Sysmin Support
Structural Adjustment Support	2.50	General Import Programme	0.00	NB: Direct Budget Support for Government's Economic Reform Programme under preparation
EIB managed Funds	27.41	Interest Subsidies and Risk Capital	0.00	
Transfers of previous EDF	32.86	Waste Water Treatment	0.00	NB: Remaining balances of EDF 6 are being transferred to EDF 8
Total Lomé Funding	191.08		70.50	NB: This amount is likely to increase substantially
EC Budget Lines	2.94	Banana Support Programme, NGO-Cofinancing, Environment (Coral Reef Protection)	11.44	Banana Support Programme, NGO-Cofinancing, Tropical Forests and Environment
EIB Loans (own resources)	105.00	Telecommunications, Global Loans to the National and Trafalgar Development Banks, Upgrading of Power Transmission (JPS) and Kingston Container Terminal	00.00	
Total	299.02		81.94	NB: This amount is likely to increase substantially

The Reggae Boyz

A World Cup Squad



Bryan Cunningham

The Reggae Boyz took with them to France the hopes and aspirations of Jamaican and Caribbean peoples everywhere

Since World Cup '98 in France, Jamaica's Reggae Boyz (the national football team) have not looked back.

Success is opening the door to the lucrative world of international football. Since the Reggae Boyz started on the road to qualifying for France, football has taken on unprecedented importance for Jamaica in

terms of domestic stability, economic development potential and even international relations. Building on this success, the Jamaica Football Federation are attempting to put in place a structure and organisation around the game to ensure that Jamaican teams go to the World Cup 2002 and beyond.

Earl Bailey of the Jamaica Football Federation (JFF) says that in the last 20 years football has overtaken cricket as the most important game played in Jamaica. Much of the credit can be attributed to Jamaica's national football team, the Reggae Boyz. A goalless draw against Mexico in Kingston in 1997 sent them to France as one of the 32 teams to compete in World Cup '98. They elevated Jamaican football to its highest level ever, and achieved much more besides. They took with them to France the hopes and aspirations of Jamaicans and Caribbean people everywhere.

The origins of football in Jamaica

When the British colonised Jamaica, football was one of a number of sports they brought with them. The 1850s gave rise to social clubs where competitive cricket was first played, and very often, football too. The game continued to be club-based until the end of the 1950s. In the 1960s, sport took on a new social dimension: as a means to empower communities and develop their self-reliance, under the supervision of the Sports Development Commission (a government agency). Since its creation in 1995, further support has come from the Sports Development Foundation which has supported football development with lottery

monies, providing funding for projects, competitions, coaches, training and institutional upgrading. In 1997-98, expenditure was projected at JM\$186.6 million. Some argue that much more is needed.

On any given day in Jamaica, football is played competitively. Each of the island's 14 parishes have their own association and league. Together they form the game's national governing body (the Jamaica Football Federation —JFF— established in 1965). JFF is a member of CONCACAF and more recently FIFA, the regional and world football organising bodies. Despite the absence of a professional football league, Jamaica has been competing in inter-regional championships against the likes of Mexico and the United States since the 1940s. It is only in the last decade that significant success has been achieved: World Cup qualification, and victory in the Shell Caribbean Cup in 1991 and 1998. The current under-17s team went to the World Championships in New Zealand (10-27 November).

It's participation that counts

This is true for the Reggae Boyz. Jamaica is the first English-speaking Caribbean team ever to qualify for the world cup. The only other Caribbean teams to get as far were Cuba in 1938 and Haiti in 1974.

How the Reggae Boyz got their name

When thinking of Jamaica you think of Reggae, the world-famous music that originated on this island, so it is only natural that the national football squad are referred to as the Reggae Boyz. But no one would ever suspect Zambia of having first conjured up this internationally-recognised nickname. Earl Bailey explained : "When Jamaica went to Zambia to play a friendly in 1995, the Zambians on their local news christened us the Reggae Boyz. The name was used extensively in the media here when we came back and during the World Cup it became an international hit used by radio and TV."

Qualifying in itself brought rewards. According to JFF spokesman, Earl Bailey "football helped galvanise the entire population. It created a wave of national fervour and pride not only at home but among Jamaican communities worldwide, in the US, Canada, the UK ..." Expressing a view shared by many, he added "Jamaica was quite peaceful. The crime rate went down and even political elections held during this time ran more smoothly than generally expected". This has been attributed to the fact that during the Reggae Boyz campaign everybody's attention focused on them rather than politics. Apart from promoting peace, football helped to raise the country's international profile. Regular coverage on the international TV networks promoted awareness and even tourism.

Jamaican overseas talent

In June 1997, at the mid-stage of the qualifying rounds, Horace Burrell, President of ZFF and Rene Seimoes, Technical Director, encouraged by the level of interest decided to invite Jamaican professional footballers based overseas to join the squad. To satisfy nationality requirements, at least one Jamaican grandparent or parent or marriage to a Jamaican was required. Following the initial trials, three players were selected, Paul Hall, Fitzroy Simpson, and Deon Burton of England's Portsmouth Football Club. Then followed Robbie Earle, Captain of Wimbledon FC, who went on to

score Jamaica's winning goal against Japan.

"That was the start of something good," said Bailey. Out of a squad of 32 players, 10 members are currently playing in the Premier League or Division One of English football. Other squad members play for teams elsewhere in Europe and the United States.

Bringing in professional players helped to raise the standard of the team's game.

"We have talented players living in Jamaica," Bailey explained "but without a professional league our local players do not play full time. Most have a second job and more importantly they do not think or act like professionals. So bringing in professional top league players forced our local guys to raise their game."

As for the overseas Jamaican players, particularly those born abroad, Robbie Earle's comments could easily apply to many of them. Of his parents he said: "Seeing their son doing something positive for the island has made them feel that they have given something back after leaving 35 years ago... Jamaica... is a home that until a year ago I never really knew I had."

Ambassadors for Jamaica

The Reggae Boyz finished 22nd overall, losing to Argentina (5:0), who dashed England's hopes of winning, and Croatia (3:1) who finished in the top four, so it was no disgrace. They exited the first round on a winning note by beat-

ing Japan (1:0). They scored a level of popularity for Jamaica among the spectators matched only by that for France and Brazil. Apart from the several thousand Jamaican fans that headed off to France, people from all over the world not only supported but identified with the Jamaican team "not because we are technically the best" explained Bailey "but because Jamaica holds some kind of mystique. You saw faces from all over the world turning up for our matches: everyone wearing red, gold and green and even their faces were painted in our colours. People just wanted to be a part of Jamaica. Reggae is very popular worldwide and with the name Reggae Boyz we were a novelty. Outside the stadiums where we played we had a big sound system blasting out reggae music and people were dancing and enjoying themselves. It was the fans themselves that organised this. There were certainly many teams in France who played better football than us but they did not get our level of support."

A vehicle for strengthening ties

The team's popularity has brought invitations to play friendly games against other countries. A short European tour in May took in matches in Norway, the UK and Sweden. The Reggae Boyz attracted more than 25,000 people each time. This was followed by a visit from South Africa's national squad to Jamaica and more recently the Boyz were invited to participate in Ghana's Panafest football event as the ancestors of many Jamaican are known to have originated from here.

Football has become important for strengthening Jamaica's ties with other nations and JFF plan to exploit this as much as possible.

"We are sure that if we continue in the same developmental mode we will attract larger teams to play against us," commented Bailey.



Horace Burrell,
President of the JFF
welcomes Sepp Blatter,
President of FIFA and
Michel Platini

Better teams attract larger crowds. Although they act as Jamaica's ambassadors, there is much more to gain from ticket sales and tourist support.

Recognition from FIFA

In a significant show of recognition for Jamaica's efforts Sepp Blatter, the newly-appointed president of FIFA, football's world organising body, paid a three-day visit to Jamaica together with Michel Platini, former Captain of France and organiser of World Cup 98. The trip included meetings with the Prime Minister and the Governor General. Blatter also inaugurated JFF's newly acquired HQ building. More significant was Blatter's choice of Jamaica as his first point of contact with the rest of the CONCACAF (US, Central American and the Caribbean) region. Hosted by Horace Burrell, President of the JFF, some 30 heads of football came to Jamaica to meet him.

Potential economic gains

At the height of World Cup 98, private sector interest and sponsorship of the team was at its peak. Some of this still remains. "American Airlines have been our biggest sponsor to date," explained Bailey. TV coverage has been another important source of support. Most of the team's international and national games are covered on Jamaican TV. The TV rights owned by JFF are swapped

for local pre-match advertising. Fees are also collected if a match is televised by international TV stations, as well as for match advertising. But attendance receipts provide the most income.

The sale of Jamaican football players is another potentially lucrative source of rewards for the Jamaican players and teams. Again, this is still in its infancy but one success story is Ricardo Gardner's, who, just 20, was sold from Harbour View Football Club in Jamaica to Bolton Wanderers in England for £1 million. The potential is there and the JFF intends to develop it more fully.

Football success also generated an informal but highly profitable sector which unfortunately did not provide many funds for football itself: the production and sale of Reggae Boyz memorabilia.

Building on World Cup success

Motivated by the success of the team and increased Jamaican interest the JFF is making efforts to raise the professionalism of the game. Plans are afoot to start a professional league in the 2001-2 season.

"We believe that we are now laying the foundations for improvement in the new millennium," explained Bailey. "We think that the under-15s, under-17s, under-20s and under-23s we are developing contain talent capable of doing well in competition."

A long-term process has been set in action, creating a kind of football farm where players identified at an early age progress through the various age groups. Within high schools more than 60 boys' teams take part in a JFF-organised competition. The under-17s team that qualified for this year's world championships is expected to qualify for the Under-20s Championship in 2001. The team of 20-year-olds is to play in the Pan American games and the qualifying games for the Olympics.

Women's football

Jamaican women also play football. Following a mandate from FIFA, JFF has now incorporated their game. In future, this should mean increased support for the women's game. Interest in the sport is growing. 36 female high school teams played last season and JFF had already received at the time of *The Courier's* visit in August, 50 entries for the new season (1999/2000). They also have their own league with 11 teams which had just reached the semi-finals stage of their competition. According to Mr Bailey "they are talented but not yet on a par with the American team that recently won the Women's World Cup, but the team is very young so there is time."

Football is big business. Many argue that to realise the potential economic gains Jamaica needs to create a professional league. This should be accompanied by the necessary administrative structures to ensure that talent rises through the ranks and is identified as early as possible. There are also calls for greater support at the community level. As always there are never enough resources put in to developing the game.

"Obviously during the World Cup we had much more interest. I'm sure that when the World Cup 2002 qualifying stages start up there will be more interest in the Reggae Boyz again."

Pitting their skills against the world's football giants, the Reggae Boyz finished 22nd overall... They may not have won but they scored a level of popularity for Jamaica among the spectators matched only by that of France and Brazil

Peter Tosh - 1947 - 1987



Reggae music is an intrinsic part of Jamaican culture and musical heritage. The music and its artists (the most famous being Bob Marley) have influenced musicians worldwide and brought recognition and foreign exchange earnings to the country. In this personal (abridged) account, **Omar Davies**, Minister of Finance and Planning, highlights Peter Tosh's contribution to reggae. Tosh, a founding member of The Wailers saw his solo career overshadowed by that of his fellow Wailer, Bob Marley. Omar Davies believes that his prodigious talent and work deserve still greater acclaim.

Just over a decade ago violence silenced one of our greatest reggae artists, Peter Tosh. Christened Hubert McIntosh, his music career spanned numerous phases. He created with Bob Marley and Bunny Wailer, Jamaica's cardinal reggae aggregation, The Wailers, whose contribution to the development of pop music was immense. Unlike Bob Marley, Tosh has never received the acclaim he deserves not least because of a combative personality and his forthright advocacy to legalise marijuana, which even on occasion brought him into conflict with local authorities.

The Early Years

Comparison of Peter's merits relative to Bob or Bunny's is pointless, as each has made his own significant contribution to music development. Bob was the most prolific writer, initially of love songs and exhortations to dance and later, songs of protest. Bunny remains the mystic, forever to be associated with the classic, *Dreamland*. Then there was Peter. He was the trio's most accomplished musician with the most powerful voice. Even from the earliest days he was the militant as reflected in his version of *Go tell it on the Mountain*.

In their formative years, The Wailers simultaneously developed their own style while copying American groups like Curtis Mayfield and The Impressions who had a profound impact on them. They recorded

together but also released their own singles with the others simply providing harmony. Peter's classics included *Once bitten, twice shy*, *Funeral* (later re-recorded as *Burial*), *Stepping Razor*, *Maga Dog*, *Mark of the Beast*, *Can't blame the Youth* and *Dem ha fi get a beaten* which was used extensively during Michael Manley's 1972 election campaign. They also produced three albums, *The Wailing Wailers*, *Soul Rebel* and *Soul Revolution II*, of which two resulted from a collaboration with Lee "Scratch" Perry, Jamaica's greatest Reggae music arranger.

The Island Albums

Signing with Chris Blackwell and Island Records in 1972 brought great opportunities and international exposure. But inevitably it led to the disintegration of The Wailers. They produced two albums, which though commercially unsuccessful, served to launch Bob Marley's solo career. The music world did however recognise in this unique group a breath of fresh air. Peter's cuts highlighted themes that would continue to be dominant in his lyrics: the fight against exploitation, and his call for unity against oppression. Hence, *Stop that Train*, *One Foundation* and *Four Hundred Years* which laments the plight of blacks even after slavery. *Get Up, Stand Up*, co-written with Marley, has become an anthem for protest groups worldwide.

Going solo

The initially lamented separation of The Wailers (1973-4) brought an unprecedented outpouring of creativity. Each developed his particular talents unrestrained while retaining their common roots.

Unequivocally, Peter, Bunny and Bob have contributed individually and collectively, as much to pop music as the Beatles. Bob remains one of the industry's pre-eminent stars. Peter's output and prodigious talent however has still to receive such acclaim and attention.

Legalise It, Peter's first solo album for Atlantic, called for the legalisation of marijuana, a theme he pursued to his death. The album, though not outstanding, revealed how wonderfully he and Bunny could harmonise on cuts such as *When the well runs dry*. Peter's final album for Atlantic, *Equal Rights* is the finest ever reggae album. There is no bad cut on it; rather, there are perhaps too many good songs. After 20 years of listening to it, choosing my favourite piece remains difficult. The screaming lead guitar on *Stepping Razor* still gives me goose pimples. The title track, *Equal Rights* must not be underestimated. Where do you rank *African* – an inspiration to so many in search of their heritage – or the assertive *I am that I am?* Newcomers listening to this album will be totally captivated by Tosh's lyrics, vocal talents and his tight backing band.

With Rolling Stones Records Tosh produced two Albums - *Bush Doctor* and *Mystic Man*. More importantly, he acquired a new backing group Word, Sound and Power (including Sly Dunbar, Robbie Shakespeare and Mickey Chung), and increased his stage performances. On their best nights, there was no better music act alive.

With Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, Tosh also produced a number of reggae-disco hits: *Buking-ham Palace*, the chest-beating *I'm the toughest* (an adaptation of the old hit by James and Bobby Purify, *I'm your puppet*) and the hymn-like *Jah seh No*.

EMI

Among the classic hits produced over four albums for EMI, *Rastafari Is* remains a favourite. Fusing reggae rhythms and Niabingi drumming with blues-rock guitar to amazing effect, the song celebrates how true Rastas combine their enjoyment of music with worship of the Creator without falling prey to the false divisions which inhibit traditional believers.

Tosh's way with words

Tosh's quick wit made playing on words easy. He renamed Kingston "Killsome City" due to its high murder rate. Once asked by a reporter about his real relationship with Marley, quick as a flash, Peter said 'Relationship? That's a ship that we all have to sail on...'
End of question.

Peter, the Performer

To me, Tosh's greatest talent lay in his stage performances where he demonstrated amply his ability to arrange razor-sharp backing and to surprise. You never knew how he would

make his entrance; how he would be dressed; what new arrangements he would try and you never knew what he would say!

Of the local performances I attended, several stand out. At the first Reggae Sun Splash in 1980, Tosh's scintillating performance was marked by a lecture to the crowd, which included the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, on the social ills afflicting Jamaica. At first, I was angry at his outburst, but two questions from a friend silenced me. First, what had he said that was not true? Second, if Tosh did not raise these questions, who would?

Tosh's last stage performance in Jamaica was at the Pulse's Super Jam Concert in December '83. He headlined a bill that included reggae legends like Gregory Isaacs and The Skatalites. After their lengthy wait, an initially sullen crowd greeted his appearance on stage. But three songs later we were eating out of his hands. After five songs many would have gone home satisfied. But he simply went on and on. It was the total performance.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, with time Tosh will receive his due credit. According to Allan "Skill" Cole, Bob Marley's confidante, "Tosh could play any instrument he put his hand on". This musical skill brought invitations from stars like Eric Clapton to tour with them, to teach them reggae rhythms and play instruments on their albums.

The recent successful re-release of Tosh's work on a trilogy of albums is perhaps a belated acknowledgment by the music world of the talents of one of its real geniuses - Peter Tosh.

"Legalise It" - legalising marijuana was a theme Tosh pursued to his death



Tourism: Jamaica is here to stay



Wayne and Webster, Negril Marine Park Rangers, the visible face of the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society

Jamaica's population of two and a half million inhabitants annually welcomes almost two million visitors to experience the natural charms of the island. Tourism is a major source of foreign exchange, employment and investment for the country. The major challenge is how to develop the industry, exploiting all its benefits while protecting Jamaica's natural environment.

In 1998, 1.9 million visitors, staying an average 11 days in Jamaica and spending around \$85 per day in total spent US\$1.2 billion. Arrivals from North America accounted for more than 75% of visitors, Europeans visitors 17.2%. As a major Caribbean hub, Jamaica also benefits from stopover and cruise ship visitors. Stated government objectives for the development of Jamaica's tourism product include: identification of markets with potential, adequate airlift to Jamaica, good ground transport, resort beautification, provision of sufficient hotel rooms and general upgrading of the tourism sector.

Jamaica's charm

Jamaica's sun-drenched shores, fine white sands and crystal clear, turquoise seas have attracted visitors since the arrival of Christopher Columbus. But it is since the 1970s that development has trebled. Jamaica's charm is based on a balmy tropical climate, stunning natural beauty, a people who are outgoing and gregarious and a rich cultural heritage which blends a colonial past with African roots and steps in time to the beat of reggae, Jamaica's own unique contribution to contemporary music. This "land of water and wood" offers plenty apart from beaches: moun-

tains rising to over 2,500m, gorges, cave systems, and tumbling waterfalls. The abundant flora ranges from lush tropical rain forests to cactus-strewn savannah plains, and Kingston, the island's capital, is a vibrant cultural centre.

The sell

The Jamaican tourist board (JTB) works hard to package and promote Jamaica to appeal to a wide range of tastes. Romance in paradise is a major marketing proposition. Couples visiting Jamaica are promised a paradise to nurture their romance, honeymoon or even get married in. International exposure in Hollywood films like *Blue Lagoon*, *Cocktail* and *How Stella got her Groove Back* have also benefitted Jamaica's tourist industry. Since the 1960s, JTB programmes aimed at giving visitors a more genuine experience of Jamaica. The potentially powerful pull of a best-selling novel about the "spice, sass and passion" of Jamaica was sufficient justification for JTB to sponsor a literary "bashment" (party) to launch Jamaican author Colin Channer's debut work *Waiting in Vain*.

Image is all-important in luring visitors to Jamaica, and security is a major factor for tourists. To overcome

poor international press about crime and violence, security in major tourist resorts is taken very seriously. Police patrol visibly on foot or bicycle in most main tourist areas.

Getting there

Efforts to attract visitors to Jamaica are wasted without the necessary infrastructure. The recently privatised Air Jamaica provides regular international flights between, America, Europe and Jamaica's two international airports at Montego Bay and Kingston. It is now possible to hop between the island's main tourist resorts Negril, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios, and Kingston on the Express Service. Completion of the new North Coast road is expected to reduce overland travelling times between the three tourist resorts, by half.

What's on offer?

Jamaica offers a kaleidoscope of tourist accommodation ranging from ultra modern all-inclusive hotels, villas and smaller guest houses in myriad architectural styles: colonial-style mansions, thatched cabins-even castles that would not look out of place in Disneyland, as well as more traditional buildings. Likewise, the industry's tourism operators range from individual hotel owners to large international corporate groups such as Ritz Carlton. Despite their heterogeneity, operators large and small share similar concerns: to ensure that Jamaica competes on the tourist market by providing ever-improving standards of quality.

Small hotels - home away from home

Donald and Deta Brookes decided to return and invest in Jamaica's hotel industry after living in Canada for 20 years. Targeting European visitors, they market their hotel complex set in lush gardens overlooking Montego Bay as "Jamaica's best kept secret". "Visitors from these countries tend to prefer the smaller hotels, the type of service that we offer and also tend to be repeat visitors" explained Donald Brookes, "It's the people that are Jamaica's main selling point". They believe their strength lies in the personalised service offered to their niche clientele. With 30 staff to look after them "our clients often tell us that they feel they are in a home away from home" remarked Mrs Brookes.

Sandals - a home-grown success

Gordon "Butch" Stewart, an energetic local Jamaican-born businessman, sits in pole position among tourism entrepreneurs both in Jamaica and the rest of the region as a hotelier and CEO of Air Jamaica. In just over 17 years he has built the *Sandals Resorts* group into a hospitality empire, which comprises 13 "ultra-inclusive" luxury beach resorts located in Jamaica (8), Antigua (1), St Lucia (2), The Bahamas (1) and Turks & Caicos (1). Initially "couples

only" were *Sandals'* target market but the new *Beaches* chain of resorts caters for families with children and singles.

Success is based on a few simple ingredients. A single fee covers all food, spirits, activities, sports, instruction, entertainment, everything; In Jamaica and St Lucia, guests staying at one of the islands' resorts can enjoy the facilities at any of the other properties also. Increasing standards of luxury is also important. Spa complexes are currently being added to many of the resorts.

"Attention is paid to every detail" explained Baldwin Powell, General Manager at *Sandals*, Negril. His job is to ensure guests enjoy their visit whether relaxing by the pool side or energetically participating in organised fun from dawn till long after dusk. "*Sandals'* success" according to Powell "has a lot to do with the fact that everything is paid for in advance. Guests can try new experiences: scuba diving, the spa facilities or new cuisines. They never have to worry."

The all-inclusive concept has its detractors. "All-inclusive resorts are alien installations for privileged foreigners, who remain strangers and have their fun amidst poverty", they claim. Local service providers are prevented from profiting from tourism and quite often a well-developed tourism infrastructure is by-passed.

"The consumer is king" is Stewart's reply. Moreover, the product has done much for Jamaica as a destination. *Sandals* properties employ 6,500 Jamaicans, are decorated with Jamaican furniture and art and buy over 90% of food and spirit supplies locally, in greater quantities than ordinary hotels. Tourism has a much greater economic impact in Jamaica than most other Caribbean islands because of our high revenue retention rate. Justifying the high security levels, Stewart explained, "Crime is a reality around the world. We have a duty to see that law and order reigns." As for charges that increased hotel development was putting pressure on the fragile coastal environment, Stewart replied candidly, "we have won almost every green award that is currently available because of our green management practices. Recycled water is used and we have sewage treatment plants at every site".

Protecting the Environment

Negril, once a fishing village, attractive for a handful of hippies, rastafarians and musicians in the 60s, has become Jamaica's third largest tourist destination with



Sandals, Negril. Activity and entertainment from dawn to dawn

Despite their heterogeneity, operators both large and small share similar concerns: ensuring that Jamaica competes on the tourist market effectively by providing ever improving standards of quality

a rapidly-growing community. Today, from Bloody Bay to West Point, hotels line the coast and more developments are planned. As a result, Negril's fragile environment is under threat. Deteriorating coastal water has massively degraded the coral reef and marine bio-diversity. Fish stocks are depleted and large areas deforested. Sustaining Negril's development as a major tourist destination while preserving a beautiful environment is a major challenge.

The Negril Coral Reef preservation Society (NCRPS) and the more recently formed Negril Environment Protection Trust (NEPT) have been instrumental in regrouping local government bodies, community groups and the business community to address Negril's environmental problems. As an Environmental Protection Area, Negril's environment resources have become a priority.

Since 1995, NRCPS, directed by Katy Thacker and recently Jean Brown, has been leading the effort to establish the Negril Marine Park. European Union funding has helped. To flourish, coral reefs

require clear, nutrient free water. Water sources rich in nutrients feeding into the sea give rise to the growth of algae which cloud the sea, compete for oxygen and literally strangle the corals. Recreational boats dropping anchor on the reefs was another major factor in their destruction. Installing mooring buoys for boats to prevent anchor damage to the reef was the first initiative taken. A scientific research programme involving vigorous monitoring of water quality at 39 sample river sites in Negril's hinterland and the condition of the coral reef, has been coupled with initiatives such as the construction of artificial reefs to encourage fish aggregation and the cultivation of sea mosses.

Local hotels and tourist businesses have been effectively encouraged to adopt environmental codes of practice and promote eco-tourism. In 1998, four hotels including *Sandals*, qualified for the internationally recognised Green Globe environmental tourism code of practice award. Rainwater collection and the installation of composting toilets have also been

encouraged among inhabitants.

Public education initiatives have raised awareness. The Junior Rangers programme for children provides an in-depth understanding of the local biodiversity not to mention fun at the beach, learning swimming, lifesaving and snorkelling skills during term time and at summer school.

The Marine Park Rangers, Linval, Chantal, Webster, Courtney, Everton and Wayne are the visible face of NCRPS. Their task is to ensure the safety of the environment and visitors in and around Negril Marine Park. These young Jamaicans can be seen daily, patrolling Negril's near-shore waters in their white park boat *Venus* or visiting some of the 39 water sampling sites located in Negril's hinterland conducting monitoring programmes, or on the beach training school children or spearheading coastal clean-up campaigns.

Improvements have been made in Negril, degradation of the coral reef has stabilised but the process is slow. Further development of the marine park will eventually entail tourism entrepreneurs paying to use the fragile but beautiful marine resources.

The Future

Jamaican tourism entrepreneurs are confident about Jamaica's future despite increasing competition from neighbours and environmental concerns. According to "Butch" Stewart, "Jamaica has easily the best sun, sea and sand product of any that exists in the world. It has beauty, mountains and rivers as well as beaches. It has a people accustomed to welcoming visitors for over six decades and we are a God-fearing people with tremendous energy."

Donald Brookes expressed similar views "Jamaica is here to stay.

Peace before another busy day at a resort hotel



The informal sector

by Kenneth Karl

There are millions like them all over the world. Driven by a natural desire for survival, men and women, the old and even children are doing what they can to drag themselves out of poverty. By their actions, which could actually be described as reactions, they have helped to create what is rightly or wrongly termed the informal sector. This sector continues to teem with an abundance of continuously expanding activities performed by illicit street vendors, shoe-shiners, small commercial, production or service enterprises and a great many other economic agents. The "informal sector" is ruled by resourcefulness and imagination. Reflecting the energy of people at the base of the social pyramid, it provides almost the only possibility of escape, and is frequently a source of hope, for those who work in it, either because they have to or out of convenience, with the common objective of improving their living conditions or simply of surviving. But the informal sector is also favoured for the development of trafficking at the edge of "legality", which frequently results in it being fiercely attacked and having very unfavourable associations. Any attempt to determine all the problems of this sector may be misconceived, since some matters linked directly or indirectly to the subject need to be considered more deeply. This discussion Dossier is draws attention to a few aspects, allowing experts and people with practical experience in the field to be heard.

Figures that speak for themselves

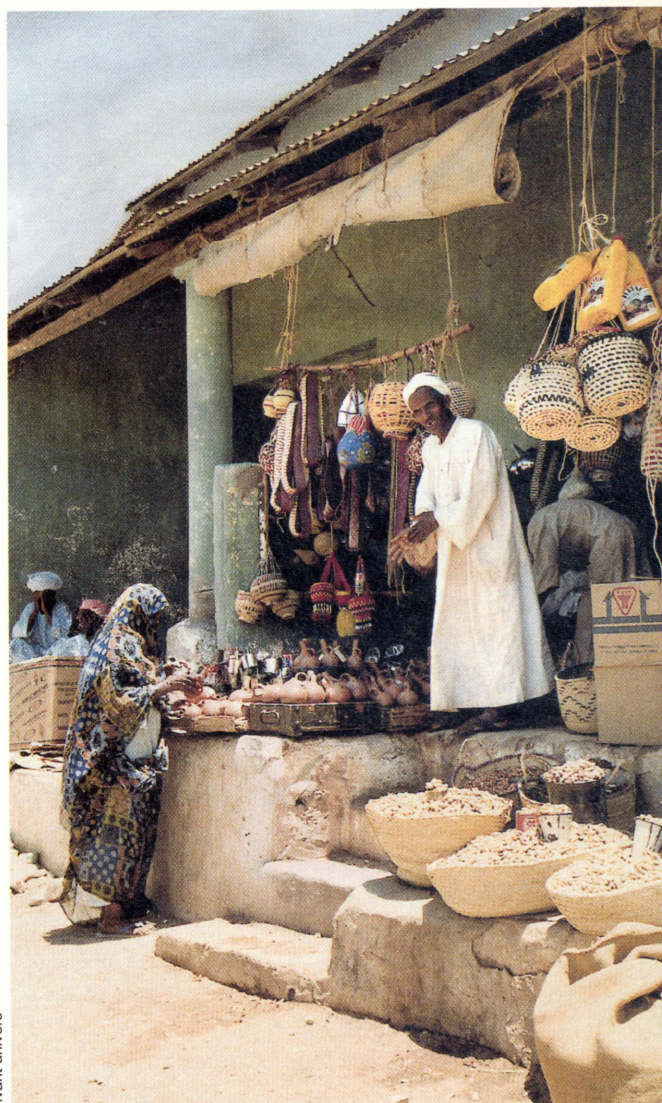
Over a quarter of workers operate in the informal sector throughout the world. In developing countries, informal activity mobilises between 30% and 80% of the workforce, mainly in the cities, which are experiencing a massive influx of people from the

countryside. In Africa, for example, this sector accounts for a significant (even the major) part of urban employment (two out of three people derive their livelihoods from the informal sector) and it is estimated to be growing at an annual rate of 7%. It is even expected to provide over 90% of jobs in the near future.

Nor is Latin America immune to this development, and it cannot be denied that the informal sector is generating many more jobs than the so-called formal sector and is making an active contribution to the wealth of many countries of the region. In Asia and the countries of ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) in particular, the ILO estimates that about 60% to 70% of jobs are created by this sector. These rising trends confirm the increasing importance of the informal sector and make us think about its implications for the developing world and all the problems it may create. But how will it be possible to extract what is good from what some people cautiously refer to as a "necessary evil", while at the same time reducing the scale of the problems to which it may give rise?

Multiple causes

The emergence of the informal sector is due to causes that may be the same or different in different countries. Some studies consider the lack of jobs created by the modern sector (between 2% or 3% per year) in conjunction with the mainly urban population growth that is frequently at a different rate (of the order of 5%) to be one of the main causes of this phenomenon. If the shortage of jobs is actually due to a lack of economic growth, which reduces the opportunities for productive investment in the formal sector, it is also due to the massive public-sector recruitment drives in developing countries, in



vivant univers

Africa in particular, during the 1970s. Economic factors (in particular the economic recession of the 1980s) together with drastic structural adjustment measures have further consolidated the basis of the informal sector by creating a large influx of former civil servants as a result of cutbacks.

But apart from more rational explanations intended to increase understanding of the mysteries of the informal sector, some people claim that it is simply the result of a refusal to accept destitution on the part of a "significant proportion" of those oper-

ating within it. The Peruvian economist, De Soto, wrote in 1989 that the informal sector is "the response to the inability of States to meet the needs of an impoverished population".

An argument about meaning

Although the informal sector generally grew out of the resourcefulness of the poorest sections of the population, experts have become interested in it over the years. Economists, statisticians, legal experts, sociologists, anthropologists, etc have devoted an increasing amount of attention to examining, analysing and understanding this informal structure in the third world. Studies to trace its tortuous outline have been performed by numerous international institutions and research bodies. Although they have succeeded in keeping the discussion going by contributing ideas about a fairly confusing topic and in lifting the corner of the veil in certain areas, they have failed to reach agreement on how to handle and even diagnose this form of alternative economy. The International Labour Office used the term informal sector for the first time at the start of the 1970s, but a great many qualifying terms have been used to describe it since then (see Box). It is, for example, difficult to speak of a sector in the singular, in view of its heterogeneous nature and the diversity of the activities it comprises. Furthermore, considerable doubt has been expressed about the existence of an informal in contrast to a formal sector. According to certain authors, networks, relationships and interactions between the formal and informal sectors are such that it is now misleading to try to draw a clear distinction between "two alleged realities". The experts do not even agree on the unstructured nature of the "informal sector", since many of them consider that significant parts of this economy are effectively structured in many respects. There are numerous terminological differences of this type and the misuse of certain terms frequently confuses the positions adopted with regard to these problems.

Real, but without legal existence?

It is claimed that *homo economicus* of the informal sector follows certain imperatives, which compel him to evade the law or simply to feel that it does not apply to him. But should we force him to return to legality, running the risk of breaking the motor that drives the popular economy or the economy as a whole, or should we adopt a policy of total *laissez-faire*, which could also create difficulties. Should the law adapt to the informal sector or vice versa? Although it has traditionally been tolerated as necessary for development, the informal sector has legal and institutional restrictions placed on it in some countries, especially as it is not always easy to decide what is legal and what is not. In the eyes of certain experts, one possible solution might be to opt for varied approaches at different levels, which would make it possible to provide a formal structure where appropriate (based on a cost/benefit analysis to determine the viability of small, informal

entities) while avoiding the exertion of too much pressure on micro-activities. But how to reach such a balance?

Also in the North

One might at first assume that the informal sector is indigenous to developing countries too, whereas it exists in many forms in developed countries, even though the legal systems of such countries are more entrenched and this parallel economy does not always follow the same logic as that in poor countries. According to a recent study by the Austrian Economics professor Friedrich Schneider, "the underground economy" accounts for about 15% of the GDP of the industrialised countries on average. Countries such as Greece and Italy lead OECD countries in this respect, with a figure verging on 30%. According to certain estimates, about 20 million workers operate in the underground economy in the European Union, and some experts even consider that it helped to bring about the upturn in the US economy. The growth in the North of this clandestine economy, symbolised by moonlighting is apparently due to high tax rates and social costs, which are a burden on companies and force them to evade the law in some respects.



The informal sector is ruled by resourcefulness and creativity

A few terms used to describe the informal sector or economy

Unofficial - parallel - undeclared - concealed - creeping - clandestine - alternative - marginal - independent - submerged - invisible - illegal - unobserved - fraudulent - hidden - submarine - secondary - underground - dual - secret - black - irregular - veiled - peripheral - shadow - informal - disguised - grey - (economy) - counter-economy - wangling -

A hope ignored: the informal or popular economy

by Jacques Bugnicourt*

**“Think differently, and you will change the world...”
(Ben Okri, Nigerian writer, in *The famished road*).**

The cities and countryside of Africa contain a structure in which most of the population live, produce and consume. Whether they like it or not, this economy, which is wrongly described as 'informal' is the everyday environment of at least half of the people living south of the Sahara, including most of the men, women and children facing an insecure existence and many others.

Far from being an ideological construct, the popular economy is a very real mixture of insecurity and energy, which is easy to observe and difficult to understand. It is much more of a social economy than the economy that is termed modern. It declares itself as such and goes well beyond merely providing the means of existence by meeting basic needs, providing work, revealing and applying a great variety of resources and establishing an ever changing network of multiple links, some of which are with the modern sector of the economy. The popular economy is in a continuous process of renewal and destruction. It is the very opposite of an unchanging structure with a definite outline. It is not a sector, but an assemblage of social, economic and cultural elements and flows, which have different degrees of relative importance over space and time. It actually has its own way of looking at time, its own style and type of consumption, its own way of 'prioritising' objectives, its own form of management and its own intimate and durable relationship with the various environments in which it finds itself. This popular economy is growing, even though it is frequently ignored and oppressed.

What is the point of the informal or popular economy ?

It is claimed that a certain amount of growth is becoming evident in certain major African conurbations. It is oriented towards exports and the world market, hardly involves the domestic market at all and is only of small benefit to the population. The environment and the living conditions of most of the population continue to deteriorate, and inequality is increasing. The discontent of deprived populations and of young people in particular, most of whom are condemned to live in shanty towns and operate in the informal sector, is leading straight to an explosion.

How can we not have an interest in becoming better acquainted with what is termed the 'informal' economy ? Isn't it time to take a closer look at what is actually a popular economy, i.e. what it contains, how it operates and who operates in it ?

The popular economy frequently provides more or less satisfactory occupations for two thirds of the working population. It is the only immediate opportunity for most young

people who wish to work, by generating low-pay jobs and income. It responds, even if only imperfectly, to the essential needs of the poor and some people in higher social strata.

The need to feed oneself, clothe oneself, acquire or develop skills and knowledge, find accommodation, benefit from a few vital services, clean oneself, move about, communicate and have some kind of social life felt by people with very limited disposable incomes generates a very significant demand, which can be met from the informal economy, as well as from the modern one. The popular economy meets this demand more or less successfully.

The popular economy must also bear the costs that are otherwise borne by the authorities. Externalities are transferred to the backs of the poorest people, although this is sometimes disguised as 'participation'. An example of this is the way in which the inhabitants of the shanty town somehow or other provide various facilities and services. This also applies to providing what is needed for everyday life and caring for children, old people, the sick, the injured etc.

This popular economy offsets the low level of return on work by offering a remarkable return on capital: the so-called informal economy shows considerable imagination in generating new activities or using a few machines or tools.

The popular economy also assumes other social and cultural functions: generating discussion, spreading knowledge and increasing literacy, in various languages, by means of assemblies, meetings, the bush telegraph and other modes of communication. A multiplicity of singers, rappers, old or new-style musicians, actors and presenters in societies or clubs offer services in return for a small amount of money or social prestige.

Without the popular economy, the problems of the major African conurbations would be even starker and the difficulties of poor people even more distressing. Why shouldn't this existing structure be supported ?

What is to be done with the popular economy ?

Suffering poverty but living in hope, the general population and its leaders must take action now to inaugurate a long period of growth on "two legs", i.e. the modern and popular economies, which involves the domestic market to a very great extent and gradually spreads through the region. But how can such action be taken in a way that is consistent, how is it possible to think out and act on a way of fighting against poverty by making this approach one of the levers of growth and of sustainable development ? And how can a new approach be developed, based on the



The popular economy is the only option for young people who want to work

knowledge that the way in which one does something is as important as what one does? How will it ever be possible to introduce into the real economy a way of sharing responsibility and involving the general population by using its work, its imagination and its management abilities, which may not be entirely attuned to technology but are adapted to human proximity, application by the people concerned and the permanence of activities wherever this is required? The question of an alternative policy arises for each of the main priorities.

- There is a need to extend productive activities leading to the provision of goods and services, and, first of all, those performed by the poorest strata of workers, i.e. those working for themselves and microenterprises. This is a first step, which is held back by a lack of boldness on the part of macro-decisionmakers, the weakness of effective demand, a lack of capital and sometimes a lack of technology. Among productive activities, recycling plays an effective and also a symbolic role by using and reusing trained but unemployed men, women, schoolchildren, students or the retired and also by making considerable use of areas, facilities, equipment or waste that have been forgotten about or cast aside. This involves discovering and mak-

ing good use of what was previously ignored or even rejected. It also increases the opportunity for involvement at a local level. This concern is part of all kinds of decisionmaking. It reflects the advance of democracy, starting with planning of the environment and the management of small individual or group activities. Whatever the circumstances, an increase in activity creates other jobs in what is described as the informal economy and may even be of benefit to modern companies, by increasing the opportunities for subcontracting. This will increase the purchasing power and autonomy of many people and reduce insecurity and poverty.

- Another approach involves providing basic facilities and services for as many people as possible. This involves increasing access to drinking water, healthcare and basic education, increasing the sharing of useful knowledge and encouraging people to develop, among other things. This approach will stimulate demand and spread confidence and hope via its effects on employment and the popular economy as a whole.

- At this stage, the popular economy is using everything it can find and does not hesitate to combine things in ways that might appear strange. One example of the combination of techniques might be the turning of a bicycle wheel by an

apprentice in order to increase the draught through a forge, improving its performance. Another example might be an e-mail message from New York to a local market in Kayes granting a credit facility of several million dollars, which is backed only by someone's word, which is accepted as law among the *soninké* diaspora. Other examples abound. What are the priorities of these technical combinations and changes, however? Which of the techniques available locally, at a district or regional level or on the world market can be effective against urban poverty, and how can they be used? There is really a need to find, disseminate and implement techniques at a basic level. A service or transport bicycle has a wide variety of uses. Scientifically controlled medicinal plants can save 20% of the costs of drugs. Tontine and credit arrangements based directly on trust are suitable for the very diverse forms of groupings that have arisen among farmers, artisans, women in particular and young people, and for other forms of association combining the sharing of information, saving, specific forms of redistribution and sometimes even rituals, in order to meet social, economic and cultural needs all at the same time.

It cannot be denied that accepted certainties, habits of thought, modernising models and a large number of interests are in opposition to this approach. It should be emphasised that the main concern is now to search for, exchange and disseminate ways of meeting the essential needs of the poorest people, at the lowest cost. An element of this type certainly has a place in a consistent policy for fighting poverty and ensuring sustainable growth. This approach to technology may make it necessary to accept a low rate of return on work for a certain period. It is not just that there is specifically a particular type of economic return in what is described as the informal economy, but also that effectiveness must also be seen in terms of the social return involving relationship and social aspects that make a posi-

tive contribution in this context. At the same time, this is also a way of improving the 'ambience', strengthening the family and increasing the solidarity between the inhabitants of districts and members of groups and at a higher level. There is a need to work out ways of supporting the popular economy closely or from a distance in a way that involves the people concerned, without turning them into mere recipients. They may take the form of advice, credit facilities, technical assistance, facilities or looking for outlets in order to help companies, associations, those working for themselves etc. Support of this type would also seek to extend the reach of the popular economy.

● An all-out policy is needed to do everything possible to place communication within the reach of as many people as possible and, at the same time, of popular organisations of young people, women and other categories of people who are widely committed to the "informal" economy or who work in groups to change society and the environment. Now that an ever increasing flood of images and products is pouring out of the dominant economies, the new communication technologies, including street-corner television, mobile phones, etc, are starting to penetrate the shanty towns for use in production and trade and social, educational and cultural activities. Both the traditional cultures and the cultures that have arisen in the cities can flourish if they seize this opportunity with both hands. It also opens up new areas of employment for the popular economy, which is why experiments with imaginative but economical forms of education and training are currently arousing so much interest. Action is being taken to remove these small-scale forms of livelihood and the people exercising them from the obscurity and silence with which they have previously been surrounded. It is also necessary, at the same time, to open up opportunities for the people exercising them to organise themselves, to increase the number of women's groups, economic groupings, etc and to take action to ensure that the popular component is

better represented in the "civil society" of African capitals.

● To remain with this problem of the present and future meaning of the popular economy and the essential part it plays in the lives of the poor, the question is now as follows: what chance is there of solving the problems in the medium term by the spread of growth depending on the world market, even if it is accompanied by humanitarian assistance and hand-outs? Can poverty be ended solely by means of policies imposed from above? Is it feasible to fight poverty without involving the poor? How can we obtain the support of young people, women in particular and the poor, including the new poor, for action to change society along the lines suggested by Emmanuel Ndione, by increasing the opportunities for both individual advancement, for example through education and collective escapes from poverty? What can be done in an urban environment, when an entire shanty town releases itself from the stranglehold of dealers and a small number of exploitative tribal chiefs, to create an economically active, safe and pleasant environment where young people feel at home, hopefully without having to deal with rules and regulations that are incomprehensible to them, speculators or bulldozers.

● Ending the continuous or sporadic suppression of the popular economy is, in any case, a major requirement of social policy. Everyday reality is strangely fragmented and controlled for ideological, urban planning or aesthetic reasons ("the rot of the shanty towns", failure to observe standards and non-compliance with external, legally accepted arrangements and techniques). The poor frequently find themselves opposed and hemmed in from all sides. Permanent pressure is exerted against those eking out small-scale livelihoods, who can be controlled, exploited or suppressed at will. Street-sellers, porters, pavement hairdressers and jacks-of-all-trades are all at the mercy of police raids and demolition unless they pay baksheesh or protection money. The so-called "informal" sec-

tor suffers as a result, but it continues to fulfil its function with incredible vitality. A new, clear-thinking, all-embracing and encouraging attitude is needed from elites, authorities and the media. There is a need to speak out against the suppressors of jobs and to assist the popular economy by moving towards a system of modulated regulation or deregulation, ending attempts to mindlessly copy the modern economy and opening up as many opportunities as possible for work without problems, suspicion or the fear of denunciation. Public opinion and most political parties care little about this and do not concern themselves with this category of "citizens on a 20% basis". How long will the popular economy and those who live in it be able to tolerate this indifference or oppression?

However this may be, time is pressing in a number of big cities. It might be possible to take a positive view of the rise in violence in the short term. Popular discontent is increasing. Will a constructive break with the past be possible? What are the organised forces from which the new politics can derive support? What socio-economic forces or assistance at work elsewhere in the world could provide effective help? In any case, the so-called informal or popular economy is already one of the elements of development that offers a number of different possibilities and is already "walking on two feet". This dynamism, this ability to breathe life into the economy and to expand employment, this remarkable adaptive ability and, if one gives it chance, this capacity for innovation, including institutional innovation, will remain in evidence for a long time to come. And might not the popular economy, that is to say what it is and what it might become, be an example and a message of value to countries a long way from Africa, even if they are not expecting it?

*Enda, Dakar

Women in the popular economy:

women in the Sahel

by Bella Diallo, Marieme Sow and Karim Dahou*

African women have always played a part in production and trade, activities which have more or less specifically devolved upon them. In the Sahel, they have not only traditionally been associated with upkeep of the family smallholding (sowing, weeding and harvesting), but have also developed parallel activities involving essentially the tending of a kitchen garden and small-scale trade in foodstuffs. In the mornings, generally speaking, women do their share of work in the fields and then regularly devote their afternoon to maintaining their own plots of millet or ground-nuts. Furthermore, in the face of an uncertain climate, women, through their production of foodstuffs and their sale of part of their produce in order to generate supplementary income, guarantee that the household will have at least some basic form of nutrition. Their involvement in economic life is thus not a recent phenomenon in African societies, although in the past few years it has grown on account of the pressure exerted by a number of factors such as soil degradation, diminished purchasing power, rural depopulation and urbanisation. A further, more recent factor has been structural adjustment policy.

Rural depopulation has placed women at the forefront of the fight to alleviate poverty

Since the 1960s, the Sahel has undergone a number of changes which have profoundly modified the structure of its landscape and of its people. Most countries in the region have experienced sudden rural depopulation which, in certain areas, has led to a serious shortfall in numbers of males of working age. Whilst major urban centres were seeing huge numbers of "newly-urbanised" migrants swelling the ranks of the unemployed and those in low-paid jobs, the countryside was being depopulated. Due to these two phenomena, women have played a significant role in initiatives to place their precarious existence on a firmer footing, both in urban and country areas. It is they who, in towns and cities, have often had to make up for the fact that their husbands are unemployed. At the same time, in the villages, soil degradation and poor plant cover (also a consequence of rural depopulation, the reduction in raw-materials prices and drought) has led women to devote themselves wholeheartedly to cultivating new crops.

Adapting to local crises

In the villages, it is mostly the men who are the first to leave; they head for sub-regional centres or go much fur-

ther afield to seek the income they are unable to earn at home. However, there may sometimes be a one- or two-year gap before the emigrant son or husband is able to send back the first CFAF 50,000 or 100,000 (approximately € 75 or 150), which the family needs in order to keep their heads above water for a few months. During this interval, the family will have no resources other than those the women are able to contrive. Ownership of a plot of land for growing food crops, cumulative experience of trade and the sale of small amounts of produce will in such a case be crucial to the safeguarding of equilibrium in families for whom existence is precarious. Sometimes, for example even in Le Baol - the centre of ground-nut production in Senegal - it is the women themselves who journey to town in order to obtain resources as basic as their household needs. They work as crushers, take posts as maidservants if they are young enough, or work as washer-women. However small the income they earn, it will be sent back to the village. When the rural population does not emigrate on such a large scale, it is the sale of crops out of season elsewhere which will provide families with the resources they need. In certain regions, such as Les Nyayes, these are ancient crops and have long been put to use both by men and women, but elsewhere, such as in Le Baol, they have been called upon in times of crisis and have been used by women in an attempt to keep the family above subsistence level.

Women: the centre of the popular urban economy

The influx of large numbers of people from the countryside into West-African urban centres has been too sudden for the latter to be able to absorb these new inhabitants easily. In all towns and cities in the region, there is massive under-employment and the modern sector of the economy represents only a small part of activity. In such a context, women demonstrate remarkable motivation, attending to the most urgent things first, by investing in a number of income-generating activities. Small-scale trade in foodstuffs is traditionally the preserve of women. The scene in the streets of Dakar, Bamako, Ouagadougou or Ndjamena is ample illustration of its importance. Needless to say, restrictions on or the repression of small-scale trade, under the pretext of regulating economic life, would be disastrous in social terms. Another responsibility of women is the processing of food and the packaging of primary products. They also find employment as domestics, keepers of cheap restaurants, hairdressers, seamstresses etc. In sum, many extremely important areas of the

popular urban economy, although principally service activities which keep them at a distance from the means of production, are the exclusive domain of women. While their husbands were working in the fields, unprepared for carrying on basically commercial activities, they have, on the whole, adapted better to their new environment, contributing here also to alleviating the consequences of poverty within the family.

Structural adjustment and women's increased responsibility

Long at the forefront of individual strategies to combat poverty, women have seen their level of responsibility increased under structural-adjustment plans. These result in large-scale lay-offs in the towns and cities, particularly amongst civil servants, which in turn results in a fall in the number of jobs available in the formal sector and also in purchasing power, and leads to a slide towards production and popular services. Moreover, in both urban and rural areas, structural adjustment restricts access to credit. Although the traditional distribution of tasks between domestic activities and productive employment has less relevance in an urban environment, the scarcity of liquid assets in the rural environment has promoted small-scale food production to the detriment of larger farms. In both cases, the role of women within the family has been strengthened. In the towns and cities, they have often taken on commercial activities in addition to their domestic tasks, and this has enabled them to add further revenue to that earned by their husbands. In the villages, they have stepped up cultivation on their plots of land and the marketing of their produce.

Dealing with hardship as a group

For many years, African women have used *tontines* as a way of saving, but, progressively, these have been shown to have limits in the context of a crisis which has increased need tenfold. The *tontines* are savings groups, where the members pay in a set sum each

month, and receive an annual payout. In fact they are more an individual than a collective response to the problem of money shortage, systematised by economic difficulties. It has become necessary for there to be a positive "mutualisation" of risks, in other words collective risk prevention. Women in particular have felt the need for collective working capital,

as a way in which to generate economic and social activities with a view to stabilising their situation in a time of crisis. The creation of savings and credit funds has thus made it possible to finance economic activities and to get around the time constraints of *tontines*. Moreover, such funds are often multi-purpose in nature and the existence of a cash reserve makes it possible to remedy urgent social problems. Central purchasing points have also been set up, in the form of groups, aimed at promoting the purchase of foodstuffs at lower cost. In this way, techniques which have grown out of village-based practices have progressively become modern methods of management. Finally, some groups are also engaged in activities which have traditionally been the preserve of men, including the management of community equipment, such as water-posts.

What we have here, then, is a situation in which activity on the part of women in areas traditionally occupied by them has increased, and at the same time they have begun to carry on activities which were formerly exclusively for men. There is now no area of the popular economy, indeed of the economy as a whole, where women are not involved,



Women have always participated in production and economic activities

although their access to the means of production is still sometimes disputed. However, there is a risk that a system established over the years is being upset too abruptly and that advantages will bring with them drawbacks. In Dakar, men have been seen to destroy a water-post installed and managed by women, out of fear that their status within the family and the local district would rapidly diminish. Not all projects or discourse promoting humanity have been called into question but, in this field as in others, intellectuals and people at grass-roots level, whose approaches are complementary, have still to converge. The situation is indeed evolving and it must be reinforced in concrete ways, with care being taken to ensure that ideology does not hold up progress in the field. Whatever happens, if the 21st Century allows women to play a full part in public and economic life, those in the Sahel will be in the vanguard.

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The informal sector in the Caribbean

by Claude de Miras*

The Caribbean is a vast group of territories with highly contrasting geography and population sizes, which also have very different administrative and political status, ranging from national sovereignty to constitutional relationships with a tutelary state - usually a "major power" - although such relationships are of the most diverse type. In many respects, Caribbean countries are characterised by diversity, the product of an eventful history largely determined by their location at the interface between north and south and imposed by the fact that many of them are islands.

Yet, from a geographical standpoint, this politico-economic diversity shares natural influences which may or may not be specific to this tropical environment (cyclones, volcanic eruptions, earth tremors, etc.) and to its particular location between North America and South America (geo-strategic advantages, population flows, illegal trafficking etc). After a long period of growth (1950-1980) founded on the primary sector and the model of import substitution, these economies went into recession: from 1980 to 1985, the average growth rate in the region dropped by 2.4% per annum. Belize, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, St Kitts Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent therefore adopted structural-adjustment plans. From 1985 onwards, the trend was one of recovery, except for Trinidad, Haiti, Surinam and Guyana. The dominant model turned these economies towards service activities (tourism, services, offshore finance, and also urban informal activities), which gradually led to a reduction in the relative - or even monopolistic - share of the primary sector (bananas, sugar, fishing). Martinique and Guadeloupe partially avoided this general problem in the region owing to French and European involvement, despite the risks of WTO deregulation of the West Indies' banana trade.

At Caribbean level, evolution will be irregular and there will be a whole range of differing local situations. From this angle, the informal sector looks set to be particularly significant in any analysis of economic and territorial pressures.

Not wishing, here, to repeat the many definitions of the informal sector that exist, this article will briefly refer to the essential mechanisms behind this form of employment which is particularly visible and wide-

spread in the urban environment: structural excess of workforce, deviation between the productivity of labour (earnings) and its cost of reproduction (family budget), the absence of indirect earnings (retirement, unemployment), unwillingness to meet the cost of placing the situation on a formal footing, illicit nature of activity amongst principals. There are so many angles that theoretical and operational approaches have been combined or promoted to varying degrees, leading to a dual observation: do these "informalisation" vectors together define a clearly identifiable sector? Are these unregulated forms of employment not historically the dominant method of integration into the labour market, Fordian employment being an atypical, dated and localised form of integration into the labour market?

If, as a first approximation, the informal sector is regarded as being linked to the population growth rate (and more precisely to the evolution of the population of working age), it will be seen that, from the standpoint of supply of labour, demographic pressure in the Caribbean will probably have a sustained overwhelming effect up to 2020, accompanied by a progressive ageing of the population. The growing relative size of the workforce in the total population bears witness to this. Owing to increasing urbanisation, it is in the towns and cities that employment opportunities will be increasingly concentrated, exacerbating "informal situations", the uncertainty underlying the lives of the working population and the latter's poverty. It is worth bearing in mind that, for the Caribbean as a whole, just a few islands - Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico and Jamaica - account for 91% of the population and 89% of the urban population, but only 80% of the Caribbean's total GDP.

Structural divergence between population growth and job creation should also, and perhaps primarily, be analysed from the standpoint of the "regulated" or formal employment dynamic. For 1995, the International Labour Office estimated the average growth rate of the labour market for all Caribbean countries at 3.7% (Trinidad: 3.8%; Barbados: 4.2%; Jamaica: 4.4%). Although, generally speaking, employment opportunities have increased faster than the workforce, with the concomitant reduction in unemployment rates, Jamaica is an exception. However, new cohorts of workers have been incorpo-

rated into the labour market to a greater extent through the extension of the informal sector. In this connection, the macro-economic reforms of structural adjustment implemented throughout the Caribbean have led firstly to a reduction in public- and modern-sector jobs in general and then, in parallel, to an increase in services and further "informalisation" of the ways in which workers are integrated into the urban labour market. Between 1993 and 1996, this situation could be seen particularly in Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Belize and Jamaica. (On the other hand, in the context of Martinique and Guadeloupe, although there are also opportunities available in the informal sector, the situation is somewhat problematical in these two islands because unemployment benefits and the minimum starting wage limit recourse to commercial self-employment).

If opening up to world trade can bring in its wake - subject to conditions - opportunities for growth and thus for employment, it can also be a source of increased uncertainty and instability in employment forms because of the nomadic nature of multinational businesses and their ongoing quest for increased productivity. In this context, the informal sector is a decisive adjustment variable, but also synonymous with poverty: productivity and thus remuneration are lower than in formal, waged employment.

Unemployment

Unemployment is an obvious cause of the poverty created by adjustment policies, with a high social cost particularly in terms of health and education. Privatisation measures, drastic reductions in public-sector deficits and restructuring of the public sector have led not only to a reduction in employment in the public sector but also

to a contraction of private business and related jobs. Consequently, unemployment rates in 1995, for example, were 12.2% in Belize, 13.1% in the Netherlands Antilles, 16.2% in Jamaica, 17.2% in Trinidad and Tobago and 19.7% in Barbados. Classically, it is essentially women and young people who have been affected hardest and longest by this depression in the labour market, although the impact of unemployment has been limited by social protection systems (Barbados) and/or by an extension of informal activities (Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica).

Underemployment

Whether in the form of visible underemployment (number of hours worked) or invisible underemployment (level of remuneration), Guyana and Jamaica have a large number of poor workers in agriculture, construction and services, including large portions of the informal sector (itinerant traders, artisans, domestic staff, etc.). The rise in underemployment is obviously tied in with the extension of this informal sector which has taken on large numbers of former public- or private-sector workers in particular, the less well-qualified and also many women formerly employed as office staff. This situation has naturally led to employment uncertainty and a widening gulf in income between the richest and the poorest, between men and women and between age groups, the most severely affected being young people.

Poverty, inequality, gender and age

Economic deterioration, employment conditions and the expansion of the informal sector have led to increased poverty in the Caribbean. The most recent estimates reveal that poverty affects almost 20% of the population in Belize, Dominica, Guyana,

Jamaica, St Lucia, Surinam and, finally, Trinidad and Tobago. The most marked divergences are, on the one hand, between the highest and lowest incomes and, on the other hand, between sectors of activity. Women are particularly affected by this increasing inequality, perceived in terms of unemployment variables, informalisation, multiple occupations and incomes. Moreover, reduced public expenditure on health and education have further exacerbated the position of women. Although unemployment and underemployment are still, in general terms, a major source of concern in development terms in the Caribbean, it is the access of young people (15-25 years) to the labour market which is the greatest problem. Take Jamaica, for example, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize and Trinidad and Tobago, where young people make up 50% of the unemployed. Furthermore, from the standpoint of gender and age, women aged between 15 and 19 appear to be the most vulnerable on the labour market. Insufficient or unsuitable qualifications is apparently one explanation for this, but surely it cannot be the only one. At any rate, neither the budget cuts in education nor an uncertain labour market afford much hope of rapid improvement.

Population growth, fewer opportunities in the primary sector which formerly employed a large workforce, macro-economic reforms, and greater flexibility in waged work linked to globalisation have, in under 10 years, led to notable progression of the informal sector throughout the Caribbean. Admittedly, it acts as labour-market regulator, but at high social cost, particularly where women and young people are concerned.

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Evaluating the extent of non-registration - do we accept the challenge?

by Jacques Charmes *

It may seem paradoxical to attempt to evaluate a sector the very nature of which is to remain unregistered or insufficiently registered just because it is unwilling to be evaluated. Nevertheless, progress has recently been made, particularly in the wake of the boost provided by the adoption of an international definition in 1993. Yet the paradox is in fact based solely on the fact that, in both current thinking and language, the informal sector is often confused with the parallel or underground economy. This latter notion (together with the domestic economy) is one element in a non-observed economy, and the informal sector is clearly distinguishable from the parallel or underground economy (illegal activities prohibited

by their very nature, which is criminal) and from the domestic economy (which has hitherto remained outside the borders of economic activity as defined by the System of National Accounts) in that it consists of ordinary legal economic activities carried on illegally because they are unregistered. This non-registration is due less to a deliberate desire to evade current legislation than to the inability of States and their governments to enforce regulations and which may be quite unsuited to everyday circumstances in developing countries.

The informal sector and the underground economy

An anecdote taken from discussions at the 14th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1987 makes it possible better to understand the distinction between informal sector (working population concept) and underground economy, evaluation of which can only be accounts-based and indirect. As the debate went on, contributions from delegates from industrialised countries turned to the subject of "moonlighting". This led to the delegate from Kenya, a country where the concept of informal sector was invented by the International Labour Office more than 50 years ago, pointing out that, in his country, the term "moonlighting" was inappropriate because the Swahili term to describe such activities (*Jua Kali*) meant "in the blazing sunshine". Quite clearly, these are activities which there is no deliberate attempt to conceal but those involved, owing to their rural and social origins and their lack of education, are not supposed to be "not unaware of the law". They therefore cannot be expected to go through all the steps involved in registration, but the government or statisticians can identify them without too much trouble. Unlike the underground economy, where only indirect

estimates can be made through cross-checking, it is possible for data to be gathered on the informal sector and for direct statistical evaluations to be made on the basis of surveys.

Informal activities create jobs and the informal sector is thus an internationally-defined working population concept. Although economists have debated the subject since the early 1970s, initial discussions aimed at defining the concept took place only in 1987, i.e. at the 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians which, in 1993, adopted a working definition which was to provide a boost to the collection and evaluation of this sector's share of the working population and of its contribution to the GDP.

International definition of the informal sector arising from the resolution of 28 January 1993 of the 15th ICLS

The resolution states that "the informal sector may be broadly characterised as consisting of units engaged in the production of goods or services with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned. These units typically operate at a low level of organisation, with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production and on a small scale. Labour relations - where they exist - are based mostly on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees".

For the operational purposes of collecting statistics, the informal sector is regarded as a group of individual enterprises owned by households (and forming part of the institutional sector of households in the System of National Accounts) and consisting of:

- informal enterprises of persons

Small weaving enterprise in Somalia



working for their own account and having no permanent employees; and • enterprises of informal employers employing employees on a continuous basis, these enterprises being below (in terms of number of jobs) thresholds set by legislation and statistical practices in the country (thresholds of five or 10 jobs being the most frequently used), or not registering these employees, or not being registered as companies. Moreover, agricultural activities and non-commercial production are excluded from the informal sector, but multiple occupations carried on by workers in the formal sector or in the agricultural sector in informal enterprises is taken into account.

Methods, estimates and surveys

Long before the new 1993 definition was adopted, a number of attempts at evaluation had been made, accompanying and fuelling theoretical debate by economists who viewed this sector only as a form of disguised unemployment and underemployment linked to the scale and speed of rural depopulation characterising the explosive increase in urban populations. The oldest and undoubtedly still the most common of such methods compares sources of information with one another in order to arrive at a balance figure (from the difference between the most comprehensive sources - population censuses or working population surveys - and sources of statistical or administrative registration of "modern" enterprises - enterprise surveys or censuses, directories). The method certainly makes it possible to employ the principal criteria of the definition, since these are actually used to define the level of registration (legal status, accounts, size). This "balance" method is still frequently used in countries which have no sophisticated statistical systems based on regular surveys, as is often the case in Africa. By favouring the non-registration criterion, it tends to underestimate the infor-

mal sector somewhat, sources of registration not covering all units employing more than 10 workers. At the other extreme, in countries which have relatively sophisticated statistical systems (Latin America, Asia), evaluation of the informal sector is now carried out regularly through the inclusion of specific questions for this sector in annual or quarterly surveys of the working population. The size criterion is thus favoured, dependent workers generally not in a position to specify the legal status of or the types of accounts kept by the company for which they work. Here, also, there may thus be a slight overestimation of the informal sector. Clearly, therefore, it is only specific surveys of the informal sector which can provide the most reliable evaluation of a sector on which they base their definition criteria and characteristics: such surveys are described as "mixed" because they consist in using a household survey (of working population of income and expenditure, or living conditions) as the basis for an establishment or enterprise survey

conducted in a second stage and involving all own-account workers (irrespective of whether these are independent or employers) identified amongst the members of the sample household. In this way, not only can the criteria for defining the informal sector be employed with precision, but all the ways in which activities in the informal sector are carried on are also covered (small establishments, home-based work, street traders, multiple occupation). These surveys have become increasingly common since 1993, but few of them have been able to achieve national coverage. Their results supplement the estimates which are already available from other sources or via other methods.

These direct or indirect methods nowadays make it possible to identify, with relative precision and for diverse periods, informal-sector employment in a significant number of countries in various regions of the developing world (Table 1) and its general contra-cyclical trend: informal-sector employment as a proportion of the non-agricultural working

Table 1: Working population, unemployment and informal employment (1980-90)

	Annual growth rate	Urban or national unemployment	Level of employment in the informal sector (3)		
	GNP/cap 1980-93	Working population 1980-95		1980s	1990s
North Africa	1.0	3.0	15.8(1)	38.8(1)	43.4(1)
Algeria	-0.8	3.8	20.5*	21.4	25.4
Morocco	1.2	2.6	12.0*	56.9	
Tunisia	1.2	2.8	16.8*	36.0	39.3
Egypt	2.8	2.5	14.0*	58.7	65.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	-1.4	2.5	16.0(1) (4)	66.5(1)	73.7(1)(4)
Benin	-0.4	2.7	10.1	86.0	92.8
Burkina Faso	0.8	2.0		70.0	77.0
Chad	3.2	2.3			74.2
Guinea	-	2.2	12.3	64.4	71.9
Kenya	0.3	3.3	16.2		61.4
Mali	-1.0	2.4	9.9	63.1	78.6
Mauritania	-0.8	2.2	31.6	69.4	75.3
Mozambique	-1.5	1.6			73.5
Niger	-4.1	3.0		62.9	
Senegal	-0.1	2.7		76.0	
South Africa	-0.2	2.6	29.3		18.9
Zaire	-	2.9		59.6	
Zambia	-	3.0			58.3
Latin America (2)	-0.4		8.1(1)	52.3(1)	56.9(1)
Argentina	-0.5	1.6	18.8	47.5	53.3
Bolivia	-0.7	2.6	3.6	56.9	63.6
Brazil	0.3	2.6	4.6	52.0	57.6
Colombia	1.5	3.5	9.0	55.2	55.5
Ecuador	1.5	3.4	6.9	51.2	53.5
Mexico	-0.5	3.2	6.3	55.5	59.4
Paraguay	-0.7	2.9	5.6	61.4	65.5
Venezuela	-0.7	3.3	10.3	38.8	46.9
Asia				53.0	62.6
India	3.0	1.9		76.2	88.2
Indonesia	6.8	2.8		39.2	
Pakistan	3.1	3.1	6.1	39.0	64.6
Philippines	-0.6	2.7			65.1
Thailand	6.3	2.2	0.4	57.4	51.4
Iran	-0.2	3.3			43.5

Sources: Charnes J. (1998): Informal sector, Poverty and Gender, A Review of Empirical Evidence. Background paper for the World Development Report 2001. World Bank.

Notes: (1) Non-weighted arithmetical means. (2) Estimates of informal employment for 1990 and 1995. (3) As proportion of non-agricultural employment. (4) Excluding South Africa.

Table 2: The informal sector as a proportion of total employment, non-agricultural employment and total and non-agricultural GDP in various developing countries

Countries (years)	% non-agricultural employment	% non-agricultural GDP	% total employment	% total GDP
Tunisia (1995)	48.7	22.9	37.8	20.3
Morocco (1986)		30.7		24.9
Benin (1993)	92.8	42.7	41.0	27.3
Burkina Faso (1992)	77.0	36.2	8.6	24.5
Chad (1993)	74.2	44.7	11.5	31.0
Ghana (1988)		58.3		31.4
Mali (1989)	78.6	41.7	13.3	23.0
Mauritania (1989)	75.3	14.4		10.2
Mozambique (1994)	73.5	44.8	7.6	38.9
Niger (1995)		58.5	27.2	37.6
Senegal (1991)	76.0	40.9		33.0
Tanzania (1991)		43.1	19.6	21.5
Sub-Saharan Africa*	78.2	42.5	18.4	27.8
South Africa (1995)	18.9	7.2	16.6	6.9
Korea (1995)		16.9		15.9
India (1990-91)	88.2	48.1	34.4	32.4
Philippines (1995)		65.1		28.2

* Non-weighted arithmetical means (excluding South Africa).

Sources: Author's personal notes based on national data. Published in 'Proceedings of the experts' meeting on Household Satellite Accounts. October 1997. Handbook of National Accounting, Household Accounting: Experiences in the Use of Concepts and their Compilation. Vol. 1: Household Sector Accounts. United Nations Statistics Division, New York, 1998. And in Charmes J. (1998): Informal sector. Poverty and Gender. A Review of Empirical Evidence. Background paper for the World Development Report 2001. World Bank.

population actually tends to increase during the phase when the economic cycle is slowing down or falling (general case) and to decrease during the ascending phase (the case of newly-industrialised countries: Thailand, for example). The informal sector has thus come to represent nearly three-quarters of the non-agricultural working population in sub-Saharan Africa as against more than two thirds some 10 years ago. In Latin America, it represents more than half of non-agricultural employment and, in Asia, nearly two-thirds. The same direct and indirect methods are used to evaluate production and income in the informal sector. However, a comparison of added value in the branch accounts of National Accounts with the added value in registered enterprises provides, unlike employment comparisons, only an estimate of the (often weak) hypotheses used by national accountants to measure the contribution of this sector to the GDP. These take their inspiration from economic theories on rural depopulation and underemployment and are seriously undermined by the results of direct surveys. These, by adapting questions to the actual circumstances of the situations being observed, reveal income levels

which are markedly higher than those spontaneously declared by interested parties. Even wages appear to be close to the legal minimum wage.

These adaptations relate essentially to a shortening of the period of reference for the collection of data (one day, one week or one month instead of one year), and the measurement of seasonal variations, which are of great significance in the informal sector. In particular, analysis of the technical coefficients of production used by operators in the informal sector to set their prices (How many loaves can be made from one sack of flour? How many pairs of shoes can be cut from one hide? How many days does it take for the stock of such and such a merchandise to be exhausted and does it have to be replenished?) and of which they are more aware, since they enable them to calculate their profits, leads to income and production estimates likely to be more accurate than those based on annual figures. These are so unsuitable that they often enable such operators to avoid payment of taxes calculated over a period of a year. It is not surprising, in the circumstances, that direct replies to questions about income are 50% underestimations.

Achievement of such results required the paradigm of the informal sector as synonymous with underemployment to be abandoned.

Evaluation of the contribution of the informal sector to the GDP lags slightly behind progress made in evaluating its share of the working population and the level of income it generates, because the System of National Accounts was revised only in 1993 to take account of these evolutions. It will be several years before a new base year for calculation of accounts is established. The results given in Table 2 are thus still a significant underestimate, but nevertheless provide a more concrete idea of the extent of the sector which, as people are coming to realise, is sizeable and cannot be ignored. It provides a livelihood for an increasingly large proportion of the population. In sub-Saharan Africa, where estimates are most common precisely because the contribution of the modern sector is so small, the informal sector thus represents more than one quarter of the GDP and more than two-fifths of the non-agricultural GDP. The fact that three-quarters of the non-agricultural working population generates only one quarter of the GDP is still a drastic underestimate, but this looks set to be corrected over the next few years. Sources, too, need correcting but much work is needed to do this. Recent efforts have concentrated on evaluating the work of women, whose activities too often go unrecognised or are difficult to evaluate - it is not always easy to distinguish them from domestic tasks. Surveys being carried out in a number of countries into the use of time will help to bring women's work out of the shadows, and progress in the evaluation of the informal sector is anticipated in the near future.

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Measuring activity at a regional level: the work of the UEMOA

by Pedro Godinho Gomez*

Through its regional economic integration objectives, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), which combines Benin, Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo, intends to create a coordinated framework and an economic space covering about 3.5 million km² containing a population of almost 70 million.

The first Conference of Heads of State and Government of UEMOA, which met at Ouagadougou on 10 May 1996 laid down overall guidelines for implementation of the objectives of the Treaty, which aimed to achieve the following:

- to reinforce the competitiveness of the economic and financial activities of the member states within a rationalised and coordinated legal framework;
- to bring about convergence of the economic performance and policies of the member states by establishing a multilateral inspection procedure;
- to create a common market of the member states based on the free circulation of goods, services and capital and the right of establishment of persons exercising an activity in a self-employed or employed capacity and of a common external tariff and a common commercial policy;
- to initiate coordination of national sectoral policies by implementing common measures and possibly also common policies;
- to harmonise the legislation of member states and tax systems in particular.

Although the Treaty does not explicitly refer to the informal sector, its importance for the economies of the member states and employment within them has compelled the Union to take account of it. Its significance had already been taken into account by the member states, most of which had introduced policies to promote this sector and worked out tax systems intended to bring micro-enterprises into the tax system. That is why the Commission, with the agreement of the member states, is showing real interest in the informal sector. This interest is being reflected in particular by the measures taken to improve the statistics relating to this sector and to reinforce the skills of those working on them. This article provides a brief description of a number of elements used to diagnose the situation of the informal sector in the countries of the Union and the way

in which the UEMOA incorporates the diagnosis as it works out its policies and its action programmes.

Improving the statistics relating to the informal sector in the UEMOA

Most of the systems of national statistics (SSNs) of the member states of the UEMOA are poorly coordinated and the figures they produce are weak as a result of a lack of human and material resources and their high level of dependence on outside financing. Under these conditions, the statistics produced can only be defective with regard to quality, coverage, analysis, regularity and speed of publication. These inadequacies are supplemented, at a regional level, by the non-comparability of these statistics as a result of a failure to harmonise the concepts, definitions and standards that are used. Statistical information about the informal sector is also very patchy, despite its economic importance. In most countries, the data covers a narrow area, both in terms of geography (it is frequently confined to urban centres) and in terms of activities. Very few of the countries have performed national surveys. Even where such surveys have been conducted, they have had long operating

Informal sector statistics are often missing



timescales and their results have lacked relevance. In some countries, statistics relating to the informal sector are also notable for their irregularity. Only four countries of the UEMOA have isolated the output of the informal sector at the level of the various economic sectors (Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger). Very different ways of preparing this data are applied in each of these four countries, however.

There is a desire to keep track of the national economies of the member states, because the Commission of the UEMOA is striving to bring about the convergence of economic performance and policies by means of multilateral monitoring intended to ensure collective discipline, which can only be objectively evaluated on the basis of reliable macroeconomic indices. The gross domestic product is a key variable in the preparation of convergence criteria. The informal sector, which contributes at least 45% of the GDP, must be given pride of place in national statistical information systems. A knowledge of it will increase the accuracy with which the GDP is estimated (evaluation of its value added is not based on reliable, recent statistical data) and establish a mechanism for keeping track of employment in an urban environment. A knowledge of the informal sector will also make it possible to establish effective policies for promoting employment and combating poverty.

In order to respond to the urgent requirement for reliable, coordinated data for multilateral monitoring purposes, the Commission, with the support of the European Union, has installed a regional statistical support programme (PAR-STAT) whose main objective is to improve the statistics. This programme is intended to reinforce the statistical systems of member states; to establish a survey of the regional economy and a database

on competitiveness; and also to harmonise the main statistics necessary for multilateral monitoring (national accounts, statistics on the informal sector and statistics on industrial output).

Action in two stages has been planned. The first stage, which was carried out during 1998, was devoted to the preparation of a manual of coordinated concepts relating to employment and the informal sector, which was approved in October 1998. The operational definition of the informal sector used in it essentially

The emergence of effective companies are able to satisfy internal demand, cope with international competition and promote social progress in a competitive environment will not occur unless vigorous action is taken with regard to all productive sectors

conforms to the definition used by international bodies. All surveys undertaken in the countries of UEMOA will be harmonised. The second stage in this process is to be devoted to the performance of surveys relating to GDP and employment.

By conducting these surveys, the Commission wishes to achieve the following objectives:

- To obtain reliable, comparable information about activities and employment in the urban informal sector on the basis of specific surveys conducted in the main conurbation of each member state of the UEMOA;

- To improve the reliability and comparability of the GDPs of the countries of the UEMOA on the basis of information derived from these surveys;

- To analyse the role of the urban informal sector in national economies at a regional level;

- To install an arrangement for keeping track of employment in an urban environment in order to gain a better view of the social impact of economic policies.

These surveys are to commence in 2000 and the initial results are expected in 2001.

Sectoral policies and informal sector support

In its Additional Protocol No. 2, the UEMOA Treaty defines the sectoral policies that must be implemented by member states in order to back up and reinforce common economic policies. The implementation of common sectoral policies is intended to contribute to the balanced and harmonious development of the community and to enable the countries of the Union to derive as much benefit as possible from the opportunities presented by improvement of the macroeconomic and regulatory framework. The general aim of the sectoral policies specified in the Treaty is to support output and to promote social progress.

The emergence of effective companies that are able to satisfy internal demand, cope with international competition and promote social progress in a competitive environment will not occur unless vigorous action is taken with regard to all productive sectors.

In the countries of the UEMOA, as in all sub-Saharan countries, the informal sector apparently accounts for between a quarter and a half of GDP in terms of output according to national definitions. It apparently accounted for between 45% and 75% of the GDP of the UEMOA countries in 1998, which was estimated at 16

200 billion CFA francs. In terms of employment, it apparently accounts for over three quarters of persons active in an urban environment. In the Ivory Coast, the Observatory of Employment, Trade and Training estimated that there were 1 698 000 people working in the informal sector in 1995 (i.e. 78% of persons working outside the agricultural sector).

The informal sector is therefore directly linked to the main development objectives by virtue of its potential for production and the creation of jobs. That is why, during implementation of the objectives of the Treaty, certain sectoral activities defined by the Commission explicitly concern this sector, with the agreement of member states. This applies in particular to action taken to utilise human resources.

Working to support training for those active in the informal sector

Despite the fragmentary nature of the information available, it is accepted that the informal sector attracts workers who have few qualifications and that the weakness in terms of human capital of those active in this sector goes a long way towards explaining the low productivity of informal groupings. In Mali, a recent survey of informal employment showed that about 900 000 persons, i.e. 76% of those active in the informal sector, had not had any education at all. And this situation accurately reflects the qualifications of those active in the informal sector in all the countries of the Union. Reforms of training systems undertaken in the UEMOA countries over the past few years have made adapting the public training courses on offer to the requirements of the informal sector a major objective. A number of non-governmental arrangements for supporting the informal sector also contribute to training (management training in particular). The effect of these initiatives on the level of

qualifications of those active in the informal sector has remained marginal, however. This is due to a number of factors: the scale of the requirement, the inability of training organisations to identify needs and to develop training contents in line with the specific nature of the sector and the poor coordination of training measures.

The training systems of the countries of the Union are marked by a lack of financial, human and material resources and by a rigid organisation that deprives them of the flexibility they need to meet particular training requirements, such as those arising in connection with people active in the informal sector. The Commission's analysis of this matter has shown that it is necessary to reinforce current programmes in this area. The Commission needs to offer

the member states a programme for supporting training arrangements in order to reinforce their ability to respond to the requirements of the informal sector. This programme, whose contents must be approved by the member states during the first quarter of 2000, will essentially be concerned with eliminating the constraints that are holding back the adaptation of national training systems to the needs of the informal sector.

If it is adopted by the member states, the community programme will place particular emphasis on the establishment of national frameworks for coordinating training initiatives for the informal sector and on reinforcing the ability of training arrangements to respond to the needs of the informal sector.

* Commissaire à l'UEMOA



Social exclusion, the informal sector and the social economy

by Patrick Develtere¹ and Patrick Van Durme²



The existence of the informal sector is a consequence of the exclusion of many social groups

The informal sector has generally not been associated with social exclusion. Researchers, policy makers and development actors rather look at the informal sector from a positive and sometimes romantic angle. We defend the thesis that the informal sector is the result of a widespread exclusion of large sections of society and in addition, by itself, creates and maintains new forms of inequalities, social injustices and abuses. It suffices to look at the power relations within the informal sector, to the exploitative working environment that often prevails and to the income-inequalities generated by informal activities.

The informal sector is not by definition a social inferno, however. Mechanisms are created by many people within the informal sector to correct these situations and to make bridges to the formal sector where certain rights, duties and regulations are institutionalised. We use the term "social economy" to refer to these innovative organizations that are developed within (and outside) the informal sector. Indeed associations, guilds, cooperative-type organisations and mutual insurance systems sprawl everywhere.

In our view, they are institutions which allow for inclusion and integration, participation and sharing of the benefits of production, as well as social justice, security and human dignity.

Social exclusion and the informal sector

The concept of social exclusion has not been used explicitly in the literature on the informal sector. One of the main reasons is that exclusion is very much related to basic rights and that often the poor of the informal sector have not been provided with those basic rights.

Yet, studies on the informal sector implicitly refer to processes of economic and social exclusion. In the original, dualistic conceptualisation, the workers of the informal sector were thought to be excluded or marginalised from economic growth and they were supposed to make their own living. The dualistic notion refers to the existence of good versus bad jobs. Good jobs provide acceptable working conditions, job security and decent income protected by law. Bad jobs, on the contrary, are insecure, low paid and often not subject to state regulation.

However, the distinction between formal and informal sector jobs according to conditions of work and legal protection does not reveal the social processes that determine labour market opportunities and labour market divisions.

In the analysis of De Soto, it is argued that the State limited the development of the small entrepreneurs in the informal sector. The emergence of the informal sector was partly seen as a response to formal regulation and bureaucracy inhibiting the access to resources and capital. Some studies refer to the segregation policies which remain in South American countries because employment policy is not aimed at changing the structure of the employment system, that is the mobility mechanisms between the formal and informal.

Studies on labour market segmentation look more explicitly to social exclusion in terms of job quality, decent working conditions and employment security. They analyse the social processes that determine labour market opportunities and labour market divisions. As such it coincides much more with the analysis of social exclusion.

One of the important contributions of recent studies on the subject has been to show that some groups are trapped in segments where jobs are low paid and insecure.

Harriss, Kannan and Rodgers have developed a categorisation of jobs according to labour status defined in terms of three dimensions: regularity, protection and autonomy. They found that the labour market in India was structured along the lines of this labour status and that many groups were effectively excluded from the better jobs due to lack of contacts, caste or community networks.

The notion of social exclusion is more prominent in Europe. It is related to the emergence of new forms of poverty and marginalization in the late 70s which were seen as structural in nature. It became more obvious that the emerging problems were related not only to a lack of material wealth, but also to various phenomena characterized by growing inequalities and informalisation of young workers, the growth of the unemployment rate, the weakening of family ties, the lowering of participation in society, etc.

More than anything else social exclusion alarms policymakers because of its dramatic effect on the stability of the social and political fabric. This is the case for both industrialized and developing countries. Witness to this is the definition used by the European Commission: **"More clear than the concept of poverty, understood far too often as referring exclusively to income, it also states the multidimensional nature of mechanisms whereby individuals and groups are excluded from taking part in the social exchange, from the com-**

ponent practices and rights of social integration and of identity. More generally, by highlighting the risks of cracks appearing in the social fabric, it suggests something more than social inequality and carries with it the risk of a fragmented society".

The Social Economy: a popular response

If we argue that there are processes of exclusion at work then the problem is to reverse them so as to promote integration.

While policymakers and development practitioners are puzzled over this problem, many people who are confronted with the exploitative and exclusionist effects of the informal sector have developed individual and collective mechanisms to cope with the situation. Particularly the collective efforts deployed are of interest. We call them "the social economy" or to use a more western parlance "the third sector".

The term "social economy" is increasingly being used by a wide variety of organizations, cooperatives and mutual help associations in Latin America and more recently in some African countries. By combining the social and the economic aspects, the concept explicitly stresses the ambition of those initiatives to resolve needs by economic activity, albeit in a socially acceptable way.

The term "third sector", on the other hand, indicates that these initiatives can be situated between or alongside the state and the profit-seeking private sector. Indeed these organisations are private initiatives with sufficient autonomy. But even if they have to be run efficiently and sometimes make a profit or surplus they have only the ambition to do so to better

serve the members or the community at large.

Social economy and social transformation

Social economy-initiatives engender social change in different ways.

First of all they almost always run into more or less overt conflicts and tensions with people and institutions that are at the root of social injustices. Credit unions combat usurers, mutual health societies question the inappropriate and often corrupt drug distribution systems and housing cooperatives quarrel with the authorities about their land distribution policies.

The third sector organisations and enterprises also release and mobilise hitherto under- or unutilised popular energy: traditional know-how, local working methods, idle capital. These assets are sometimes invested in risky, but worthy new local economic initiatives, just because the people concerned believe in it. This is the reason why the 1 million-member strong Caribbean credit unions are sometimes called the new venture capitalists.

Many organizations and enterprises of the third sector often enter into networks with similar organisations or enterprises and as such create real social movements with a strong determination to defend the interest of the members and their social programme for the local society. It is therefore no surprise that trade unions of workers and peasants are often the origin of many social economy initiatives to address the new needs of their members or to remain in touch with members who lost their jobs in the formal sector.

Three examples

Many examples could be presented to show the worldwide emergence of new and renewed forms of social economy. A recent textbook indeed amply



Taximotos-motorbike taxis: in Togo these allow many young people to make a slim living

shows that third sector organisations have regained importance in both Southern and Northern countries against the background of profound structural and institutional changes in society and the economy (Defourny, Develtere and Fonteneau, 1999). We just give three examples.

In Togo the taxi-motos came on the local scene during the general strike paralysing the country for nine months (1992-1993). Hundreds of mainly young - educated but unemployed - people found a meagre revenue in this activity. Some of them (who were formerly

involved in the local trade union - CSTT) created a union for the taxi-moto drivers. Their first joint initiative was to demand the recognition of this new profession. This was followed by the introduction of a uniform, of protective helmets and of driving licences.

Apart from defending the rights of its members the union also provides them with a number of services such as insurance, driving lessons, health insurance schemes, AIDS-prevention campaigns.

In Bangladesh a number of well-developed non-governmental organizations joined hands to develop a system for the coverage of the health expenses of their members, most of which have no access to health care because of their limited financial means. G.K., Grameenbank and Brac have launched health insurance schemes managed by local communities with the aim of strengthening existing health care delivery systems and enabling equitable access to health care. For these 'micro-insurance' schemes they rely and build further on the community development practices they worked out through micro-credit and saving systems.

Villa El Salvador on the outskirts of Lima has found a rather unique formula to tackle the many problems of its 300,000 inhabitants. A coalition of a local women's movement, a producers, association, popular restaurant and others has given birth to numerous initiatives

such as milk distribution committees and consumer cooperatives. 10,000 people are employed in the industrial parc set up by the community.

Social exclusion has been aggravated in many countries due to liberalisation of the world economy causing a fall in overall real wages and incomes and the deterioration of the working conditions in the formal sector.

Especially in those countries with lower levels of organisation, the decline in the coverage of labour protective schemes has generated new forms of marginalized labour. Much informal sector work generates other processes of exclusion such as those related to basic rights, social security and identity. It follows that a phase of institutional transformation is required that attacks the deep-rooted patterns of exclusion. The social economy - as a variety and multiplicity of self-initiated and collectively supported undertakings - is one popular response to this. The social economy is certainly not a panacea for the many problems related to social exclusion but it is a strong appeal to the policy-makers to take into account those social processes that emerge from communities and social organisations in finding ways towards social integration.

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Received and debatable ideas on the informal sector

by Bruno Lautier

The notion of the informal sector has been a recurrent theme of literature on development for the last 30 years or so. Nevertheless, its theoretical relevance, which defies precise definition and covers widely varied phenomena, is slight. "Strong ideological notion and weak analytical concept" [de Miras Cl., 1991], the term "informal sector" persists all the same, being used even by its harshest critics through laziness (yet demanding a couple of minutes to deny its relevance) or simply to make themselves understood. There is an implicit agreement on what it means, despite any theoretical difficulties it may arouse: "the informal sector is like a giraffe, difficult to describe but easy to recognise" (Hans Singer, cited by [Cacciampali M.C., 1983 p.37]). The "informal sector", a concept dreamt up by a group of experts for reasons of theoretical consistency of post-dualist models of the development economy, has undergone a change in status. Circulated among researchers, journalists and politicians, it has ultimately come to represent the accepted reality itself.

The expression "informal sector" conveys a range of preconceived ideas which have existed since the pioneering ILO study on Kenya conducted in 1972. These ideas relate to the characteristics of informal activities, undeniably present in a number of focused studies, but haphazardly applied to the entire sector. A number of these cases are anecdotal and in many cases quite clearly incorrect (not using electricity, only using salvaged materials, etc.). Six others are more significant: low income; low training of workers; low product prices; small production units; ease of entry and non-observance of the law. I shall comment briefly on these issues before going on to dispute the most significant: the very existence of an informal sector.

Low income

It is an undeniable fact that incomes are low for the majority of people employed in the informal economy; non-existent (apprentices, family workers), below the minimum wage (employees of micro companies), or low and subject to wide fluctuations (street workers, microcommerce, etc.). However, many studies on micro businessmen and particular traders (international, such as the Mercedes Ladies of Togo, but also itinerant traders) have shown that these categories collect on average higher income than formal workers (not including managerial staff). It is precisely this characteristic that explains why people choose to leave the formal sector to find informal work.

Low training

Average figures in terms of the number of years spent in education by informal workers compared with their peers in the formal sector would suggest a low level of training. If, however, account is taken of the period of informal apprenticeship, the difference is not so great, and in certain north and west African countries even reversed. Moreover, since the late 1980s the effect of the fall in public employment and the rise in the number of graduates has led a growing proportion of these graduates going straight into informal employment (in some instances, as in Senegal, with financial incentives from the State) or in times of economic crisis to be brutally expelled from the sector (Mexico in 1995).

Low prices

The low level of prices in the informal economy is highly debatable, working on the basis of equal quality of products and services. While prices may be lower in the area of house building, this is a result of poorer quality; in the case of non-food commerce, selling products from the formal sector (imported or produced domestically) in proportions ranging from 70% to 95%, prices are generally higher than those in formal commerce (especially in Latin America, where the maintenance of informal commerce is explained far more by the opening hours, the level of detail and the availability of credit for customers than by prices). In the case of domestic services, no comparison is practical (formalised positions are extremely uncommon). The price advantage of the informal economy essentially applies to a section of transport, certain personal services (restaurants, clothes care, vehicle or electrical appliance repair) and trade in food, which is directly related to agriculture. The price competitiveness of hand-crafted products is low on the whole (the advantage gained by non-payment of taxes and contributions not compensating for differences in productivity) and is being eroded with the globalisation of trade.

Small production units

The fact that informal production units are small owes more to how they are classified: most statistics define the informal sector on the basis of the small size of the units (generally fewer than eleven workers), non-observance of the law being a secondary feature designed to distinguish the informal sector from legalised small-scale activities (medical practices, law firms, etc.). But if the informal sector is to be defined on the basis of non-observance of the



Some preconceived ideas are applied incorrectly to the informal sector

law, two facts are immediately striking: first, there are plenty of large-scale activities operating wholly outside the bounds of the law (generally criminal outfits such as drug-trafficking or smuggling rings). Secondly, many large or medium-sized organisations are informal in part, in that they only declare some of their employees, or their wages.

Ease of entry

Observing the great diversity of the informal sector, Victor Tokman, former ILO research director, noted that ultimately the one thing common to all the various activities was ease of entry. In contrast, with the exception of certain street traders, nearly all focused studies show the existence of high entry barriers: eg financial, such as the cost of equipment,

premises and above all stock. For a business this may mean several months' income, or for a craftsman income for a year or more. These entry barriers are not however purely financial, and may therefore be less visible: membership of a caste or of ethnic, family or criminal networks. While the growth of microcredit goes some small way to overcoming these first barriers, crises tend to reinforce the second group. This is precisely the cause of the increase in open unemployment, in particular in the cities.

Non-observance of the law

Informal production units are never wholly outside the bounds of the law, except in the case of certain street workers (car look-outs, shoe-shine boys) or criminal organisations. It is rarely the case that there is no payment of tax at all. Payment of standard tax by small businesses and workshops is becoming the norm quite simply because many of the starting materials have to be acquired through formal commerce (taxes not being deductible) and around the world, partly because company sponsors are insisting that municipal services be financed by the authorities. It is common for there to be partial observance of labour law (payment of the minimum wage or paid holidays), more as the result of a code of good conduct than from fear of pressure from the authorities. Moreover, many microbusinesses paying no tax or social contributions nevertheless feature in land registers, council registers or chamber of commerce registers and so on. The main argument behind Hernando de Soto's liberal vision of the informal sector according to which microbusinessmen turn to informal business on account of the excessive tax burden and bureaucracy, cannot therefore be supported. A host of surveys have revealed that these reasons are only put forward by informal businessmen in 17% to 25% of cases. Failure to observe the law is most commonly down to ignorance of the law or the belief that it does not apply to them.

The ultimate received idea: the existence of an informal sector

The very word "informal" is not apt: the so-called informal economy has form, rules and follows normal practices. It is organised along the lines of strong hierarchical relationships (family, ethnic, religious); codes of good conduct (between employers and employees, customers and suppliers and also between competitors) are very widespread, and penalties are often very harsh. Nor is it true that the forms laid down by the State are lacking, especially since codes exist for any transgression (such as small-scale corruption). Finally, it is not truly a sector in the proper sense of the word (the Latin verb *secare* means "to cut", suggesting complete division) since there is a constant intermingling of activities classed as formal and informal, whether in business relations or subcontracting, determining the level of informal activity from the spending of income gained from formal activities, or the continual movement of workers between activities. This is true for both itinerant traders and large-scale drug trafficking (which feeds cash into formal banks through money laundering). Conversely, many activities classed as formal (including public administration) hide pockets of informality (corruption, nepotism, false declarations by workers etc.). The prevailing force is hybridisation, not sectorisation. These received ideas are the basis of the common perception of the informal sector and are in nearly all cases mistaken, although they are accepted as being true. This creation of a shared notion owes much to the action of international institutions which are responsible for much of the debate on the subject and provide finance for research and study. The question is no longer purely academic since promotion of the informal sector has become, for want of better options, the main axis in development policy.

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Out of the mainstream

by Serge Latouche*

Informal trading arrangements have a long tradition in the Third World, and in Black Africa in particular, as a way of coping with the failure of development. This phenomenon takes many forms, from drug dealing to household survival strategies. The shanty towns on the fringes of major African conurbations (as in the case of Grand Yoff, the suburb of Dakar under discussion here) have populations of between 100,000 and 500,000, existing mainly on what they produce themselves without the mediation of money, on the basis of close-knit neo-clan social networks.

The role of money

Money (*Xaalis*, in Wolof) occupies everyone's thoughts, but our world and the world of informal trading give it different meanings and use it in different ways. In mainstream society, money, as the general medium of exchange, is an abstraction. It is currency. Limited use is made of notes and coin. Most money is bank money, which circulates via cheques and credit cards. Book entries determine most of the claims of mainstream city-dwellers, with the backing of solid institutions called banks.

In the shanty towns of Africa, on the other hand, money is a concrete and tangible instrument for acquiring status by means of investment. It may, of course, take the archaic forms of gold or silver jewellery, cattle or cloth, which determine status. Throughout their lives, the Alhaji of Niger (who have completed the pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia) force a smile in order to reveal the gold teeth, fitted in Mecca. Money of this type reinforces social networks. Those who use it speak of hot and cold money. Money appropriated by these networks is contrasted with "white man's money", which is alien and abstract. The former, which generally takes the form of small coins and notes of very small denominations (though sometimes in very large bundles) covered in dirt and sweat, tied into pieces of cloth and stuffed into clothing, is taken out carefully, with respect, and is counted and recounted in the hope of obtaining a discount. The latter type of money is used by non-governmental organisations and technical assistance organisations. It is counted in millions and is frittered away in an abstract sphere.

The large number of *tontine* arrangements help money to perform these special functions. These "poor man's savings banks" ensure social control over the use of savings and also fulfil a great many other functions, as well as providing occasions for celebrations. Money and even commercial links therefore drive a non-commercial society. Of course, non-commercial society of this type does not follow the logic of commerce to any great extent, even though numerous exchanges are performed and money



circulates with great velocity. The need for solidarity therefore dominates social and economic life.

In the informal sector, money is tangible

Relational strategies

Those excluded from mainstream economic life in the South produce and reproduce outside the official sphere, using relational strategies. These include a wide range of economic activities in which vocational specialisation does not occur at all, or only to a limited extent. Making do, fixing things and individual resourcefulness are essential features of networks. The nodes of the networks, that is to say the people of whom they are composed, gather into clusters. These strategies, based on the subtle interplay of social and economic categories, are comparable to the strategies of individual households, i.e. usually of individual housewives, but translated to a society where an extended family has hundreds of members.

Observers of these network clusters are struck by the amount of time, energy and resources devoted to social relations. Although there is intense activity, it would be wrong to describe it as work in the craft industry sense of the term. Lending, borrowing, giving, receiving, giving mutual assistance, placing orders, making deliveries and obtaining information require meetings, visits, hospitality

and discussions, all of which takes up a significant part of the day, not counting the time devoted to festivities, dancing, dreaming and playing.

Everything received, in the form of money or commodities, is immediately placed within the network, either to pay off debts, or with an eye to a future need to borrow or, as is generally the case, simply in order to give pleasure to people close to the donor, by allowing them to benefit from what has been received. Everyone knows that a good deed is never wasted. The general feeling is one of having great obligations to the other people in the cluster, rather than of being a creditor who is always being cheated. If a gift works well, everyone concerned considers that they have received more than they have given. This feeling is clearly essential if the logic of giving is to work properly. Everyone is a creditor and debtor at the same time. Despite monetarisation and the commercial environment, economic life is completely subsumed into social life. Here, as everywhere, social relationships are based on exchange, but exchanges, whether or not they involve money, are based on the threefold obligation to give, receive and give back in anthropological rather than market terms. The essential point of this logic of the gift is that commodities are replaced by relationships.

The neo-clan economy and the world economy

It is obvious that, despite all the ingenuity of its members, an unofficial society of this type does not exist in isolation and will be unable to produce everything it needs, or meet all its food needs in particular. Not all the food consumed on the fringes of cities is grown locally. In 1990 a third of the market garden produce on offer in Kinshasa was produced there, a considerable proportion for a conurbation of its size. Although proportions will be smaller for other foodstuffs, grains in particular, it seems likely that the local input will be of this order in many cities of the South. Philippe Engelhard claims that 10% of the fish consumed in

Calcutta is supplied by small producers from local lagoons. In 1980, small producers supplied 100% of the pigs, 80% of the chickens, 30% of the fish and 40% of the vegetables consumed in Singapore. Fatou Sarr proceeded along very similar lines for a sociological dissertation based on a study of the economy of the Medina Gounass quarter of Pikine. Its results all point the same way. 49.99% of requirements are met by local farmers and craftsmen, 22.76% by the local capitalist sector and only 27.23% by imports.

A much larger share of manufactured goods is accounted for by local suppliers, maybe in excess of 100% in terms of value, reflecting the preponderance of exports over imports. Not all goods of this type can be produced locally, however: cheap clothing, radio-electronic products and many materials must be imported, as must petrol, western medicines and international educational facilities (the need for which is not evident, however). A not inconsiderable proportion of imports of this type still follow the logic of the gift and of networks. This also applies to items passed to and from family members in the country and to a not inconsiderable proportion of manufactured goods received from family members abroad. The conclusion is that an irreducible proportion of imports cannot escape the logic of the marketplace and must be paid for in cash, this proportion frequently being particularly large in the case of pharmaceutical products. If exports of goods from the informal sector do not match the imports that are necessary, which seems more than likely, they must be offset by a surplus on the capital balance. In dealings with the official sector, the logic of commerce once more comes into its own, and symbolic goods lose their value. This takes us to the nub of the problems associated with money. Unlike local systems of exchange that have developed among people excluded from normal economic life in our societies, neo-clan networks tend to divert money already in existence rather than create local currencies,

as the transcendent nature of the former guarantees its fetishistic power. They do not need a notional unit of account (acorns, salt, coloured beads, etc) to create a pyramid of credit, pass on claims and appropriate foreign currency to a certain extent. Before it can be diverted to all its numerous uses, money of this type has first to be acquired.

It is recognised that many people live in both the official and unofficial sectors. Normal wage-earners in particular tend to obtain some of what they need from the informal sector. It is also recognised that money does not lie idle in the hands of those who acquire it in the African suburbs. It is just as hot as money held by international speculators. Money received in this way is immediately entered in the network, i.e. put back into circulation. *Tontine* arrangements, mutual savings banks, gifts and loans all act as sponges that immediately absorb liquid resources. This high velocity of circulation of money stimulates the production of goods and services.

To give an idea of the impact of this making, do structure in strictly economic terms, we consider that it increases the standard of living of those left behind by development three to five times over. The starting figure is incredibly low, however, and although sharing their destitution and precarious situation has enabled the people of Grand Yoff to keep their dignity, to enjoy a rich social life and to have an undeniable *joie de vivre*, they are not prosperous by any means. Those left by the wayside of mainstream society have miraculously managed to survive by reinventing a social nexus and making it work. The informal sector is a true society, rather than just an economy of the people, and it is reasonable to assert that it is the social environment that allows people to cope with the economic crisis.

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Evaluating a complex phenomenon

by Prosper Backiny-Yetna *

The need for a definition

The term "informal sector" first appeared in an ILO report on Kenya in the early 1970s to describe a group of fringe economic activities carried on outside modern, organised economic circuits. At the time, the sector was experiencing significant growth. Its importance in economic terms led economists and statisticians to deliberate on the problem of its evaluation but a precise concept of the object to be assessed is a prerequisite for a correct evaluation. After a number of attempts, the XV International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) put forward a definition.

According to that conference, the informal sector is a collection of units producing goods and services for trade with the primary objective of creating jobs and generating income for the people concerned. These production units are part of the institutional sector of households as individual enterprises as far as the national system of accounts is concerned. They are small-scale operations, with a low level of organisation and little division between the factors of production (capital, labour). The employment relationships that they maintain are principally founded on casual employment, links through kinship or personal or social relationships, rather than on contractual agreements containing formal guarantees. They do not constitute a legal person distinct from the household or members of the household to which they belong, and the fact that they do not keep a full set of accounts makes it difficult to distinguish their individual production activities from the other activities of their proprietors. Given the difficulty involved in applying the above as a working description, the International Labour Office suggests that it might be possible to define the informal sector using one of the following two criteria: size of the enterprise below a given level or, alternatively, non-registration. In the French-speaking countries of Africa, the following working definition summarises the principal criteria set forth above:

"An informal activity is any activity which is not registered (in statistical terms or in the trade register) and/or which does not produce any formal, written accounts, being carried on either as principal or secondary employment by a person acting either as employer or for his own account. This person, actively employed, is then regarded as the head of an informal production unit".

How to evaluate the informal sector

Before discussing how to evaluate the informal sector, it is necessary first to clarify two misconceptions. Firstly, agricultural activities form an integral part of the informal

sector in that they comply with the above definitions; however, given the specific nature of agricultural statistics, other methods of evaluation are applied to them. Secondly, "informal sector" and "statistical non-registration" should not be confused: even in the case of enterprises in the modern sector, it may not be possible directly to evaluate certain phenomena. For example, an arms dealer will be unwilling to reveal details of his activities because they are illegal, so the information is inaccessible; in the case of a manpower survey, an employer will not wish to declare non-registered employees to the social-security authorities, leading, in statistical terms, to insufficient coverage; a third situation is that in which the evaluation instrument proposed by the statistician is unsuitable for evaluating the phenomenon. The problems involved in evaluating the informal sector arise, generally speaking, from the latter two situations, particularly the last one. Statisticians wishing to investigate this sector quickly realise that informal production units do not always have an address like enterprises in the modern sector, and one has to adapt to this situation. Statisticians nevertheless seek a Holy Grail, namely comprehensive coverage of all activities in the sector, including itinerant and home-based activities.

Two different methods are often used to evaluate the informal sector: the first consists of combining a census of places of business with a survey of the informal sector, the principle being firstly to conduct a census of places of business and subsequently to use this as the basis of a survey to draw up a sample of informal production units. The census may relate to all places of business (both formal and informal) or only to informal places of business or, alternatively, consist of a simple counting operation. This type of survey has been conducted in several coun-



Production units in the informal sector don't always have a fixed address

tries, particularly Benin, Cameroon, Mauritania and Tunisia. In Tunisia, all places of business were included in a census; later, individual branches of informal production units were studied and poll-based surveys were conducted of these places of business. The main weaknesses in this approach are incomplete coverage and the risk of a double count. Indeed, within the context of a census of places of business, home-based activities and itinerant activities are not always easily distinguished. This approach therefore elicits details only of the visible part of the informal sector, possibly resulting in an overestimation of *per capita* income in this sector in so far as non-localised activities are generally the least secure and pay least. Another consequence is the problem of monitoring over time. Owing to incomplete coverage, the aggregates and indicators generated by this method are not strictly comparable and the degree of underestimation is unclear.

Such weaknesses have caused thoughts to turn to a second approach: combined household and place-of-business surveys. The idea is that, on the basis of a household survey, it is possible to arrive at a complete count of all persons in active employment in this sample of households and from there to work back to the production units which employ them (if they receive a wage) or which they operate (if they are independent workers). The principle is then, in a first stage, to conduct a survey of households, preferably an employment survey, which makes it possible to identify those who are actively employed and working in the informal sector. It is intended, in a second stage, to survey the informal places of business identified in stage one. Stage two could involve surveying either all the places of business identified in stage one or only a portion, depending on the degree of precision required in estimating principal aggregates (production, added value etc). Polling techniques make it possible to draw conclusions relat-

ing to all production units.

The principal advantage of the method is its comprehensive coverage; consequently, it is satisfactory in that it provides precise knowledge about the informal sector and allows reliable monitoring over time. This second method was used in a number of countries: Cameroon (1993), Madagascar (1995, 1998), Mali (1989), Niger (1995) and Tanzania (1991, 1995). Such combined surveys have been developed using a variety of strategies. In the case of Cameroon and Madagascar, the objective was to approach the informal sector from a macro-economic angle at both the level of supply and that of demand applied to it. Surveys were conducted in three stages using a methodology (1-2-3 type) developed by DIAL. The first stage of the survey (employment) was sufficiently developed to allow inclusion of all persons in active employment, even those in the most lowly jobs. In the case of Niger, the objective was more to estimate aggregates for the national accounting system, and the household survey was reduced to its simplest terms. At any rate, two-stage survey methodology, whilst effective in evaluating the informal sector, is obviously not free from the problems inherent in conventional surveys in developing countries, namely approximate poll bases, approximation of concepts used, particularly concepts of employment, etc. Such defects can undermine even the best methodology. Furthermore, effective implementation of this method requires the ability to manage the classical problem of surveys comprising several stages, particularly if the sample grows to become sizeable.

The informal sector in statistical information systems

The national system of accounts has not always had reliable survey data available for incorporation into its accounts and has, on occasion, had recourse to the means at its disposal: use of employment matrices

generated by population censuses combined with branch-based superficial monographic studies, use of surveys on household consumption etc. It is therefore necessary to set up a system for surveys if the informal sector is to be fully incorporated into the national accounting system. In conceptual terms, the situation is clearer now than in the past: firstly, the new national accounting system (1993) has fully incorporated the concepts of the informal sector into its accounting framework; secondly, statistics are now capable of conducting reliable surveys of this sector, notably using mixed-survey methodology; and, thirdly, the precautions to be taken at this level have been identified - having standard nomenclature which can be used by the nation's accountants, using harmonised concepts and reconstituting the accounts of these production units to allow the transition from enterprise accounts to the national accounting system.

The real problem now facing statistics involves the resources granted for conducting survey operations - no small problem in so far as, beyond the national accounting system, the informal sector should also be studied in micro-economic terms on the basis of its demand for labour, its contribution to individual income and to poverty alleviation, its own dynamics, its relationship with the rest of the economy, etc. This need for information could be satisfied via 1-2-3 surveys which now appear to be the best framework, not only for a study of the informal sector, but also for a system of socio-economic information on households allowing issues relating to employment, poverty and living conditions of households to be addressed and also issues concerning all the other requests for information mentioned in this article.

*AFRISTAT (Economic and Statistical Advisory Service for Sub-Saharan Africa)

Incorporating the informal sector into economic information and national accounting systems

by Hubert Vihouénou Gbossa *

It is now more than 25 years since the concept of an informal sector first arose to account for specific aspects of urban non-waged employment against a background of significant rural depopulation and accelerated growth of towns and cities; nowadays, this sector reigns supreme in all its diversity in developing countries and there is a great deal of literature on and expert analyses of the informal sector. As an aid to understanding it, increasingly sophisticated surveys have been conducted in a number of developing countries. However, close examination of the research shows that there are still differences in the way in which the phenomenon is defined and understood. A precise definition is required. This will facilitate dialogue between the producers and the users of data on this sector. An effort has been made and convergence is on the horizon. For national accountants, the "unregistered" area is an integral part of the economy. In their work, they distinguish the informal sector from other unregistered elements such as fraud, the carrying-on of illegal activities, etc, which are specific, individual targets.

Correct definition of the informal sector

The following definition is borrowed from a UNDP working group and is, in our opinion, an interpretation, not to mention a simplification, of the International Labour Office definition:

"The informal sector includes any business or enterprise which is not registered with the national or local government [aside from illegal activities]. Or, according to another working group, the informal sector is composed of all activities which are not directly and properly registered".

A poor understanding of the extent of the informal sector or a definition which is not widely supported leads to misinterpretations, which generally bring with them mistaken rejection of certain results arising from the work carried out under the system of national accounts or a reluctance to use such results. Thus, certain governments have perceived the informal sector as being that area of the urban economy which eludes State monitoring, specifically fiscal monitoring. However, although the informal sector involves tax evasion, a sizeable number of "informal" enterprises are taxed on estimated income. Such governments thus wrongly regard the size of this sector in an economy as an indicator of the inefficiency of the State's taxation of the economy. Frequently, also, the

results presented by national accountants are not readily accepted - it turns out that the more the informal sector is taken into account, generally the higher the GDP, the concomitant risk being that the country concerned will no longer be regarded as an LLDC (if that is its status), with a loss of the attendant advantages. The above, apparently simple, definition is not without its problems, which are linked essentially to the way in which the sector and its inclusion in the system of national accounts as an entry under "branch of activity" and "institutional sector" are understood. We shall now examine its evaluation under the system of national accounts.

Evaluating the informal sector in a difficult context.

Owing to the lack of statistical surveys or the latter's restricted scope, age or inappropriate nature, it is difficult to incorporate correctly informal-sector data into national accounts. Independent of the extent of the informal sector, which is now becoming clearer, the system of national accounts has always used the means at its disposal to estimate areas such as the rural economy, the non-industrial production which is currently an integral part of the informal sector, farm gate prices (because this information is rarely collected), accommodation services, etc. At a time when there are several surveys of the informal sector, a reading of the results affords little that can be used directly by the system of national accounts, which continues to provide a best estimate of such data taking, as appropriate, partial information from such surveys.

The need for surveys designed to evaluate the informal sector.

Without seeking comprehensive coverage, the following may be mentioned :

- A population census, when this is followed by demographic surveys which enable evolution of the figures established during the census to be inferred. An agricultural census followed up by a system providing agricultural statistics on a permanent basis is required to identify trends in production and agricultural prices.
- Livestock surveys should be able to establish the herd age pyramid, zootechnical parameters and herd movements. It would also be advantageous to have information on the livestock and meat marketing circuit.
- A budget/consumption survey should generate a great deal of useful information for the system of national

accounts. Household spending is included in greater detail. It gives a good idea of the demand satisfied and of household income.

● Specific surveys of the informal sector are increasingly numerous and varied given the diversity of situations involved in social practice in each country. Irrespective of whether this relates to establishments or households, these are small-scale surveys which relate to one district of a town or city, to towns or cities of a certain size, etc. They are rarely nationwide in their scope. Generally speaking, their aim is to provide, amongst other things, production structures and an order of magnitude of *per capita* income according to type of activity rather than to establish the extent of informal production in a country. It therefore comes as no great surprise that, despite the amount of detail they contain, very few results of surveys of the informal sector have been directly incorporated into the work of the system of national accounts. In order to be effective, such surveys have to be adapted to accountants' requirements and these accountants need to modify their working method in order to get the best out of them. Many factors are involved, ranging from giving them the same name to a need for a change of base for taking into account data arising from these surveys, which are still greatly underused. Financial constraints place too great a restriction on the level of detail required (detailed branches of activity) and the threshold at which data becomes significant. Accountants are forced to make the best use of what they have available, but consistency in the quality of these surveys and an expansion of their scope would undoubtedly enable work to be more precise. With a view to best use of the results, such surveys need to have a sound structure and above all to use the same concepts and definitions. The nomenclature used also has, as far as possible, to be compatible with international nomenclature. However, irrespective of their number and complexity these surveys do not always reflect a true picture and often omit areas of the economy which national accountants have to take fully into consideration.

When statistical information is insufficient

Sometimes there is not a single survey on which to base an estimate of production in a given field. Unfortunately, this is usually the case, so accountants have to come up with an estimate to replace missing data. Most accountants in the developing countries do attempt to estimate production in the informal sector, each using the method which seems best adapted to the actual circumstances of his own environment. A recent example is provided by work on the ERETES module (a tool to assist in the drawing-up of national accounts in accordance with the 1993 SNA). For example, in order to process the "hairdressing and beauty-care" sub-branch,

the three approaches of demand, supply and income are combined to arrive at an acceptable production figure. In the case of demand, the starting point is the population concerned - for this purpose, accountants need to know the distribution of population by sex per age group and its distribution by urban and rural area (population census). It is then necessary to estimate the mean annual *per capita* requirement (budget/consumption survey) and the mean price of a haircut for men and of hair braiding for women (price survey). The demand figure at this stage is a first proposal for comparison with the supply of this service. The modern part of the supply can be obtained from company accounts (statistical and fiscal returns, if appropriate). The informal part remains to be estimated. At this level, the ERETES module allows better assessment of the hypotheses adopted. The starting point is the workforce employed for the informal form of production (employment survey) of the "hairdressing and beauty-care" sub-branch; an idea is obtained of the *per capita* income (specific survey of the informal sector) and, from this, informal hairdressing and beauty-care production is calculated. A comparison between the supply and the demand determined in this way leads to acceptance of a production figure for the branch. A similar approach is employed for repair work, accommodation services, etc. Obviously, the more surveys there are of the informal sector, the more precise the accountant's work under this report will be.

The 1993 SNA gives developing countries the opportunity to harmonise the methodologies they use to compile their national accounts. The informal sector will have to be better managed - its extent and the problems involved in taking it into account will have to be better understood. This will involve adopting a precise working definition and taking full advantage of surveys which should be better adapted to the requirements expressed by users, particularly national accountants. Modern tools for drawing up national accounts, such as the ERETES module, should be further investigated; by incorporating the informal sector in the developing countries more correctly, they will undoubtedly be of considerable assistance in the reform of national accounts.

Grains of hope

Dorothy Morrissey looks at promising signs that genetically modified rice may help to improve human health in developing countries.



Transgenic rice forming beta-carotene (provitamin A).

I Potrykus (ETH, Zurich, Switzerland) and P Beyer (University of Freiburg, Germany)

A research project funded by the European union - Carotene plus - has managed to incorporate the production of beta-carotene (vitamin A) into rice. This major scientific achievement will help to combat the problem of Vitamin A deficiency, one of the major nutritional deficiencies worldwide, particularly in developing countries. The announcement was made at an international botanical congress in St Louis, USA, this summer, where scientists from around the world met to outline the latest research on the use of plants for improving human health.

In developing countries large numbers of people live on simple diets which are often an inadequate source of vitamins and minerals. This is particularly the case with rice, a staple food for over 2 billion people. Not only does it lack Vitamin A but it also contains too little iron. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) these are the two major nutritional deficiencies found worldwide.

Vitamin A deficiency

Vitamin A is an essential nutrient which is needed in small amounts for the visual system, growth and development. Vitamin A Deficiency (VAD) occurs when the body's store of the vitamin is so depleted that certain physiological functions are impaired. VAD is the leading cause of xerophthalmia, or childhood blindness. This illness affects some 400 million children worldwide, or 7% of the world population. It is especially severe in developing countries where rice is the staple diet. VAD has other implications for children's health, making them more vulnerable to infec-

tious diseases and less likely to recover from infections.

Vitamin A is found in foods of animal origin, particularly liver, where it is stored in the body. Cod liver oil is also a popular source. Vitamin A can be made synthetically, but some synthetic forms are more toxic than the natural forms. There have been concerns in medical circles about the dangers of taking excessive amounts of the vitamin. The animal form of Vitamin A is called retinol, and this form can also be toxic. Beta-carotene in its vegetable form is safe in large doses. It is found in orange-coloured foods including carrots, peaches and green leafy vegetables. Beta-carotene in plant form is half as potent as retinol, and therefore there is no risk of overdosage.

The WHO estimates that Vitamin A deficiency (VAD) exists in at least 60 countries. An estimated 2.8 to 3 million pre-school age children are clinically affected and the health and survival of 251 million more is seriously compromised. The reason it hits pre-school children in particular is that their Vitamin A needs are higher because they are in a period of rapid growth. Children who are being weaned are particularly at risk in areas where rice is the major food, as they may eat nothing else but rice gruel. School-age children are still growing but at a less rapid rate, at least until adolescence. The other risk category is pregnant and breast-feeding women, because the mother's Vitamin A supplies are being depleted. Important for proper foetal growth, it also helps to protect against infections.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates that by the year

The WHO estimates that there is a significant VAD problem in parts of most African countries, as well as in South and South-East Asia, some areas of Latin America, and the Western Pacific.

VAD is a condition which is largely preventable, by eating a Vitamin A-rich diet, or with supplements, which are costly and difficult to distribute. Supplementation programmes often do not reach rural areas. Most common sources of the vitamin are meat, eggs, and dairy produce, as well as fruit and vegetables - foods which are expensive and not easily available in developing countries. An added problem is that Vitamin A-rich foods tend to be perishable, thus not suitable for storage or for distribution.

Iron deficiency

Clearly, in socially underdeveloped countries, access to health and social services is limited. People with no access to educa-

tional materials will continue to follow traditional feeding practices.

Ecological factors, too, play a role. Arid, infertile lands, where drought is common, will not provide a favourable environment for growing a sufficient quantity and variety of food.

Generally vitamin A-rich foods such as vegetables and fruit need abundant water supplies. Where conditions are difficult, priority will not be given to these foods, an inexpensive source of Vitamin A, but to staples. It has been found that countries which have long periods of water shortage are more likely to have a VAD problem than those countries which have regular water supplies.

Increasing awareness of the importance of Vitamin A for health has led to international efforts to



eliminate the problem by the year 2000.

The principal researcher on this project, Professor Ingo Potrykus of the Swiss Institute for Plant Sciences, has genetically modified two new rice strains to address these two deficiencies.

Yellow rice

It seems that only the green, inedible, part of the rice plant contains beta carotene, which the body converts into Vitamin A. The part which is consumed - the grain - does not contain beta-carotene. Rice does not have the enzymes needed to make this compound. Grains are traditionally milled, and in the process the outer layers, which contain many nutrients, are removed. Milling is favoured because it removes a fat-rich outer layer which turns rancid, making storage impossible.

Professor Potrykus managed to overcome this deficiency by genetically modifying the rice so that it can produce Vitamin A. This was done by introducing three genes into the rice. Two genes were transferred from the daffodil family (*Narcissus*), which, as well as pro-



Biotechnology holds promise for improving human health through food

vivant univers

Africa will need over 50 million tons more of grain each year than it is producing



ducing beta-carotene, also create the flower's yellow colour - the process turning the rice grains yellow. Beta-carotene was further enriched by the addition of a third gene, one from the bacterium *Erwinia uredovora*.

Iron deficiency

Rice eaters also suffer from iron deficiency, because rice contains insufficient iron. In addition, what little iron it does contain cannot be absorbed by our bodies. This is one of the world's greatest nutritional problems, affecting 1.4 billion women worldwide. One problem is that rice contains a high concentration of a chemical called phytate, which prevents iron from being absorbed. The researchers tackled this problem in two ways. They introduced a new gene which destroys phytate. And they added another gene - from a type of bean - which enables rice to produce iron.

Frankenstein foods

Genetically-modified food has had some bad publicity in Europe, especially in the UK where experimental crops have sometimes been destroyed by anti-GM protestors. In

the States however, genetically-modified crops of corn, cotton and soyabeans are relatively commonplace. Benefits are that crops are resistant to herbicides, yields are higher, offering an abundance of produce at lower cost to the consumer. These developments have not so far trickled down to developing countries.

The results of the yellow rice research will be made available free of charge to developing countries. Full compliance with all European safety legislation will be obtained. Provisions have already been made to transfer the technology to the International Rice Research Institute, a non-profit research organisation based in the Philippines. It will pass the rice on to local and regional rice growers so that it can be developed for local varieties. There will be no cost involved in this transfer, as would usually be the case if the markets were in the developed world, or if the benefits were to go to industry. The rice will be subject to nutritional and environmental testing as it is being released into the environment. Estimates are that the rice will be available for farmers in between three and five years.

The project also involved research on introducing beta-carotene into other crops, the aim being to create functional foods which have a positive effect on human health. Rice was the researchers' first success.

No environmental concern

The rice is genetically modified solely to boost its nutritional value, and not to give it any environmental advantage. It does not therefore give rise to environmental or health concerns.

The project was funded in its first stages by the Rockefeller Foundation* and for the last three years by EU FAIR, a research programme in the area of agriculture and fisheries, which has the aim of promoting and harmonising

research. Projects are submitted to the programme and evaluated by independent experts, and the best ones are selected for funding. This project was considered important because it was in the area of nutrition. The researchers were working mainly on Vitamin A, but also on introducing it into other crops, not just into rice. The rice is where they first succeeded, and it will have the biggest impact in developing countries.

This is one example of how genetic improvements can lead to a dramatic improvement in human health around the world.

Other areas of research in biotechnology hold out promise for resolving problems in the area of food security. Genetic modifications could make crops more suitable for growing in areas where they previously could not have survived, and develop crops which can withstand infertile soils and erratic weather conditions. As population increases, so does pressure on land, and crops will increasingly have to be grown on marginal lands. Special genes can be introduced to make plants resistant to disease; other genes can heighten and promote drought tolerance, or enable plants to be stored without being vulnerable to insect damage. Research could make these crops adaptable to different environmental conditions in the event of global warming.

Scientific ingenuity is creating a golden opportunity to help address the nutritional deficiencies of millions of people worldwide.

*** The Rockefeller Foundation was founded in 1913 and has a mandate to enrich and sustain the lives of the poor and excluded throughout the world. Its work falls under four themes: food security, employment, health, creativity and innovation**

Rice is a staple food for over 2 billion people
Rice field in Darel Barka,
Mauritania

"Humans only survive in the long term by genetic modification, adaptation and movement. These alone will keep us ahead of population traps, pests/diseases and food deficits"

Philip Stott, Professor of Biogeography, School of Oriental and African Studies, London

Cato Manor - where South Africa



An old white resettlement site in South Africa is being reclaimed from bush and neglect to become the first project in the country aimed at providing integrated urban development. The large-scale housing scheme is being developed, and used to test sustainability and iron out glitches so that it can be efficiently duplicated elsewhere in the country

can start again



Healthier and happier, with much to look forward to...
Beneficiaries of the new development, Chesterville Housing
Project with the Park in the background

Ancient History

Cato Manor used not to have a good reputation: it was the largest resettlement site under apartheid in South Africa. Now in the heart of the city, it was, at the beginning of this century, right on its outskirts. It was originally settled and owned by Indian landlords, renting out shacks and land to Africans, who moved in after World War Two. When the area was designated a White Group Area, all occupants were forcibly removed. The owners were given some compensation for their loss of rights, but the African tenants received nothing. This was particularly ironic, as the area was never inhabited by whites, unlike the Sophiatown area, where the white suburb of Triumph is now.

Cato Manor reverted to bush until the late 1980s when Africans began to reoccupy the land, and the Indian House of Parliament developed some old houses and a technical college.

Today, things are rather different.

Integrated Housing - the way forward

It is the first area targeted for integrated urban development in what was a white suburb, and has been chosen as a Special Presidential Project by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). It is the first large-scale housing scheme to test sustainability and whether it can be duplicated elsewhere, both issues raised by the government's housing policies. In the past the government built large housing estates (the townships) but they had no social, business or education amenities. Cato Manor is aiming at providing a rounded urban environment in which people can thrive.

At present there are a number of informal shack communities (about 6,000 households) and some new housing projects (about 3,000 households). The area incorporates the existing African township of Chesterville, and also existing Indian and coloured housing developments. There will be about 170,000 people living in Cato Manor when the development is over.

Improving Living Conditions

The main purpose of the project is to improve living conditions for poor people in South Africa by strengthening infrastructure and housing, and refining its most effective development. The people who will benefit most from the scheme are the poor - largely black, coloured and Indian - who live in the area already, have past land rights or will be attracted there by the project.

"Greater Cato Manor is leading by example in the delivery of housing. Squatter settlements will soon become history."

Thembi Mthethwa, Msimbini Development Committee Member



There are two Multi-Purpose Centres, one already offering schooling to 1,200 pupils (soon to be 1,800) and another will be completed with EU funding in the first half of 2000.

This will consist of a primary and secondary school, community hall, library and sports field. A pre-school is being built on an adjoining site. Another school in Chesterfield Ext (also funded by the EU) will be completed by January 2000. There will be formal houses, title deeds for residents, electricity, water-borne sewage, piped water, paved roads, and social, commercial and light industrial developments.

The EU's financial contribution to the programme is 24.5 million Euros over three years from the signing of the agreement in February 1997. This will be provided partly in funds and partly used to provide a technical assistance team seconded to the Cato Manor Development Association.

Owning their own homes

Today the poor of Cato Manor are encouraged to buy their own homes. The EU funds a home loan scheme to give low-income families access to loans. In any case, the Government of South Africa gives a subsidy of R 17,250 to those earning under R 1,500 a month to help them build somewhere to live, with electricity, running water, water-borne sewerage, street-lighting and storm drainage. Subsidies to the value of about R66 million have been allocated to the project by the Provincial Housing Development Board. All people earning below R3,500 per month can apply for a subsidy, the minimum being R5,750 and the maximum for households earning less than R800 per month being R17,250.

Medium- and high-density housing will be built with an income mix of about 50% for very low income households and the rest for all the other categories of income.

In order to set this up as effectively as possible, needs assessment and the refinement of the financing process have been undertaken; this has involved a survey of land values, land pricing, and assessment of the cost of the recovery of the Cato Manor Development Association's management costs. The Association itself has been the subject of examination and improvement of its management capacity so that it is better-equipped for coordination, planning and scheduling, monitoring, evaluation and administration.

Education

The project plans adult literacy programmes which will train 2,000 - 3,000 people. The technical college will be restructured and skills training offered to 500 people. Previously, the college was an "old dispensation" facility, which will be integrated into the new, larger development. At present the existing facilities are used for practical training such as bricklaying, which forms part of the training skills programmes.

The primary school is up and running, and classes carry on at the same time as the renovation of the 16 existing classrooms and the addition of several new facilities: a washing area, tuck shop, utility room, book store and admin block.

The secondary school is being built from scratch and will have 24 basic classrooms and additional specialised ones for technical drawing, needlework, domestic science, typing and computer studies, and two science labs.

Both schools will hold 800 pupils

each and will be ready for the start of the 2000 academic year. The library and community hall will be ready in April 2000.

The Centre's facilities will be administered by the relevant government departments. The schools fall under the provincial Education Department, while the library, community hall and sports field will be administered by the Durban Department of Culture and Recreation.

Income generation

Income generation is a priority - vocational training will be offered, and 20 small-scale industrial workshops are being constructed, as well as a community centre which will be the base for many community development initiatives.

Industrial and commercial development takes the form of some catalytic projects i e the Bellair Road Market which will offer small retailing opportunities for hawkers and small traders (this is under construction). A Housing Support Centre will be 2,400 m² for small and medium size retailers, and suppliers of housing related services (under construction). An office development of 2,300m² is also under way, to allow for affordable office accommodation for local enterprises and public authorities.

Some 72 small urban parks with playground equipment will be built in the housing projects.

For further information on Cato Manor, their website is: www.cmda.org.za.

Achievements so far

- Detailed planning completed; contractors commissioned
- Training for home ownership
- Housing finance packages defined, and offers to manage them reviewed.
- Job seekers database.
- Placement services: 237 have found jobs.
- 14 local development committees.
- 24 sub-projects.
- Local newspaper
- 3.4 million rand spent each month - expected to rise.
- 7 capital projects and 32 out of 33 under way.

The new Umkhumbane school is going to play a major role in terms of saving money that has been used for transport since the school is going to be within every kid's reach. Moreover most of the parents are unemployed and they cannot afford to take their kids to far away schools like they have had to in the past. The money they have been using for transport will be used for other needs in the household. Beautiful projects are mushrooming all over Greater Cato Manor and the informal settlements are beginning to be the problems of the past.

Bacengile Phoswa
New Dunbar Road
Informal Settlement

"What is happening at Cato Manor is real proof that you can combat poverty - and win. With the right help and with their full involvement in the whole process, individual people and communities as a whole are making a better life for themselves - moving to better housing, getting their children to school, providing social services, fighting crime. I have nothing but admiration for the people I met who have dedicated their lives to the transformation of Cato Manor. It's a constant fight but they have made fantastic progress. The European Union should be proud to be the major foreign backer of the project."

Philip Lowe, Director-General, EU Development DG

Water from the hills

by Thibault Grégoire



Hinche, the principal town of the Central Plateau, is a long way by road from Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital. It takes some time to become accustomed to the rough, rocky terrain. The small hills and bluffs that we are leaving behind are devoid of vegetation, and now we frequently pass peasant farmers riding donkeys or on horseback. To shield themselves from the sun's rays, they use large umbrellas as parasols. Progress is necessarily slow, but the richness of the September landscape is ample compensation - viewpoints looking over the entire valley are more numerous the higher we go. The journey continues like this until we reach the town of Mirebalais, where those in a hurry breathe a sigh of relief. They can now speed away on the almost 70 kilometres of tarmac road leading to Las Cahobas. The countryside now flies by. They are lucky - this road, the RN 3, was actually officially opened just a few days ago, in the presence of members of the Haitian government. Financed by the European Union, the building of this road was part of the Seventh EDF, which is now practically at an end.

We stop off along the way at Peligre. This place is famous for its hydro-electric power plant, which

supplies Port-au-Prince with a good 50% of its electricity each day. There was European Union involvement here, too, this time in partnership with other donors who contributed to the rehabilitation of the plant, particularly the alternators. Further upstream, behind the impressive dam, dugout canoes glide gently over the lake. Each carries a watchful fisherman. Whilst we have been here, on the shoreline a woman has been spreading lengths of fabric out in the sun and others have been selling dried fish by the roadside.

Numerous sources of finance

Following on from an emergency aid programme implemented by ECHO, in 1994 the Seventh EDF enabled the European Commission to relaunch its development cooperation work in Haiti, which involved a very large number of activities and a wide variety of sources of funding: non-programmable aid, such as Stabex funds (for example to support the production of coffee, cocoa, etc), regional cooperation (for example, CDI actions), a programme of micro-projects, support for food security (for example, support for rice growers in the Artibonite valley), democracy and human rights budget lines etc.

European Union cooperation with the Republic of Haiti has entered a new phase, under the Eighth EDF, offering an opportunity to examine the achievements of past years. One unusual project involves lakes, hills, a congregation of priests, and mango trees



On average, the lakes cover less than one hectare

Naturally, aid under the National Indicative Programme is still the principal source of funding, amounting to 112.5 million. Just as in the case of the majority of the rest of the funding, the watchword in this case was "rehabilitation". In addition to support for structural adjustment, the office of the national authorising officer and decentralised cultural initiatives, the NIP

included a major rehabilitation programme proper.

There is a dual backbone to the project: infrastructure and agriculture. A total of 52 projects have been implemented, all of them being entrusted to a technical management unit. The first part of the programme covered 18 projects relating to drinking-water supplies, roads and education. The 34 projects of the second part covered agricultural production, fruit crops, reforestation, irrigation and country roads. This was the context for the construction of a network of lakes in the hills, in the Central Plateau region.

The chosen alternative

The Central Plateau, on the border with the Dominican Republic, in the east of the country, is a particularly remote region. In this *département*, where agriculture reigns supreme, peasant farmers work often degraded and impoverished soils. Furthermore, the very hilly terrain exacerbates the problems involved in cultivation and, above all, irrigation - despite the abundant resources of water in the form of the many rivers which flow through the area. Stock-rearing is limited to just a few animals per family, since the large numbers of pigs

killed locally by the outbreak of fever in the early 1980s have not been adequately replaced.

Given these circumstances, the creation of lakes in the hills offered an interesting alternative. They consist of stretches of water with an average surface area of just under one hectare. Located in valleys, they are supplied by a system of dams and reservoirs up in the hills. Equipped with a small barrage, the lakes formed by the collection of rainwater and the conservation of other water resources thus drain a number of catchment areas, making it possible to grow a wide range of crops on small strips of land either downstream or beside the water. The entire region is therefore dotted with small plantations of cabbages, tomatoes and other vegetables and food crops, as well as with fruit trees such as mangoes and lemons. Moreover, these new lakes have been stocked with young fish and look set to generate a new "industry" - fish production. There are also plans to experiment with "fish cages". In short, the project encourages any initiative which might improve the food security of recipient communities or generate new economic activities.

The project does not stop



Cabbages are grown on narrow strips of land

there, however. It also includes a significant training aspect, particularly as regards managing soil fertility and irrigation. This region, and Haiti generally, does not have a tradition of cultivation or any tradition of irrigation. On top of this, consideration has to be given to existing peasant-farmer structures and to the setting-up of markets to provide an outlet for crops. This is the only way in which the system can make a profit and therefore be viable. To help the process along, it is the peasant-farmer structures which will be called upon, ultimately, to manage all that has been achieved so far under the terms of the project. Responsibility has been transferred gradually from the outset and is still being transferred, the EU's chosen body for implementing the project being none other than the Congregation of the Little Brothers of the Incarnation, the PFI, a group which traditionally trains and supervises a number of these peasant-farmer groupings. It is

also these priests who have provided the vast majority of the labour required for constructing the lakes.

A new spirit of enterprise

"We're currently working with 168 peasant-farmer groups," Brother Armand, the Congregation's leader, explained. "We hold frequent meetings to promote continuous monitoring of the project and ongoing training. There's been a very significant change in outlook, because now the farmers have assets to manage, not just their own wretchedness. It's no secret that enthusiasm has to come from within".

This change in outlook has generated a demand for training, with other peasant farmers taking the initiative and becoming entrepreneurs - particularly given the trend of taking over management of the lakes, which makes things much easier.

Admittedly, there are problems, the greatest being an increasing and continuous demand! Brother Armand com-

mented further, "over 100 farmers have now requested lakes, whereas, in the beginning, they thought we were completely mad!". Of course, further problems may arise from the management of the irrigation pumps, for example. Remaining issues are sometimes solved by the application of a little discipline. "Clearly, using the lakes for bathing and laundry is not ideal as far as forestry is concerned".

Now for the real project to begin

The European Union regards the "Lakes in the Hills" project as completed, despite the fact that there are possibly a couple of details to be finalised. It is now time to move on to the Eighth EDF, which will concentrate on basic economic infrastructures, rural development and governance. However, to quote Brother Armand, for the peasant farmers in the Hinche district, it is only now, with the official programme coming to an end, that the real project begins.



Rwanda: the creative world remembers and reflects

by Nocky Djedanoum*



Exasperated by the overwhelming silence on the part of Africans in the wake of the Rwanda genocide, the organisers of Fest' Africa (a festival of African literature held in Lille, France) set up a project entitled *Rwanda: our duty to remember*. This project brought together, in July and August 1998, in Rwanda, 10 African writers from different countries. Further trips were organised in March and July 1999.

As a follow-up to their travels, each of these writers undertook to produce a book commemorating this tragedy which saw almost one million people die in the space of a few months, amidst general indifference. These books, which are aimed at keeping the memory alive, will be published by May 2000 at the latest. As well as organising these written testimonies and accounts, the initiators of the project are now actively preparing for the eighth Fest'Africa, which is to take place in Rwanda in June 2000 and, later that year, in November in Lille. The event's ambitious programme includes discussions with the writers about their books, the staging of a play, the showing of a previously unreleased film, and concerts.

The writers' Rwandan trip was made possible thanks to support from the Fondation de France, at La Villette (Paris) and the Rwandan Culture Ministry. The European Union is the foremost contributor to the organisation of Fest'Africa 2000 in Rwanda.

The writers invited to take part in the "Rwanda: our duty to remember" project set themselves the deadline of one year in which to finish their individual pieces on the memory of the genocide in Rwanda. A number of manuscripts have already been completed and have been sent to the Fest'Africa organisers

in Lille, and they have now been passed on to the publishers. According to the project timetable, all the manuscripts will be ready by the end of November, with publication expected in May 2000.

If the people behind this project are to be believed, the publication of the books is as eagerly awaited by Rwandans as it is by the general public aware of the project, this initiative being a veritable "first" in the history of African literature. No other tragedy has inspired as many writers, now twelve in total if one includes in the initial group the Rwandans who have subsequently offered their support.

This type of literary testimony is all very well, but it requires a suitable forum where it can be brought to the public's attention and properly appreciated. Such a forum is Fest'Africa 2000 in Rwanda and in France. Interestingly, this first staging of the traditionally Lille-based festival in Africa, the keynote of which will be conflict prevention and the safeguarding of human rights, will not only bring together the twelve writers but will also be opened up to other creative people and bodies and intellectuals from Africa and other continents. Although literature will undoubtedly be the main theme of the festival, other artistic disciplines will also be represented, particularly theatre, dance, music and cinema.

from left: Abibatou Traoré, writer; Bernard Magnier, literary critic; Natalie Etoke, writer



A multi-faceted dramatic creation

Aware that not all classes of society have access to the written word, the organisers of Fest'Africa 2000 in Rwanda have decided to stage a "total" theatrical presentation, which they hope will mean greater publicity for the festival. Evocatively entitled "Body and voice: spreading the word", the show will draw its inspiration from the various books produced by the writers. It will be a multi-faceted dramatic creation incorporating the performing arts in a number of forms, particularly theatre, contemporary dance and ballet, and paying special attention to sets. This presentation, which will open the year-2000 festival, also aims to play a part in the revival of cultural activity in Rwanda by seeking active synergism between creative artistes in Rwanda and their counterparts in other African countries. It is hoped that the anticipated upsurge in creative activity will lay the foundations for more permanent cultural activities, generating a reappraisal of Rwanda's own creative artistes. The principal beneficiary will be the planned setting-up of a Performing Arts Department within the Faculty of Arts of the National University of Rwanda. As far as the target audience of secondary-level

students is concerned, the project will provide the foundation for a course in art.

The Chad playwright Koulsy Lamko, himself a member of the group of twelve authors, is responsible for the artistic direction of "Body and voice: spreading the word". Having successfully initiated a dramatic arts workshop last March, involving students from Butare, Koulsy Lamko returned to Rwanda at the invitation of the rector of the university to begin a year-long stay during which he will be the driving force behind the newly established arts centre. Importantly, the National University of Rwanda is a partner in Fest'Africa 2000.

The talented choreographer, Irène Tassemedo, from Burkina Faso, and Koffi Kwahulé, a producer from Côte d'Ivoire, will be arriving in early December, to help with training and supervision as part of this project. It will be their first visit to Rwanda and they plan to return in April 2000 for the event itself. Internationally famous musicians, such as Ray Lema and Lokua Kanza, have also been approached in the run-



Aminata Sow Fall

up to the show.

The public will then be given the exclusive opportunity to see a screening of "Nous ne sommes plus morts", a documentary by Cameroonian director François Woukoache, which was filmed at the same time as the writers were in Rwanda. This film gives a platform to the writers to enable them to explain their involvement and commitment, and also includes extensive testimony from Rwandans on how they survived the genocide.

The organisers of Fest'Africa 2000 hope to reach out to a wide audience, but this will depend on the resources available to them. "Fest'AFRICA Olivella Culture et Paix", a travelling company of writers, actors, dancers, painters and musicians from a number of countries in

Music at the last
Fest'Africa, 6-7 November
1999 at the Théâtre du
Nord in Lille



Africa, together with creative artistes from Rwanda, will make its way around countries in the Great Lakes region. The convoy will be a strong symbol of solidarity vis-à-vis the Rwandans, and will also demonstrate the need for unity and peace, which are prerequisites for life itself. After it has toured the Great Lakes region, the "caravan" looks set to head off for other parts of Africa.

The next phase of the project is staging Fest'Africa in Lille, in November 2000. By happy coincidence, the year-2000 festival in Lille has Africa as its theme and, having received a request to organise an African book fair, will naturally make the Rwandan literary event its focus. The city of Lille will be the starting point for a series of meetings with the writers in the various towns and cities in France, and also Belgium, where it is possible for the event to be staged. In Paris, for example, the Parc de la Villette intends to involve eminent researchers in discussions of the Rwandan issue.

Whether in Africa or in Europe, Fest'Africa has one sole aim: to keep the memory of the genocide in Rwanda alive, to understand, to encourage reflection on the mechanisms which gave rise to this tragedy, and to promote freedom of thought with a view to preventing such horrors recurring in Africa or elsewhere.

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Addressing the constraints to marketing fresh foods in developing countries

by Dr Peter Fellows

Existing marketing systems for fresh produce suffer from their lack of organisation and dominance by middlemen, their poor market price transparency, the lack of incentives to improve product quality, and disincentives to change. However, co-ordinated action by governments, donors and the private sector offers the opportunity to modernise domestic fresh food supplies, reduce their cost, and expand and develop new markets for processing and export.

In developing countries, most fresh foods are produced by small-scale farmers or fishermen. Products include those from horticulture (fresh fruits and vegetables, some nut crops, herbs and spices), fisheries (lake and sea fish, seafoods), livestock or wild meats, and floriculture (cut flowers and pot plants for export, controlled by large-scale farmers or agents for multinational companies, with little input from small-scale producers).

Domestic markets, which comprise the first three sub-sectors above, consist of:

- rural retail (primary) markets, used by villagers to sell excess produce to neighbours
- rural wholesale (secondary) markets, held daily near small towns, where producers sell crops or animals to traders; traders may also collect produce from farms and sell it in these markets, and
- major urban wholesale markets, which in turn supply urban retail markets and street vendors.

There are two other types of market which, although smaller in size in developing countries, have the potential to offer greater returns to producers:

- the market for raw materials for food processors, and
- the export market to industrialised countries or neighbouring countries in a region for high-value tropical fruits and vegetables (e.g. mango, pineapple, sweet potato), temperate crops that are produced when out-of-season in the importing country (e.g. beans, asparagus, peas), root ginger, fish and cut flowers.

For and against the middleman

In domestic fresh food marketing, the concept of marketing is usually only applied to selling an end product, rather than to the whole chain, and there is no single body that has responsibility and authority for implementing marketing plans. There is usually little government intervention and decisions on, for example, prices and volumes of crops that enter the market, and are left entirely to 'market forces', which in practice means a complex system that is controlled by a series of traders, hauliers, commission agents and retailers, often referred to as 'middlemen'. Middlemen have adequate capital, transport and communication facilities, together with a network of business contacts; they often act in alliance with each other to fix prices and otherwise take advantage of the market. Whilst free market operation is the

most efficient way of supplying fresh foods, such systems often lead to unequal distribution of incomes, increased wastage and lowering of product quality, and excessive price increases for consumers.

However, middlemen also provide essential services to producers by supplying horticultural or fishery inputs, easily accessible informal credit, and storage, distribution and selling of produce, which relieves producers of the need to negotiate prices with individual retailers or arrange their own transport to markets. Producers have come to rely on the services offered by middlemen, although that does put them in a vulnerable position.

In most developing countries there are no market information or forecasting services to collect and publish marketing data and this results in a lack of price transparency, to the detriment of producers and retailers. However, it is in the interests of the middlemen to maintain this situation as a lack of publicly available information helps support their control over the markets. This cartel-like nature of wholesale marketing has two negative effects. Firstly, it discourages farmers and fishermen from forming their own marketing associations or selling to processors under contract, both of which would give producers the opportunity to earn higher incomes; and secondly, the traders' dominance creates an environment in which there is little incentive for producers to increase production efficiency, improve product quality or reduce losses, as it is the traders and not them who will benefit.

Difficulties in achieving adequate quality standards for export arise due to a large number of factors, for example production of unsuitable cultivars; lack of understanding of quality grades by producers; low yields and high collection costs; lack of control over post-harvest handling; inadequate national agencies to promote exports and lack of incentive packages to develop value-added, non-traditional exports. Other constraints have been described by J. Alvarez Ramos (CTA bulletin, *The Courier* No. 173, Jan 1999).

Overcoming constraints, developing new markets

These constraints are complex and inter-related, but incentives exist to improve the production of fresh crops: in addition to strong demand for fresh foods in domestic markets in all developing countries, there is increasing demand for processed foods in urban centres and the potential for growth of food processing is an incentive to improve the marketing of fresh crops as raw materials for processors. There are also increasing opportunities for exports of fresh produce to industrialised countries, where 'natural' and 'organic' foods have recently shown a rapid growth in their market share. Furthermore, horticultural products can be exported duty-free from developing countries to Europe.

In domestic fresh produce markets, there are a number of opportunities to address the constraints that at present hinder their development.

There is a need to:

- Reduce the complexity of marketing and distribution chains

More efficient fresh produce marketing can be achieved by reducing the number of stages at which produce is handled, thus allowing enlargement and diversification of the markets, expansion of the total market size and value, and creation of new marketing opportunities to sell to processors and exporters. However, middlemen may see any change as an additional cost or a threat to their control over the market, and they are likely to resist.

- Strengthen the influence of producers

There are examples of well-run marketing associations and co-operatives in many developing countries and these could be more widely disseminated as models for producers to copy. Government extension staff and NGOs could also encourage group marketing by producers and the development of alternative outlets for their produce, such as farmers' markets, or direct sales to retailers. This would strengthen the bargaining power of producers and reduce their dependency on traders and hauliers. There are also opportunities to establish Trading Centres in rural wholesale markets to provide farming inputs and to encourage the use of shared transport by producers to enable them to market their produce in urban markets. Such Centres could also act as grading units to improve the quality of foods for urban markets or raw materials for processors.

(see also accompanying article by Igor Viderot)

- Improve co-operation and co-ordination between players in the marketing chain

There is an over-riding need to promote a better understanding of marketing as a concept, at all levels and at each stage of the marketing chain. One route to achieving this could be a government or private sector funded Marketing Unit, which would co-ordinate support to each fresh produce sub-sector. For example, lack of market price transparency is an important factor that allows middlemen to maintain their control over markets. One role for a Marketing Unit would be to improve the type and amount of information made available through a co-ordinat-

ed marketing information system (MIS) for the different types of fresh produce. Many countries already have systems for reporting daily market prices in newspapers or on radio, but these are usually limited to the larger retail markets in the main towns. Such systems could be expanded to include farm-gate prices across the country as well as wholesale market prices. The provision of such information is expensive and it is likely that contributions from producers and traders, as well as support from Government and donor agencies, would be needed to support such an initiative

- Urge government assistance

There are specific areas in which governments are best placed to implement improvements and control change, while leaving the management and control of distribution and marketing to the private sector. For example, greater co-ordination of research into suitable crops for export or processing, when linked to extension services and formation of producer groups, would promote the development of suitable varieties, inform producers of the market requirements for their produce and improve their opportunities to supply the required crops to the expected standards. Strengthened interactions between research staff at agricultural universities and other research institutions, extension staff, producers, processors and traders, would ensure that research activities are appropriate to the needs of the sector and that limited government resources are used most effectively. Governments also have a role in influencing the type of education and training that is provided to meet the needs of the sector. A further role for governments is to develop industrial policies that support the fresh produce sector.

The way forward

The inescapable conclusion is that there are very real opportunities for the development of fresh food markets through improved market organisation and control, greater transparency in market information and the development of 'new' products for export or processing. Some developing countries have already shown how these opportunities can be seized, and others can learn from their example.

Director,
Midway Technologies Ltd, UK

Promoting cooperative trade in West Africa and setting up an Intercoop Exchange

by Igor Viderot

In 1998, at the instigation of its member cooperatives, the Regional Office for West Africa of the International Cooperative Alliance launched a programme to promote trade in agricultural produce between and by cooperative organisations. A study conducted with a view to defining a strategy for the promotion of such cooperative exchanges in West Africa advocated the setting-up of a Trade Exchange.

Marketing of agricultural produce geared essentially to cash crops

In the majority of West African countries, the authorities and large private companies promote agriculture exclusively in terms of how it relates to export sectors (cocoa, coffee, cotton, ground-nuts), which receive significant funding and technical training and supervision. By contrast, sectors involving foodstuffs (cereals, fruit, vegetables and legumes) show poor yields and considerable harvest failures. It is businessmen and traders in the informal sector who are essentially responsible for marketing, and if the authorities were to invest as much and to grant as much financial and technical assistance to the foodstuffs sectors as they do for export sectors, the position of markets for agricultural produce would be a great deal healthier.

Given the gradual withdrawal of the State from such sectors, producer- and consumer-organisations are able to supplement the dynamic output of businessmen and traders by

investing in these sectors in order to improve yields and production levels, to reduce production/market distortions, to improve storage and preservation capacities and to make sub-regional trade more fluid. The promotion of trade at regional level by and between cooperative organisations is an important option.

Buoyant sectors for subregional trade

The potential for trade in foodstuffs between countries in the sub-region indeed exists - countries along the coast, from Guinea to Nigeria, could provide those in the Sahel with cereals (millet, maize), tubers (yams, manioc, gari, attiéké, dry chicory roots) and fruit (pineapples, dessert bananas, plantains).

Conversely, the Sahelian countries - Mali, Senegal, Niger and Burkina Faso - could provide market-garden produce (potatoes, onions, various vegetables) and beans to countries along the coast where such commodities are in short supply. There is also potential for trade between countries in the same subregion which do not share a border. Such is the case of Cape Verde, which could obtain supplies of cereals, tubers, fruit and market-garden produce from other countries.

There are also opportunities for trade with other regions in Africa - food produce from West Africa (fruit and vegetables, processed tubers such as gari and attiéké, niébé and fish) could find an outlet in Central Africa.

Constraints linked essentially to insufficient technical organisation

Although the trade potential exists, it is underexploited. Cooperatives in West Africa come up against a number of constraints:

- lack of information on sub-regional markets for their produce: quality, prices, periods of abundance and shortage;
- difficulty in identifying partners in markets in other countries in the region;
- insufficient funding to prefinance

campaigns, resulting from a low level of mobilisation where local saving schemes are concerned and a lack of knowledge of commercial and financial instruments allowing access to financing from local banks. Businessmen and traders dealing in the foodstuffs sectors generally invest their own money;

- insufficient storage and preservation infrastructures, with such facilities as there are requiring overhaul;
- absence of regular sea traffic between Cape Verde and West Africa;
- their lack of a structure which could effectively meet their need for technical assistance.

Important assets: experience and expertise further up the chain in agricultural sectors

Member cooperatives of the ICA/ROWA, however, are "doers", and are able to rely on a wide-ranging national network.

- Experience of production and primary collection methods in export sectors, useful for Intercoop exchanges.
- Good-quality management and training/supervision personnel.
- Significant, but under-used equipment resources (lorries, warehouses, cold stores, etc).
- Further up the chain in these sectors, they have the advantage over businessmen and traders and can improve productivity and quality and also meet market requirements.
- An environment favourable to producer-organisations wishing to invest in the integration and boosting of the regional market.
- A regional and international network set up by the ICA and its regional offices in Africa, Europe, Asia and Latin America, offering both outlets and support structures.
- A financial environment which promotes trade. The West African Monetary Agency runs a multilateral payment system set up between the central banks of 15 countries in the region, enabling these countries to trade with each other without monetary barriers.

An African Intercoop Exchange

A subregional institution to boost trade in agricultural produce in the subregion appears to be needed.

The idea of creating an agricultural-produce exchange in 2000 was adopted and developed at the seminar organised jointly in Grand-Bassam (Côte d'Ivoire) by the ICA, CTA (Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation) and the AIAFD (Association of African Development Financing Institutions).

The objectives of this Intercoop Exchange are the following:

- To identify genuine and potential outlets for the various types of agricultural produce at all levels (national, regional and international) and to generate genuine purchases/sales;
- To seize new opportunities on world markets;
- To boost marketing-technique capabilities;
- To mobilise and facilitate access to funding;
- To use modern financial instruments for marketing;
- To seize agrifoodstuffs industry opportunities.

The principal functions are to:

- Set up a commercial-information system;
- Organise a network providing technical assistance to the cooperatives;
- Promote financial assistance for Intercoop marketing.

It should be pointed out that sub-regional exchanges will be set up in the first instance, giving rise, in the long term, to an African Exchange.

For further information and to take part in setting up the exchange, please contact:
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DOSSIER

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to be seized**

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IN BRIEF

**CDI news in Europe and throughout
the world**

**Organic Products:
an opportunity to be seized**



The Centre for the Development of Industry (CDI) is a joint ACP-EU institution created in the framework of the Lomé Convention linking the European Union with the 71 ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific). Its objective is to support the creation, expansion and restructuring of industrial companies in ACP countries. To this effect, the Centre promotes partnerships between ACP and European companies. These partnerships may take various forms: financial, technical and commercial partnerships, management contracts, licensing or franchise agreements, sub-contracting, etc.

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In 1996, CDI organised a prospecting and partnership mission in Madagascar for a number of European organic product importers with the goal of developing this type of production in the region. Since then, not only has the island become fully involved in this new production means but also CDI's belief that the organic segment is promising for ACP countries has been confirmed. The opportunities exist on condition that one plays the game by the rules, a more difficult task than it might first appear.

The organic products market is developing rapidly in Europe, the United States, Japan and other Asian countries, notably Hong Kong and Singapore. Its annual growth rate exceeds 20%, illustrating the consumers' growing concern for quality and "authentic" taste in products, for health reasons and, to a lesser extent, for the preservation of the environment. Undoubtedly, the current craze for organic products has been stimulated by the successive crises that have resulted in consumer mistrust and led to a growing demand for better means of tracing the origins of food products: mad cow disease, criticism of genetically modified organisms (GMO), the excessive use of



pesticides, preservatives or artificial colours and the recent dioxin crisis.

However, "eating organically" remains above all an art of living that illustrates a love of nature and natural products. Traditionally, organic consumers in Europe are the urban households whose head is between 30 and 50 years old and with annual income of between Euro 20,000 and 40,000. They are willing to pay higher prices for organic products, often 20 to 30% higher, if not more. This is a far cry from past clichés that portrayed the consumers of organic products as vegetarians and ecologists. Nowadays, a wider range of the population - with varying levels of income - choose to buy organic products. Proof of this is the recent introduction of organic products in the supermarkets in western countries.

Unsatisfied demand

On the global scale, Europe constitutes the leading market for organic products with sales of Euro 4.1 billion in 1997. Germany, Denmark and Switzerland were the pioneers of this tendency that remains more prevalent in northern Europe but which still accounts for only 2% of food product sales. The European Union of Processors and Distributors of Organic Agriculture products (*Setrab - Syndicat Européen des Transformateurs et Distributeurs de produits de l'Agriculture Biologique*) lists the most frequently demanded products in the Northern Hemisphere. First on the list are fresh and processed fruits, notably the tropical products: bananas, pineapples, mangoes and

papayas. These fruits are consumed throughout the year and are also used in another growing sector: baby food. Next on the list are vegetable fats such as palm oil (for frying and biscuit production) and peanut oil. The other products in short supply on the northern markets are primarily sugar, soy cakes for livestock food, sesame (oil and bakery input), coconuts (biscuits and cosmetics), coffee, cocoa and all the out-of-season fruits and vegetables.

According to Pro Natura, the leading distributor of organic fruits and vegetables in France, the list of organic products more or less follows that of conventional products. In France, other than the products listed above, there is a high demand for fresh or frozen (pre-cut) vegetables and for frozen fruits, in jars or mashed, intended for industrial processing. The consumption of organic products is growing rapidly, and distribution has become more professional. The largest growth emanates from the specialised retailers, some of which have gone as far as to open genuine organic "mini-markets" as large as 200 m² and greater.

At this point, it is worth mentioning that the increased European demand is far from being satisfied by local producers because of the difficulty in converting their fields into land suited for organic production. In Europe, the area used for organic farming has considerably expanded between 1986 and 1999, increasing from 0.12 million hectares to almost 3 million hectares. The main producers are Italy, Germany, Austria and northern Europe (Denmark, Finland and Sweden). Yet, even if European production is developing and

becoming more organised, it remains insufficient to meet current and future demands. Moreover, the tropical organic products (cocoa, coffee, fruits, vegetables and spices) have a strong chance of gaining large market shares. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that organic production must comply with very stringent restrictions and, therefore, calls for a high degree of professionalism.

How do you produce organically?

To merit the "organic" label, agricultural or processed food products must have been produced without chemical or synthetic products. Therefore, farmers rely more on work methods based on the recycling of natural organic materials and on crop rotation. These growing methods aim to respect the balance of the living organisms in the soil (bacteria, earthworms, etc.)

Contrary to a rather widespread idea, organic farming does not rely on "ancient" or manual methods. On the contrary, it makes use of very elaborate methods that require considerable know-how. For example, fertility and organic activity must be maintained or increased by growing leguminous plants, green fertilizers or plants with deep roots, in the context of an appropriate multi-annual rotation programme. The farmer may also incorporate organic material in the soil, composted or not, and by-products from organic livestock breeding such as manure. Furthermore, to fight against parasites, diseases and weeds, they can make use of appropriate species, establish an adapted rotation programme, use mechanical growing procedures, protect the parasites' natural enemies by adequate means - hedges, nests, stocking predators, organic control means, etc. - and implement thermal weeding. Only those products included in a list of authorised products may be used.

Regulated production

The products derived from organic farming and intended for the European market are controlled by the European Regulation Nr. 2092/91 amended concerning the method of organic production for plant products, processed or unprocessed. National regulations must also be considered in some cases. An EU Regulation (Nr. 1804/99) now exists for animal production. Scheduled to be implemented as of August 24, 2000, it will serve as a basis for the certification of animal products in non-EU countries.

Added to these rules is the time constraint to convert from conventional farming - for previously cultivated land - to organic farming. During this period of two to three years, a farmer may not sell his production under the organic label and cannot take advantage of the higher prices normally associated with organic products. This transition is even more

Regional Analysis

The Dominican Republic - a diversifying economy

From an essentially agricultural economy, the Dominican Republic is moving toward a multi-sector economy that benefits from particular CDI assistance.

The Dominican Republic acquired its independence the 27th of February of 1844, occupying the eastern two-thirds of the Hispaniola Island, which it shares with the Republic of Haiti. The total surface of the country is of 48,482 km with 1,575 km of coastline. The country has a population of almost 8 million whose official language is Spanish although English is widely spoken in the business sector.

In the early 1980's the Dominican economy was largely based in agriculture, mainly the exploitation of traditional crops such as sugar cane, coffee, cocoa and tobacco. Nevertheless, since the mid 1980's the country has diversified its economy promoting the introduction of new agricultural products such as exotic fruits, tomatoes, avocados, plantains and oregano and the development of services such as tourism and free zone enterprises. In this framework, CDI's interventions have supported the industrial development of the country especially by assisting enterprises in agribusiness, non-metallic minerals, clay-based products and furniture.

An economy moving toward the service sector

The Dominican economy depends largely on services such as trade (12.4%), construction (9.8%), transport (6.8%), hotels and restaurants (6.7%) housing (4.9%), finance (4.7%), telecommunications (3.8%) and free trade zones (3.5%). Tourism constitutes the largest sector of the Dominican economy with 5% of employment and 50% of currency exchanges. The free trade zones absorb a large labour force: 180,000 spread among more than 450 companies located in 35 parks. The clothing sector, with 270 companies, leads in the ranking of activities. Regarding the mining sector, the Dominican Republic is one of the world's leading nickel exporters. In addition to that, the soil contains gold, silver, bauxite, marble, gypsum, limestone, kaolin and clay. The Dominican Republic's main trade partners are the United States, which absorb 59% of all exports, followed by the European Union (21%), South Korea (6%), Haiti (3%), Canada and Japan (2% each). The country's main imports are petroleum and petroleum by-products (78%) that come primarily from Mexico and Venezuela. Other large imports are food products and industrial raw materials. In 1998, the Dominican gross domestic product increased by 7.3% in real terms, while inflation reached 7.8%. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank congratulated the country for this economic performance.

SAFLEG: Organic pineapples in Togo

The Fruits and Vegetables Food Company (SAFLEG - Société Alimentaire des Fruits et Légumes) was created in 1994 following the purchase of SOTAB (Togolese Organic Farming Company - Société Togolaise d'Agriculture Biologique). Located near Lomé, SAFLEG is part of the FADOU group which includes a number of companies in Africa.

SAFLEG employs 231 persons, 200 that work on its 52 hectares of plantations and 31 processing plant workers. Pineapple is the main product and is destined for the production of dried organic pineapple that is packaged in slices, triangles (tidbits) or in muesli (tiny pieces). The plant handles a weekly quantity of some 22 tonnes of fresh pineapple. All of the production is destined for a single client in Europe (Germany) according to the terms of an exclusive contract. The company is certified by Ecocert.

Following an industrial partnership meeting organised in 1995 in Abidjan where SAFLEG was represented, CDI decided to provide assistance to the plant in order to consolidate the starting up of its activities as well as improve its knowledge of drying techniques. This intervention was

carried out in 1997. Subsequently, CDI carried out two more extensive interventions involving management and production assistance. Each of these six-month operations - one of which is still in progress - were carried out by two specialists from CIRAD (Centre of International co-operation in Agricultural Research for Development - France).

At present, SAFLEG has expressed its wish to diversify its production and has begun producing dried organic mangoes and bananas for new export markets.

The pineapple rejects from the cutting process will also be used to produce 500 litres of juice per day for the local market. The CIRAD specialists, one of which is assigned to SAFLEG for the duration of the assistance period, will help the company diversify its production and clientele while improving the process and the personnel's quality control skills for both raw materials and finished products.

**CDI Contacts:
Henriette Acquah Dodet Malenge
and Daniel Nairac**

difficult for ACP producers as they do not benefit from specific State aid as is the case for farmers in northern countries. On the other hand, they have vast, unused areas that can rapidly be classified as organic farmland.

Another obstacle is the mandatory certification for all organic products. This can only be carried out by certifying organisations and, in most cases, means that

experts must be sent from western countries. Because of this, the certification is costly for the local producers unless they are able to call upon the services of a certifying organisation with local representatives - as in the case of Ecocert International. Furthermore, the certification costs vary according to the size of the farm and the volume of production.



Production of organic cocoa at Arco Océan Indien (Madagascar) which also produces coffee, essential oils and spices

ACP countries face an additional difficulty. As emphasised by Ecocert International, the European Union regulation corresponds to the European situation, but the African reality is far different. "A clear definition of the production unit is not always easy. For example, it is sometimes difficult to make ACP operators aware of the differences between traditional farming and organic farming which implements specific farming techniques. Moreover, the labelling restrictions are not always understood." As an example, the Latin American press recently accused the European Union of "organic colonialism" because of the trade barriers it puts up with regard to importing organic products, thus keeping the small farmers of the Southern Hemisphere from exporting this type of production.

Finally, the ACP countries' lack of infrastructure results in slowing down organic production because of the products' limited shelf life. A solution could be to process the organic products locally as long as the processing is done according to the specific needs and consumption habits in Europe.

Yet, as Setrab explains, the greatest difficulty facing the development of organic farming remains the stabilisation of supply. "Organic production will always be subject to climatic hazards, to parasites and other pests that can destroy crops. Yet, as long as the European importer cannot be certain of the total security of supply, he will abstain from ordering. The supply must be guaranteed and stabilised. Because of this, it is necessary to invest in considerable technical and human means so as to be able to guarantee production."

Case-by-case procedure

It is precisely in this direction that CDI orients its assistance in ACP countries. Indeed, based on its experience in the sector since 1996 (see box on Madagascar) and on its numerous contacts with certifying organisations, local operators and European importers, CDI is fully aware of the technical difficulty involved in organic production. CDI decided to support the ACP promoters in a number of fields: production management, costs of taking part in trade fairs, researching import markets, bringing together professional associations and technical support. More than ever before, CDI implements an individual approach: case-by-case treatment prevails and leads to the decision whether or not to support the promoter in his certification procedure. CDI also strongly encourages the local producers to build regional/national associations in order to share their knowledge and experience in the field.

A genuine opportunity

One of the key success factors in organic production and processing in ACP countries resides in the conclusion of partnerships with European importers,

NABEKAM: organic fruits and vegetables in Guinea

NABEKAM - BIO is the only company in Guinea that is specialised in the production of fresh and dried organic tropical fruits and vegetables (pineapples, mangoes, bananas, green beans, etc.) exported to Europe through trade agreements concluded with European Union companies. The dried fruits are part of a trade contract with one of the leading French wholesale importers specialised in the marketing of dried organic fruits - it sells 1,000 tonnes per year - and which is a member of a group of four professional buyers that operate in a number of European Union countries. With an annual production of 20 tonnes, NABEKAM is far from satisfying the 40 tonnes the French buyer is willing to purchase. Therefore, the Guinean company wants to increase its drying capacity to reach 60 tonnes per year over the next two years. This effort will require the purchase of additional sites to build new installations that comply with the present safety and hygiene standards. The acquisition of new equipment - notably the dryers - is also under consideration. The French trade partner has promised to take part in financing the working capital of the new processing and packaging facilities in the form of cash advances on future production. It has also stated that it will purchase up to 40 tons per year of Nabekam's dried fruit production. Nabekam has ten permanent and 25 temporary employees but does not own any plantations. Therefore, it purchases organically grown raw materials from a network of grower co-operatives that it manages and remunerates directly, accounting for 30% of its turnover. Apart from the two main owners, other small shareholders have their own plantation and sell their harvest to the company.

In the context of the follow-up to the industrial partnership meeting on fruits and vegetables organised in July 1998 in Dakar, in which a Nabekam technician took part, CDI co-financed a technical and administrative diagnostic mission to the company. The conclusions of this mission led CDI to subsequently co-finance assistance in negotiations, a partial technical study, support in bringing the new installations on-line and, last, assistance in training the personnel to master the monitoring of raw material and the quality of dried products.

In the medium and long term, the company will develop the farming of organic vegetables (green beans, peppers, tomatoes, eggplant, etc.) and increase the agronomic and energy value of its production waste. Among other things, CDI assistance will help the company increase the value of its raw materials, create jobs, transfer technology and earn foreign currency.

CDI Contacts: Henriette Acquah Dodet Malenge and Alioune B. Ndiaye

Venui Vanilla in Vanuatu: a specialised and flourishing "niche"...

This project - the largest CDI endeavour on this Pacific island - has been operational since 1987. Venui Vanilla Co., Ltd cultivates vanilla, pepper and ginger, three products in high demand. To process in various forms, package and market its production, Venui Vanilla employs six persons and purchases raw materials from some one hundred growers in the vicinity of Vanuatu. In addition to satisfying 80% of the local market, its vanilla production holds a very specialised niche in the world market and is sold primarily in Europe but also in Japan, Australia, New Zealand and various countries of the Pacific region. Its European partner is an Italian organic chemist that has a well-established marketing network.

Venui Vanilla's participation at the Biofach 2000 fair in Nuremberg was approved by CDI, who will also finance the pending Ecocert certification of the land used by the company's suppliers. As this type of control is annual, the operation must be renewed each year. This will usher Venui Vanilla into the large organic products market, and consequently, CDI will provide technical training assistance for the association of vanilla growers because Venui has a shortage of raw material in the face of rising demand. The company's staff will soon increase to ten permanent employees, and some thirty vanilla and ginger growers will also be hired.

**CDI Contacts: Vana Castica
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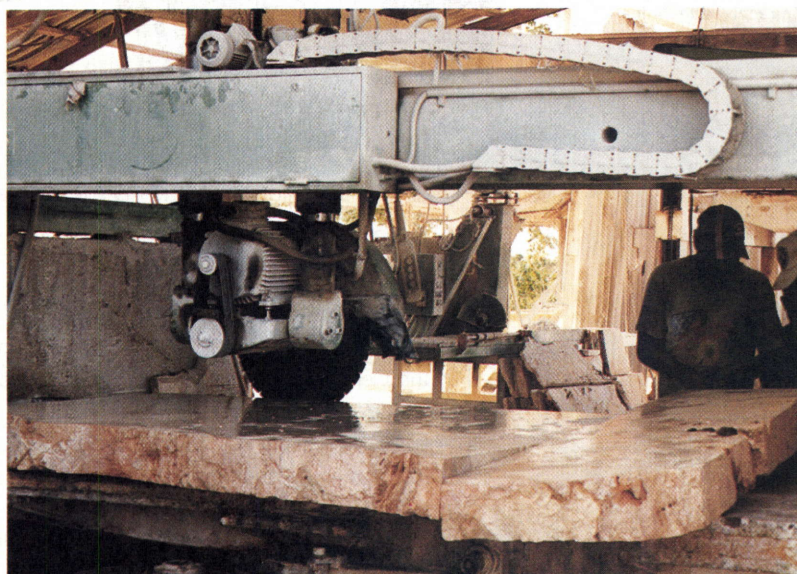


distributors and producers. It is an excellent means of rapidly obtaining indispensable technical know-how for organic production. It should be pointed out that the European organic producers have a level of training that is generally two years higher than the national average. All of them enrol in continuing education programmes.

Arco Océan Indien (Madagascar), the world leader in the production of organic cocoa, confirms: "Since the market for organic products does not yet exist, the organic producer increases his chances by joining forces with a European, American or Japanese partner. This is the first step to take before even beginning the certification procedure. Next, it is imperative to play the game by the rules to avoid being blacklisted for not having complied with the organic production conditions. Last, it is no use trying to go too quickly; it is better to guarantee a moderate level of stable pro-

The production of tropical fruit juices is becoming an increasing part of the Dominican economy's diversification, above

CDI provides considerable assistance in the sector of stone exploitation, below



duction than to promise quantities that cannot be delivered in the long run. One should not approach this market blindly because a bad reputation, especially in the field of organic products, is irreversible."

In conclusion, organic products have brought the producer and consumer closer together as the latter demands to know more about the origins of the food products he purchases. And in this field, ACP countries benefit from some sizeable advantages: their farmers have always remained very close to nature. ACP countries are also fortunate to have vast tracts of land that are easily certifiable, to not be dependent on additives and to have large quantities of available labour that is less costly than in northern countries. This last factor constitutes a substantial competitive advantage when one considers that organic farming requires 30% additional labour. It is clear that the ACP countries nowadays have the opportunity to take advantage of organically-grown products to increase their production reputation. The opportunity is genuine even if the organic market is a difficult one to target and one that is still in its early stages.



Furniture production at Von Furniture, which received technical assistance

CDI Contact: Paul Chotard and Henriette Acquah Dodet Malenge

CDI in the Dominican Republic

Locally, CDI has a national representative (appointed by the Centre). He is assisted by two professionals and a secretary appointed by the local CDI antenna. This team, entirely devoted to CDI activities, has placed the country among the top ten nations assisted by CDI.

From 1995 to 1999, CDI carried out 110 assistance

operations in the Dominican Republic in the sectors of mining exploitation (43%), food (24%), wood (16%), textile and leather (2%), with the remaining 15% classified as "miscellaneous". The total amount involved during that period is Euro 975,000.

In the mining sector, numerous missions have taken place in the natural stone sector and have had considerable impact on the development of the various related activities. The exploitation of marble quarries has been the target of many assistance projects. CDI has also been called upon to assist in the expansion of gypsum production and to stimulate the production of calcium carbonate.

In the wood sector, CDI has assisted furniture companies as well as others that produce objects in rattan or wood, such as superb model ships.

In the food sector, CDI has backed a wide variety of projects involving coffee processing, the exploitation of mineral water springs, freshwater shrimp and fish farming, the production of coconut cream, fruit juices and fruit products for export, salt production, etc.

Among the interventions in the miscellaneous category is assistance to the cigar industry and to the ornamental plant sector, a sector whose success has led the Dominican government to encourage its active development by farmers.

From among the Caribbean countries, the Dominican Republic continues to benefit from steady and effective CDI assistance, and the results to date fully justify the continuation of such efforts.

CDI Contact: Gary Aylmer

In the sectors

Caribbean

Technical training for clothing manufacturers

In the Caribbean, the textile market in the clothing sector sells almost all its production to the United States where it benefits from an import tax exemption. In fact, the USA operates in CMT (Cutting, Making, Trimming) with the Caribbean whereas Western Europe operates in OPT (Outward Processing Trade) with Eastern Europe: it is a means of importing articles at very low production cost. But a deadline is approaching: the customs duties will drop from 43 to 25% in the year 2000 and, starting in 2002, by virtue of a WTO world trade agreement, all customs barriers will gradually be reduced to zero by 2005. As it is now, Asia constitutes strong competition to Caribbean textile manufacturers, but in the future, the threat will increase substantially. For this reason, CDI has set up an assistance programme to structure 18 of the 40 companies originally identified to better resist the future "Asian wave". This selection was made following an analysis carried out in

January-February 1999 by an expert recruited to help CDI in this ambitious task. The promoter is EDADU/OECS, an institution co-financed by the European Commission that is active in the six countries constituting the Eastern Caribbean. EDADU was designated as the CDI correspondent.

Each of the selected companies' needs have been clearly identified to facilitate the conception of the most appropriate assistance programme to reinforce the companies. The content of the workshops will include an introduction to work measurement, various methods of improving standards, production programming, a cost reduction study, training capacities and work incentives. The project primarily aims to improve productivity, study the methods used, put together an effective organisation, raise the companies to international standards, implement better management controls and train personnel appropriately. Improvement of the equipment and maintenance will be the object of a second assistance programme.

CDI Contact: Gary Aylmer

Fiji

Ocean Trader: joint venture for tuna fishing

The Pacific presently boasts the world's largest tuna reserves and the related fishing resources.

CDI is taking appropriate initiatives in the sector.

Following an industrial partnership meeting on tuna organised by CDI for the Pacific region in Nadi (Fiji) in February 1999, some very encouraging results have appeared in the Pacific region. One of them is a joint-venture proposal between Ocean Trader (Fiji) and four participating European companies that are highly experienced in the capture, processing and marketing of tuna. CDI was called upon to lead a feasibility study on the joint-venture project.

Tuna remains under-exploited in the region, a situation that creates attractive perspectives. Ocean Trader was founded in 1995 to take over the assets of Stonefish Company Ltd and set up a more efficient fish processing plant. The company, which employs 60 persons and provides a livelihood to twice that number, is developing up to the stage of actual capture (800 tons per year). Its production of smoked and dried fish is exported.

Upon completion, the project will have resulted in the hiring of 50 fishermen in addition to the 60 already employed by Ocean Trader. It is estimated that between 200 and 300 persons, on land, will work for or benefit from the activity. Following the conclusion of the joint venture, there will be as many as 500 fishermen and 400 shore personnel. 2,000 persons will derive their livelihood from the expanded operations. CDI's role in the feasibility study led by four complementary experts has been essential, especially in terms of assessing the potential gain achieved by adding European ships to Ocean Trader's activity.

CDI Contacts: Vana Castica and Paul Chotard



Uganda

Assistance to the Uganda Fish Processors Exporters Association (UFPEA)

In Uganda, fishing provides the second source of foreign exchange after coffee

CDI has undertaken a double programme of "intense" assistance divided into two slightly staggered phases. The first one is intended for fishing companies and the second one for the secretariat of the association that unites them.

Following an industrial partnership meeting organised in March 1996, the publication of the report on the topics discussed brought out the need of technical assistance for the fish processing companies in Uganda operating on Lake Victoria. The objective is to enable them to comply with European sanitary standards. Exports to Europe are blocked, and the European experts granted a grace period; the main product involved is the Nile perch.

After being called upon, CDI set up a double assistance programme in two staggered phases. The first type of assistance was intended for the highly organised fishermen's association: the UFPEA. The second one targetted the association's secretariat in terms of its role as an administrative body.

Phase one

The first phase of the first assistance programme began in April 1997 which was completed in November 1998 included ten missions carried out by an expert sent by CDI. At the outset, it dealt with eleven of the countries largest companies that export Nile perch and are members of the UFPEA. In the end, only the seven operational companies will actually benefit from the action. The in-depth CDI assistance went as far as the complete reorganisation of the factories to ensure compliance with European hygiene standards and an uninterrupted refrigeration chain. Some companies were faced with a shortage of funds during the process. By CDI standards, this programme qualified as a large intervention, in part because of its duration. It was co-financed by the FMO (Dutch development



It was necessary to build a new jetty to be able to unload fish in compliance with European hygiene standards

agency). The CDI expert provided very useful information to the local inspecting body. Thanks to this programme, on July 1, 1998 Uganda became the region's first company authorised to resume exports to Europe through the end of the year 2000.

Phase two

The second phase of the assistance programme was in answer to the request made by all of the UFPEA member companies. In this case, the objective was to consolidate the results of the first phase and lead up to the total compliance with the HACCP (Hazardous Analysis Critical Control Points) method by improving the techniques used, starting from the moment of capture. A new jetty was even conceived to facilitate the respect of sanitary standards during the unloading of catches. This programme began in June 1999 and is scheduled to end in early 2000.

The timing of the second assistance programme is slightly staggered compared to the launching of the first programme. CDI aims to improve the expertise of the UFPEA secretariat. To do so, CDI has provided the services of a Belgian marine biologist to act as scientific and technical advisor. This person helps the secretariat organise its efforts effectively for the sake of its members, notably to ensure the continued compliance with sanitary standards. The first phase was spread over one year, from March 1998 to March 1999. In light of the first phase's results, CDI began a second phase of assistance in September 1999 to consolidate the achievements and develop the biological expertise of the UFPEA as it constitutes a sizeable negotiating partner for the Ugandan government. The second phase is scheduled for completion in September 2000.

CDI Contacts: Anani Adade-Helledy and Paul Chotard

In Brief

Further training for African poultry technicians

Following an identical seminar organised in 1997, CDI recognised the need to assist the Central and Western African poultry farmers in improving both their breeding techniques and their poultry management. Thus, CDI organised a seminar at the Innovation and Practical Centre (IPS) of the Barneveld Livestock College: from September 6 through 24 1999, twenty breeders from the region received training in breeding, incubation methods and the handling of layers. CDI also presented various technological aspects as well as production systems and methods.

CDI Contacts: Babs Adenaike and Corentin Georges Tatepo

Wood sector

Cameroon-Italy industrial cooperation programme

Various contacts with the Italian Wood Federation (FEDERLEGNO), the Italian Foreign Trade Institute (ICE) and Italian wood sector companies led CDI to prepare an industrial co-operation programme between Italy and Cameroon, co-financed by ICE and CDI. The Cameroon forestry code and its successive revisions reinforce the local transformation policy for timber production. Therefore, the emphasis of the assistance programme launched by CDI was placed on the modernisation of existing sawmills, the installation of drying kilns and the production of laminated products for doors and windows, garden furniture, furniture in kits and frames. The production of plywood, boards and flooring will be dealt with in a second stage. A meeting scheduled for late 1999-early 2000 between Cameroon and Italian industrialists aims to give appropriate solutions to the demands made by the profession and to put into effect CDI assistance so that financial, technical and commercial partnership agreements can be established between industrialists from the two countries. It is also intended to identify areas of potential, obstacles and specific problems facing the profession to better determine levels of priority. Three topics of discussion will orient the meeting: the market, the techniques and the environment.

CDI Contact: Paolo Baldan

In Brief

Belgo-Mozambican twinning programme

In May 1999, the first phase of the Belgo-Mozambican industrial twinning programme, co-financed by AGCD (Belgian Co-operation) and CDI, was successfully concluded. A mission of Belgian companies visited Mozambique. This phase of identifying suitable partners has already led to the forming of five partnerships between European and African companies. Continued efforts in this area should increase, beyond initial forecasts, the number of direct CDI interventions. The Mozambican potential and economic conditions enabled the Belgian partners to present local entrepreneurs with very interesting and less conventional alternatives in the diversification of their industrial partnerships. The support of the Mozambican embassy in Brussels enhanced the exchanges among participants from sectors such as fishing, construction block production, printing, textiles and the food industry. The second phase of the programme was launched in late June 1999 through a call for financial assistance from the CDI to aid in the success of the projects selected.

CDI Contacts: Jorge Borges and Orlando Perez Diaz

Concrete components: Sectoral study - ECOWAS

This guide is a follow-up to the industrial partnership meeting organised from 11 through 14 November 1997 in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) and is devoted to the development perspectives of the concrete components sector in all ECOWAS countries. Markets and perspectives, development and adaptation of technologies, development of projects and aspects of financing: the guide aims to provide practical formation on the investment perspectives in the sector of light concrete components. This guide can be obtained from CDI.

The CDI guide on ornamental

stone in the SADC zone, previously presented in Partnership, has experienced great success. It was welcomed with enthusiasm during the seminar on mining exploration techniques organised in May-June in Ireland. It was also distributed in June 1999 during the meeting of mining Ministries from SADC countries in Arusha (Tanzania), and during a CDI mission to Mozambique from 26 - 29 July 1999 on the occasion of a national conference on the mining sector organised by the World Bank and the Mozambican Ministry of Mining and Energy. Lastly, the guide was widely distributed at European trade fairs on stone (Carrara in May 1999, Lisbon in June 1999 and Verona in September 1999).

CDI Contact: Sid Boubekeur

How to benefit from CDI assistance: a brochure in Portuguese

CDI and ICEP (Investments, Commerce and Tourism of Portugal) recently published a brochure in Portuguese detailing the ways of obtaining a wide range of assistance from CDI. The type of assistance is well defined, as are the criteria that the beneficiaries must satisfy, the amount of contributions, etc. The guide also provides examples of assistance. Given that the projects can be introduced via the CDI network in Europe and in the ACP countries, a list of contact points is also included. This brochure can be obtained from CDI or ICEP (Direcção de Promoção das Exportações Sul, 101 Av. 5 de Outubro, 1050-051 Lisboa).

CDI Contacts: Orlando Perez Diaz and Gerardus Nijborg

CDI-DEG agreement renewed

CDI recently renewed its cooperation agreement with DEG (*Deutsche Investitions und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH*), the German development bank. According to the terms of this agreement, any ACP country proj-

ect emanating from CDI or DEG involving a German partner will be able to benefit from a joint participation of the two institutions in the financing of the technical assistance required for its development. The German government's new co-operation programme for developing countries - including ACP countries - which came into effect in 1999 and is called PPP (Private-Public Partnership), clearly stipulates that a German partner must be involved in the project concerned. Moreover, the DEG's financial participation in the technical assistance cannot be greater than that of the project's promoters. This condition also applies to CDI. This agreement marks the continuation of fruitful co-operation between CDI and DEG begun several years ago. It will enable the two institutions to take advantage of their respective networks and financial capacities.

CDI Contact: Orlando Perez Diaz

Leather and shoes

Entrepreneurs meeting in Cape Verde

In view of increasing the awareness of potential investors and making known the incentives offered by governments, CDI periodically organises industrial twinning meetings for various sectors. In July 1999, a mission of some fifteen Portuguese directors specialised in the leather and shoe sectors was organised by CDI and ICEP/FCE for Cape Verde. The mission had been preceded by a one-day workshop in Porto (Portugal), with the participation of Promex (Cape Verde) and the Portuguese Association of the Leather and Shoe Industries. The July 1999 mission was intended to highlight joint venture perspectives between the two countries. A large number of partnerships are now in progress.

CDI Contact: Sebastiao Ditutala

Done.

On 11

October of this year

in Pretoria, the European

Union and South Africa ratified the

agreement on trade, development and cooper-

ation. Mr Alec Erwin, the Minister for Trade and

Industry of South Africa, represented his country

when the agreement was signed. The European Union was

represented by Mr Poul Nielsen, the Commissioner for

Cooperation; Jakku Valtasaari, the Finnish Secretary of

State; and the European Union Ambassadors to South

Africa.

The day before, the two parties had reached a compromise

on the case of wines and spirits, which had threatened

to impede finalisation of the long-awaited agreement. The

European Union was unwilling to permit the use of the

terms port and sherry produced in South Africa. Under the

specific agreement on wines and spirits, South Africa has

five years in which to gradually stop using the terms port

and sherry on non-European markets. This arrangement already

applies in the European market. These terms can be used freely

in South Africa for a period of twelve years, at the end of

which the signatories to the agreement will renegotiate the

arrangement.

The European Union, in its turn, undertakes to grant aid amounting

to Euro 15 million, which will be used to finance the relabelling of

the South African products in question. South Africa will also benefit

from customs duties for up to 32 million litres of wine.

This agreement on trade, development and cooperation opens up unprece-

dentented opportunities for commercial exchanges and collaboration between

the parties. It should be emphasised that the European Union is the main

trading partner of this major African country, on its own accounting for

45% of South Africa's foreign trade. About 70% of foreign investment in

South Africa is from the European Union. Finally, by financing development

programmes to the tune of 127.5 million per year, the European Union is

treating South Africa as a privileged partner.

The general agreement was drafted in March of this year,

finalised in October of this year and will be

applied from 1 January 2000.

The EU and South Africa reach agreement on wine

To find out more,

e-mail :

contact@iansa.org.

Website: http :

//www.iansa.org

The Hague, May 1999.

200 NGOs and allied institutions set up the International Action Network on Small Arms, IANSA. The aim of the organisation is to stop the proliferation and misuse of small arms, instruments of repression and violation of human rights, which hinder development.

IANSA sees itself as a platform for

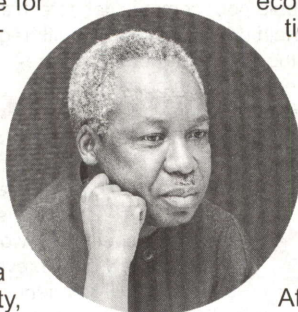
discussion and work. Each of its component organisations contributes information, know-how and experience for use by the other organisations. By properly coordinating their activities and their campaigns to raise awareness, all these different organisations will speak and act together through IANSA. The long list of participants includes Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins Sans Frontières, NOVIB, Oxfam (Albania, Belgium, UK), Save the Children, Servicio Paz y Justicia, etc.

IANSA is operational

Julius Nyerere, a man of wisdom

Julius Nyerere, the former Tanzanian president, died on Thursday 14 October. This simple and honest man leaves behind memories of his frankness, a particular view of socialism with an African face and his unremitting desire for independence from regional and international powers.

Julius was born in 1921 as one of the many sons of the chief of the Zanaki, a small tribe in Tanganyika. He gained a degree in history at the University of Edinburgh, returning to his country in 1952. Two years later, he transformed the Tanganyika African Association from a cultural association into a political party, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). He claimed that the party was the people in action, and despite the British attempts to break the movement, Nyerere turned TANU into the leading political force in the country. (70 out of 71 seats in the 1960 elections). He negotiated and achieved a peaceful transition to independence in 1961. He was elected president with 97% of the votes in 1962. (He was re-elected in 1965, 1970 and for the last time in 1980). In 1964 he achieved union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar, forming the United Republic of Tanzania. After the failure of the free-market system inherited from the British, he experimented with African socialism, which he called *ujamaa*



(*spirit of community* in Swahili). He gave it up as a result of the failure of certain measures, such as collectivisation of the land. He reorientated his policies by gradually moving towards a mixed economy. In 1985, he gave up his position as head of state in order to devote himself to reforming his party. After having retired to his native village, he still frequently acted as an ambassador for the third world or as a mediator for the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

The unity of Africa was the other main concern of this president of Tanzania. But unlike most of his African counterparts who became prominent after independence, Nyerere really did believe in the unity of the continent. He thought that without it, the people of Africa would have no future, except as perpetual victims of imperialism and exploitation, and that Africans must develop themselves, whatever the cost. Although his model cannot be described as a success and failed to enable his country to take off, thanks to his policies Tanzania has remained and continues to remain free of the conflicts that have troubled so many of its neighbours. And, somehow, it still enjoys one of the least effective healthcare systems and one of the highest rates of literacy in Africa, including among women, which is quite an achievement.



First Signatory to the Convention on Child Labour

Encouraging news from a country from the south: the Republic of the Seychelles in September was the first to sign the new convention forbidding the exploitation of child labour. Juan Somavia, Director-General of BIT has welcomed this and has called for everyone to sign: workers, employers and governments, to get rid of the

injustice of making children work. The text of the convention specifies and enlarges on the concept. It talks of the worst forms of work, including all kinds of exploitation, all over the world: slavery, selling children to pay off debts, forced and compulsory labour, their involvement in armed conflict, prostitution... BIT puts at 250 million the children put to work on the five continents. And as well as the fact that this is a clear violation of human rights, it is also necessary to emphasise that a child put out to work these days becomes an adult who tomorrow will have great difficulty in finding its rightful place in society, because they will be hampered physically and psychologically. This convention, No 182, adopted unanimously last June in Geneva by the 174 Member States of the International Labour Office, can come into force 12 months after its ratification by two members are registered.

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Halving the number of people suffering from malnutrition by 2015 was the objective accepted by those participating in the World Food Summit in Rome two years ago. This goal seems a long way off. The annual report of the World Food Programme is uncompromising in claiming that 1998 was a very dangerous year. This United Nations agency had never had so many demands on its resources in any of its previous 36 years of existence.

And the prevalence of hunger beat all records. Over the past year, the WFP provided assistance for about 75 million people in 80 countries. It contributed 36% of world food aid as against only 15% in 1990. Over 53% of this aid went to the continent of Africa.

There has been an obvious upsurge in emergencies

of Africa: Sudan, Guinea Bissau, the Great Lakes region, Liberia, Afghanistan and also in the former Yugoslavia (Kosovo).

The main desire of the WFP is to enable poor communities to achieve a certain degree of security with regard to the supply of food. It is therefore introducing policies intended to bring about long-term

development. This aspect of its work has a low profile, even though this UNO agency is devoting an increasing amount of attention to achieving this. In 1998, the programme conducted a campaign to encourage the Egyptian government to allocate land more efficiently to benefit farmers without land. In Benin, it devoted itself to increasing girls' literacy. In Syria, it tried to help women by working to give them greater access to credit. Wherever it takes action, the WFP prioritises women, since they and children are the main victims of poverty and hunger. Their situation in society also make them the engine that powers development.

The WFP calls on its partners, i.e. the NGOs, the donor countries and the entire international community. All these elements of the Society of Nations are urged to continue and intensify their efforts in the war they are waging against poverty and hunger. The WFP wishes to be realistic about the future. 1998 therefore shows us what will be required of us if we really want to reduce hunger, which is an affront to human dignity.

requiring significant amounts of humanitarian assistance. Anyone who is doubtful of this only needs to consider world news in 1998. Born of climatic change, El Niño has sown natural disasters in its wake: hurricanes and floods in Asia and Latin America and drought in Africa, which is further exacerbating the living conditions of already poor communities. The WFP has therefore intervened in China, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nicaragua and elsewhere.

In what might be termed a more traditional manner, the WFP has taken action in crises resulting from armed conflict, mainly in the continent

AIDS

Depressing atmosphere at the 11th International Conference which took place in Lusaka from 13 - 17 September. Powerlessness and isolation were the words used by delegates, sufferers and specialists. No response from the African politicians who otherwise were conspicuous by their absence. 90% of sufferers from this catastrophe across the world are from Africa.

Although the World Bank says it is concerned about the consequences of AIDS in the context of development, it continues reducing its loans to African countries: 67 million dollars in 1994, down to less than 2 million in 1997. What can Africa do about this shortage of means? It will carry on as best it can, with the treatments that exist in spite of everything, and people will start to turn back to traditional medicine... For how much longer?

World Bank - IMF: An alliance against poverty?

At a meeting in Washington in September, these two institutions called upon creditors to reduce the debts of the poorest countries.

Gordon Brown proudly proclaimed the birth of a new world alliance against poverty at the end of the Washington meeting, which gave concrete expression to the decision taken by the G8 in Cologne two months earlier. The Chairman of the Interim Committee (the political organ of the IMF) and British Chancellor of the Exchequer added that those who were enjoying the greatest prosperity the world had ever known were now reaching out to those who were crushed under the biggest debts the world had ever known.

This ambitious plan to alleviate the indebtedness of the poorest countries covers 41 countries (including 34 countries of sub-Saharan Africa) and has an overall budget of 60 billion dollars. In return for this assistance, these countries must undertake to allocate the resources released in this way to social programmes intended to reduce poverty. These structural adjustment policies will, of course, be specified and supervised by the World Bank and the IMF.

Although the World Bank and the IMF appear to be satisfied, a number of NGOs and associations are describing it as illusory. Apparently, out of the 23 countries that ought to have benefited from a similar plan since 1996, only four (Bolivia, Uganda, Guyana and Mozambique) have actually received assistance under it. In addition, the write-off does not cover debts between states or debts owed prior to any re-scheduling (all the countries have been re-scheduling their debts for more than 10 years).

Millions celebrate ageing

The biggest health promotion event in history by and for older people took place on Saturday 2 October in more than 1,500 cities in 86 countries.

Well over 2 million people of all ages staged a global "walkathon" to support the concept of healthy and productive "active ageing" and to oppose "ageism" or age discrimination. Active ageing is the World Health Organization's response to the rapidly-growing number of men and women over 60 in the world's population. Today there are about 590 million older people; in just 25 years that number will double to 1.2 billion.

The world-wide walk, known as the Global Embrace, also celebrated the United Nations 1999 International Year of Older Persons. WHO launched the Global Movement for Active Ageing, a world-wide network of interested partners in developed and developing countries, through the Global Embrace. By active ageing, WHO refers to the process of seizing and optimising opportunities for physical, social and mental well-being throughout the entire life in order to extend healthy life expectancy.



Constantin

"The thinking behind the Global Embrace is quite simple," says Dr Alexandre Kalache, the Brazilian Head of WHO's Ageing and Health Programme.

"Individuals can and should make choices about healthy life styles, and policy-makers are in a position to make well-informed decisions about the policies that will keep the largest number of people productive and healthy at older ages. Informed changes in life styles and sensible public policies - not miracle drugs - are the road to active ageing. Getting older is good for individuals and for their societies. The alternative of dying prematurely is certainly not. The future emphasis of public policy should be on promoting active and healthy ageing rather than concentrating on a disease-oriented approach."

Hailing all these and innumerable other events on Saturday 2 October, Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, WHO's Director-General, declared: "The Global Embrace is an impressive demonstration of what Active Ageing is all about. In all parts of the world older people have been actively involved in planning and organising the events in their cities and towns. I would like to assure you that WHO will continue to play a leading role in promoting Active Ageing in the future by launching a Global Movement for Active Ageing. This Global Movement will harness the combined energies of government and civil society to promote policies and programmes that work best to ensure that people remain in good health and are active and involved with their families and communities."

NGO Development Education Forum

Edinburgh 3-6 November 1999

Representatives of development NGO national platforms from the 15 Member States of the EU met in Edinburgh for the annual Forum on raising European citizens' awareness of development issues. Facing up to the challenge of the impact of globalisation on North-South relations, the delegates debated new strategies intended to broaden and deepen support in the EU for actions and policies which could have a positive impact in the South. Working with groups ranging from schools and popular education movements to trades unions and consumers, the NGOs are proposing to improve collaboration with partners in developing countries, enhance inter-NGO cooperation in the EU to increase efficiency, and to lobby for an EU Council Resolution on Development Education. An annual Summer School to build development education capacity will be organised next year in Austria and will address strategies for stimulating civil society participation in decision-making on development issues, bringing together participants from Europe and from the South.

"I live by the sea, you empty it"

Industrial overfishing has led to severe depletion of stocks, threatening the livelihoods of millions of fishermen. They demonstrated about this on 21 November, International Fishing Day.

There are at least 200 million traditional fishermen who depend directly or indirectly on fishing for their survival. 95% of them live in the South. For some of them, fish is their staple food, for others it is a source of income.

But today, all feel the impoverishment of these marine resources, overfished by powerful industrial vessels in their waters.

If the "world overloading of fishing fleets" has given rise to many debates in Europe, these have not been effective, for many reasons. Measures taken by the Commission to reduce the overfishing have not been followed, due to lack of political will in the Member States. On 21 November the coastal communities of 32 countries gathered together at the heart of the World Forum of Fishermen and those who work in the fishing industry remembered that European industrial fishing is always a reality. Heavily subsidised, it is more prosperous than ever.

3rd Ministerial Post-Lomé Conference, Brussels, 8-9 December 1999. After two days of intense negotiations the EU and ACP have concluded a provisory agreement which will replace the Lomé Convention, which expires next February, for another eight years.

In the wake of the turbulent Seattle Conference, it is significant that the 15 EU Member States and 71 ACP countries "have reached a very satisfactory agreement in this cooperation" as Philip Lowe, Director-General for Development and Chief EU Negotiator, expressed. The agreement still has to be formalised and verified in a ministerial setting, but on the basis of the progress achieved so far, Commissioner Nielson considers that the agreement is comprehensive and said that he is looking forward to the final conclusions of the negotiations early next year.

On the initiative of the President of the Republic of Mali, Alpha Oumar Konare, Bamako has become the capital of the internet. Internet - the pathways to development is the title of an international conference taking place from 21 -26 February. It concerns the place of this tool in development, and the mobilisation of decision makers in the public and private sector in favour of the use of information technology and communication (TIC). To know more, consult the site. www.anais.org.

The Sir Charles Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (T) is organising on 12-14 January a series of conferences on the theme alternative development in the Caribbean and of the role of the service sector. The end of the cold war, the new rules of international trading and the scientific revolutions, knowledge and production are working to promote an understanding between countries in a world context. This meeting aims to stimulate dialogue between the different actors in development in the Caribbean: intellectuals, professionals, workers...

Information :
www.uwichill.edu.bb/ISER/iseconference2.htm

Public Meetings of the Development Committee of the European Parliament, **Brussels**

26 January at 3pm
27 January at 9am and 3pm

21 February at 3pm
22 February at 9am and 3pm
23 February at 9am

The agenda can be found on the website, accessible from the Europa website, which has links to all the European institutions:
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/development>

The International Council for Care in the Community (ICCC), the UN, in collaboration with NGO's and the private sector are holding a meeting in New York on 10 February 2000 to consider the best way to live together: "Caring Communities for the 21st Century - what is possible in a community open to all?"

Preparing our society for the Age of Longevity, where do the oldest in the community fit in? Technology, tourism, town planning with a human face directed to the common good, all generations together. Experts come from different areas: town planning, architecture, development finance, technology, health, tourism will debate all the questions.

Information:
Fax : 212/688-4321/
e-mail: iccc@undp

16- 22 March
Second world water Forum and Ministerial Conference in The Hague.
Tel: 31 70 348 5402
Fax: 31 70 348 6792
e-mail: secretariat@worldwaterforum.org
web site:
[//www.worldwaterforum.org.information.html](http://www.worldwaterforum.org.information.html)

Training programmes in the health sector

The IOC aims to increase solidarity between member countries by promoting cooperation in economic, social, cultural and technical areas. It was from this perspective that the General Secretariat of the IOC commissioned the Brussels Research Unit Education and Development (URED) in close cooperation with national experts to draw up a comprehensive inventory of training programmes offered by public and private institutes in the health sector in the Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Réunion and the Seychelles. The European Union provided financial support for the study and production of the brochure. The guide is intended to serve principally as an information tool for students wishing to study in an institution of an IOC member country, but it will also prove a valuable reference source for researchers and teachers keen to establish cooperation links with colleges in the region.

Guide to training in the health sector in the Indian Ocean Commission countries, an initiative of the **Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)**, financed by the European Union and produced by the Research Unit Education and Development (URED), Brussels.

e-mail: ured@tvd.be

Ethnolinguistic analysis of proverbs

The author, the Zambian linguist Mukumbuta Lisimba, has a PhD in African linguistics from the University of Wisconsin and is the current head of the Department of Linguistics and Oral Traditions at CICIBA. The work is structured in two main sections. The first section is an ethnolinguistic analysis of Kongo proverbs and also those from other parts of the Bantu region.

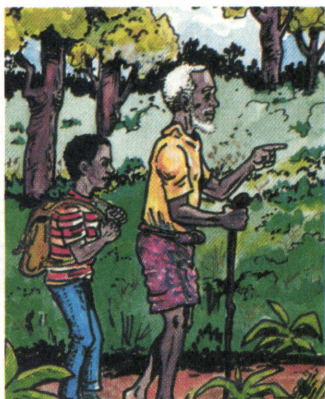
The second section features a selection of 122 Kongo proverbs and 126 proverbs from other Bantu groups including the Zulus of South Africa, the Kwanyama of Angola and Namibia, the Tekes of the two Congos and Gabon, the Fang of Cameroon, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, the Sotho of Lesotho, the Swahili of Kenya, the Nkore of Uganda, and the Ndebele and Shona of Zimbabwe. Translations and meanings are included for all the proverbs featured.

This work is published by the International Centre for Bantu Civilisations (CICIBA) in Libreville, as part of its programme of cooperation with the European Commission.

Kongo proverbs and the origins of Bantu wisdom

Mukumbuta LISIMBA - Illustrations: Ly BEEK - CICIBA, B.P.

770 - Libreville, Gabon - 251 pages



Rice cultivation in Sukumaland

Based on his experience in Tanzania, the author, who studied Tropical Crop Science at Wageningen Agricultural University in the Netherlands, explains why integrated nutrient management (INM)/low external input and sustainable agriculture (LEISA) approaches cannot provide sustainable soil fertility in the rice cultivation systems of Sukumaland or similar areas in the present circumstances. A review of the literature suggests a number of elements that are required for INM/LEISA successes in Sub-Saharan Africa. Without these, farming methods based primarily on labour-intensive techniques can even lead to the impoverishment of farm households.

H.C.C. Meertens : *Rice cultivation in the Farming Systems of Sukumaland, Tanzania: A quest for sustainable production under structural adjustment programmes* (The Royal Tropical Institute [KIT]). ISBN 90 6832 130 7 - 192 pages - Paperback - thesis - Dfl 29.00

Training opportunities abroad

Information on more than 1,800 courses offered by 230 different institutions, selected on the basis of strict quality criteria to enable those interested in training opportunities abroad to take more informed decisions on their career and professional development.

Both the Directory and the CD-ROM are outputs of a project financed by the European Union aimed at fostering South-South cooperation in human resources development.

In addition to the CD-ROM the information can be accessed directly at a special web site maintained by the DTOACP Project. It can be accessed at :
HYPERLINK <http://dtoacp.kub.nl>
<http://dtoacp.kub.nl>

Second edition CD-ROM of the *Directory of Advanced Training Opportunities in African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (DTOACP)*.

Thinking about democracy

An analysis of what ordinary people think about democracy, as they have expressed themselves in public opinion surveys. In seven different countries (Southern Africa, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia and Zimbabwe) this series of essays shows what people expected from democracy, how they have been disappointed and satisfied, and their hopes for the future. The book restores confidence in what democracy is really meant to be about, i.e. vesting power in people to guide their government and the political process.

Southern Africa - The people's voices - Perspectives on Democracy The School of Government of the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

From this issue of *The Courier*, No 178, the Operational Summary will no longer appear in the magazine. This is for several reasons, most importantly that it is available on the web:

Address: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/development>
then click **Projects**
e-mail: dev-info@cec.eu.int
SCR: europa.eu.int/comm/scr

It is regularly updated, and therefore more current than any that appear in *The Courier*, which comes out only every two months. By the time it reaches some of its readers, it is considerably older than that.

The Courier welcomes letters and comment. All correspondence should be addressed to:

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or sent by e-mail to
sylvia.howe@cec.eu.int



It's the jerk that makes the difference

Walk around uptown Kingston and you quickly spot internationally-known fast food chains. In one street you have six to choose from.

And what a choice!

Hamburgers, chicken, nuggets, filets 'o' fish, fried or grilled offered in whopper, quarter or half pound portions. The obligatory potato fries, and soda water.

Island Grill is a home-grown Jamaican fast food operation. It's the jerk that makes it different. All the usual elements are

repackaged Jamaican style. Restaurants are vibrant with colour, burgers, chicken and fish are coated in a spicy, peppery sauce and grilled or baked in a way Jamaicans find fingerlickin' good. Green banana fries go down a treat with almost everything - chicken and fries will never be the same again. There's always rice with callaloo (a green vegetable similar to spinach) or pumpkin, *pickney meals* for children, or *jus' 'nuff* (just enough) to *soopa doopa* proportions.

More importantly, Island Grill offers dishes made from local produce. A women's agro-processing group from the Morant - Yallahs agricultural development project (Cooperation in Focus) is supplying callaloo to Island. To all intents and purposes the concept is succeeding. Franchises have been opened in London and Florida.



