

DEVELOPMENT

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THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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FOREWORD

In its policy of cooperation with the Third World, rural development is undeniably the sector to which the Community allocates the most funds, as it accounts for a third of all financial commitments, not counting food aid, the counterpart funds from which go as a matter of priority to rural development projects.

For the 66 countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP), this is a deliberate choice, made when the third Lomé Convention was negotiated. Community assistance to Latin America and Asia (LAA) is based on a unilateral decision by the 12 Member States and covered by a regulation which restricts the field of application to rural development and regional cooperation. Aid to Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries (SEM) is more diversified, because the cooperation agreements do not provide for any concentration, although, in practice, some countries have channelled a large percentage of Community funds into agriculture.

This publication looks at each of these three geographical areas in turn, giving an historical outline, but paying particular attention to the more recent aspects of cooperation. Examples are given to illustrate the text and there are inserts to shed extra light on specific operations.

PART ONE: RURAL DEVELOPMENT
IN THE ACP (AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC) COUNTRIES, 1960-1989

First stage - priority for cash crops

The European cooperation policy emerged with the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1958, when it was no more than a fragile bridge between a very young institutional Europe and its colonies and one or two newly independent nations. The development drive in these southern countries focused on infrastructure and industrialization at the time and the development theory was that local agricultural output was adequate to feed the populations and there would be no harm done to the rural areas if some of the workers were taken away to build up industry and infrastructure. So a large part of the first European Development Fund (EDF), covering the 1958-63, was used to equip the colonies which later became young independent States.

The resources of the second EDF (1964-69), set up by Yaoundé II, also focused on economic and social infrastructure - schools, hospitals, airports, roads, ports and so on. However, considerable sums also went on agriculture, but mainly export crops, groundnuts, coffee, tea and palm oil or cotton indeed being the main sources of income.

In most cases the Community contribution did two things. It improved the dominant cash crop - the national speciality, as it were - and it tried to diversify this sector of cash crops so as to avoid "putting all the eggs in one basket" and reduce the effects of some price slumps as much as possible. In Senegal, the growing of groundnuts, a traditional crop, was intensified, mechanised and improved and new cash crops (cotton, fruit and peanuts) were encouraged. Similar diversification was undertaken in Côte d'Ivoire (the Palm Plan), Rwanda and Cameroon (tea) and other places too. The situation lasted without too much damage until the end of the 60s, as the food output was still sufficient to feed a population which was expanding, of course, although at nothing like the rate that was to occur in the 80s.

In the early 70s, various misfortunes came to overturn this way of seeing and doing things. The first of these were climatic: in Africa, and particularly in the Sahel, which - as Europe was to learn - means "fringe of the desert", cereal production collapsed and mass hunger followed.

And not just in Africa either: the Indian sub-continent too was very short of rain. And then there was demographic growth of something like 3% p.a., increasing the pressure on the demand for food. Lastly, to cope with its cereal shortfall, the Soviet Union began to buy up large quantities of wheat, as much as 40 million t p.a., on the international market. By way of comparison, the cereal output of the 12 Sahel countries was 18.3 million t in 1986. So, under the combined pressure of events, there was the evidence - an unstable cereal market and soaring prices, increases of more than 100%. Finally, since mishaps never come singly, surging oil prices made the situation in the developing countries even worse. Their oil bills soared and so did transport costs and, therefore, the cost of the cereal imports needed to cope with the shortage and the price of fertilizer, other inputs, pesticide and seed - which were still essential to bigger and better production. The result was that the food crisis was coupled with a financial crisis - and it did nothing but get worse over the years.

Governments, funders and aid and assistance organizations, with the EEC in the front ranks, reacted, got together and decided to readjust their cooperation plans to put greater emphasis on growing food.

This period saw the emergence of the idea of integrated rural development, something which many of the (bilateral and multilateral, public and NGO) funders erected into a philosophy and method of development cooperation (see inset). They also increased their food aid significantly alongside.

Second stage - integrated rural development

In 1975, when Lomé II was signed, the economic and geographical situation of Europe and its partners changed. The United Kingdom joined the EEC and its former colonies joined the Associated States of Africa and Madagascar, en masse, to create the group of ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) countries and this institutional change, combined with the above trends, was to bring about a profound change in North-South cooperation to the benefit of rural development and the food sector specifically.

Major cereal crop extension projects were run, particularly for rice, which does not rely directly on rainfall but on a regular supply of water from irrigation. Large-scale rice projects were thus set up in several ACP countries - Ethiopia, Senegal, Cameroon, Madagascar, Niger, Suriname and Guyana. This adjustment of cooperation policies to the benefit of food crops had positive results and, between 1975 and 1980, there were no further major famines and world price tension slackened. Yet more and more people were hungry, first and foremost because of increasing demographic pressure (the average growth rate in Africa went from 1.8% to 3.6% between 1960 and 1980, with a peak of 4% in Kenya) and, second, because although some growing methods were new and some of the highest yields in the world were achieved here and there, the cost of producing this irrigated rice (diesel fuel for pumping, upkeep of the equipment and transport from the place of production to the markets) was such that the plantations ran at a deficit. Nevertheless, there were some exceptions - the small (250 ha) Toula plantation in Niger, for example, set up in 1975 with a grant of ECU 2 million. The rice growers here replaced all the motor pump units with money from a common fund which they had built up with the profits of 10 year's operation. No less than 24 000 t rice were produced in Toula, now a region which is fully self supporting in cereals and a supplier of the Niamey market.

The rural exodus had swollen and was still swelling the towns of the Third World out of all proportion and, in Africa and the Caribbean, urban expansion increased by an average of 6%. To feed these populations, often living in slums around the big metropolises on the coast, the leaders sometimes opted to import cereals, particularly rice and wheat, which were cheaper than cereals produced locally. At the same time, the city dwellers started to prefer white bread and long grain rice to local cereals, a change in habits which stepped up the demand for imported goods and increased food dependency and the deficit in these States' trade balance by the same amount.

The Community brought in integrated rural development programmes alongside the cereal projects in a large number of countries of the Caribbean and the Pacific. The projects in north eastern Bénoué (Cameroon),

Iringa (Tanzania) and Djebel Mara (Sudan) had the same philosophy behind them (see inset). And they had many things in common too - encouragement for food crops (cereals, roots and tubers), cash crops (cotton and coprah), small animals and village water engineering, primary health care and village pharmacies, training and agricultural extension work. And, in the light of the environment, the climate and the productive traditions, other specific elements were added too - improvements to the administrative potential of the local authorities in Tanzania, for example, fish farming in Cameroon, artisanal fishing in Vanuatu, the construction of family reservoirs in Tuvalu (which depends entirely on rainwater for its soft water supplies) and anti-erosion work on Rodrigues (Mauritius).

INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

By going in for integrated rural development in the mid-70s, cooperation placed economic considerations in a wider social and cultural context. Integrated rural development projects pay more attention to the needs of the underprivileged groups of society and participation is also a driving force of development which is sustained at the grass roots and built and achieved with them. The various components of projects, such as credit to purchase machinery produced by local craftsmen, higher productivity, the construction of rural tracks and village stores, mini-water engineering schemes and market gardening, health training and literacy schemes, were set up jointly, for they all interpenetrate and work towards the same aim. Nonetheless, the attempt to integrate the rural world in the economic system often failed and, while integrated rural development projects remained positive experiences, of course, they had few lasting effects on food security. The projects were sometimes overambitious and in other cases failed to mobilise the local authorities. It was not until the food strategies of the 80s that integrated rural development projects were seen in the broader economic context of the country.

The varied fortunes of these integrated rural projects, observers suggest, had more to do with the socio-economic environment than village involvement or local tradition. Some covered too wide an area and others overturned biotopes and ways of life, causing new problems. In many cases, the economic and productive effects were diluted in a difficult or even hostile macro-economic environment. It is good to lay rural tracks, of course, but no help with shifting output to the towns and the rest of the country if there is no road, rail or river infrastructure. New production techniques and tools and machinery or higher performance seed offer sound prospects of better production. But who and what for? If storage, marketing and urban distribution have not been organized, development efforts may well be pointless and ensure that the sector remains one of subsistence farming. The people who benefit directly from a project get a guaranteed supply of food and a better standard of living, certainly, but the majority of the population gets nothing. In some countries, it is the political circumstances which defeat the funders' efforts to make them inoperative. Ethnic uprisings, wars of religion and frontier fighting all do violence to development efforts.

From these findings and a stock-taking of the projects run in 1975-80, there emerged a new approach to rural development - the food strategies.

CAMEROON - RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH EAST BÉNOUÉ

In the early 70s, the land in the Mandara Mountains in far north western Cameroon could no longer feed an over-large population. Further south, however, east of Garoua, there was the Bénoué plain, a fertile area of many rivers but with a curiously small population of barely 20 000 souls, and the authorities decided to try and encourage mountain dwellers from the north to come and settle there, with the promise of facilities and infrastructure.

"We transferred the first of them and then word of mouth did the rest and a movement got under way", recalls the Head of the Bénoué Government Mission. Over the years, the people had to be welcomed, the area developed and, most important, production encouraged. Today, the population is 170 000 strong and the results are impressive - 1100 km of tracks laid and 1600 km rehabilitated, 320 wells and 80 boreholes sunk, 180 village pumps installed and 11 dispensaries, as many pharmacies, 100 primary classrooms, dozens of shops and stores and hundreds of houses provided... the list gets longer every day. By 1991, ECU 46 million will have been spent on this.

This vast integrated rural development operation contains a health section which is universally regarded as a success. Every child is vaccinated and the maternity units and dispensaries are managed by the population, as indeed are the 11 pharmacies. Every village in the area has its pharmacy, run according to basic health principles. The schools however, are still inadequate, some classes having as many as 150 pupils and no textbooks or exercise books.

The problems of deforestation in the tropics are well known. So a nursery has been set up in the region to supply thousands of young forest and fruit plants. The main drive has of course been to improve agricultural output. Cotton is the cash crop and sorghum, mouskouri, groundnuts and maize the food crops. In 1973, barely 8000 ha were under crop, but the figure today is 65 000 ha, both cropland and yields having improved thanks to programme backing by rural engineering technicians. The use of inputs, fallow periods and draft animals have been made possible by a system of agricultural credit, managed by village groupings run along village cooperative lines.

Other European funders (Fed. Rep. of Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Belgium) have recently joined with the Cameroonian Government and the European Community to exploit the potential constituted by the reservoir behind the Lagdo dam over the Bénoué and fish farming, irrigated crops and lake fishing are new and promising activities for the inhabitants.

Stage three - food and sectoral strategies

In 1980, the European Parliament organized consultations and held a special debate on world food problems. The following year, the Commission launched a plan of campaign against world hunger, which went a long way to guiding the European Community's agricultural cooperation and rural development schemes. It pointed out that the priority for development, without any doubt, was for every human being to have enough food of the right sort of quality to eat. However, over the previous decade, African food production had gone up by 1.7%, while population growth was 3% p.a., so the food shortfall did nothing but increase. And the relative increase in production was obtained, not through better growing methods, but an increase in the arable land - causing greater pressure on the environment.

This plan marked the emergence of a more global and more political approach to development problems. It ran food strategies born of the finding that, in many countries, despite large injections of funds into rural development projects, nothing had really changed in terms of nutritional balance or food security. Yields stagnated and even regressed when they should at least have kept pace with demographic trends. The methods were unsuitable and there was less and less food for the urban centres every agricultural year. The Governments in the countries of the South had policies which did little to encourage local agricultural output and, anxious to guarantee their citizens cereals at the lowest cost, they imported wheat and rice from the east and the far east and sold it on the urban markets, sometimes at subsidized prices. These policies contributed to social stability in the towns, but did little about the basic problem of the countries' food security.

This new food strategy approach was used in Mali, Kenya, Zambia and Rwanda from 1982 onwards and the basic ideas were incorporated into the text of Lomé III in 1985. In addition to the food strategies, this Convention also recommended a sectoral focus for aid. The bulk of the means made available to a country had therefore to be allocated to a priority sector of the economy, in some cases even being combined with geographical concentration. In the majority of the ACP countries, this benefited agriculture and worked towards the aims of food security. Small countries and islands with limited agricultural potential were an exception to this - in Cape Verde, for example, the means were focused on the urban environment and, in Mauritius, on small and medium-sized firms. Rural development programmes were set up in the light of the food strategies and the sectoral concentration of financial and technical aid.

Food strategies - three levels of intervention

The three levels of intervention in the sector as a whole are:

- micro-economic level, i.e. the family and the village, which is in fact the level at which rural development projects of the previous generation were run;
- meso-economic level, where the whole of a branch of agriculture (rice, cotton or tea, for example) is involved, from production to consumption, with particular emphasis on marketing;
- macro-economic level, covering all the economic indicators influencing agriculture - the exchange rate, imports etc.

MALI - FOOD STRATEGY

Mali is a Sahel country, eaten away by desert and with a major food shortfall to cope with, but it still has real agricultural potential with irrigation, livestock and fish. In 1981, it adopted a Cereal Market Reorganization Programme, a real revolution in its food and agriculture policy and the origin and focus of its food strategy.

This food strategy is based on recognition of the role of the farmers as economic operators. It aims to improve self sufficiency in food, meet the needs of every class of society and reorganize the agricultural sector and it is based on striking a fresh balance and ensuring collaboration between the State organizations and the private sector. Marketing is being gradually handed over to the private sector, but the State ensures that price trends are favourable to the producer so as to create an incentive to produce more. An essential instrument for food strategy is food aid - paradoxical, no doubt, but real, because the counterpart funds accruing from its sale on the local markets are channelled into the food strategy. This food aid is designed, in principle, to be degressive, to ease the transition over to higher performance agriculture. In 1981-89, some ECU 100 million were mobilised by various donors in this way, essentially to finance cereal buffer stocks, support the prices paid to the cereal producers and temporarily subsidize the price to the consumer. The most difficult thing, in fact, when a previously institutionalized market is liberalized, is to avoid sudden price rises, so the Government is going in for degressive subsidization of the consumer prices for a while, to ensure the change is a smooth one.

In addition to this, there is the financial and technical assistance of Lomé III, two programmes worth ECU 40.9 million offering technical assistance and advice to the various State organizations involved in the strategy, agricultural credit to the farmers, minor water engineering works, rural infrastructure (roads and tracks) and irrigated village plots.

In 1989, eight years after Mali began on its food strategy, the marketing of cereals (millet, sorghum and maize) was liberalized. In most of the non-productive parts of the country (in the north, on the edge of the Sahara), buffer stocks have been set up to cater for deficits in times of drought. Over the past few years, the strategy has also been helped by good harvests, so there has not been too much price tension. Mali is currently trying to liberalize the rice sector, a delicate operation, because imported rice is half the price of the local product. Meanwhile, the Malian Government has taken transitional measures to protect its market, discouraging imports and encouraging local production.

The food strategies try to produce lasting effects at these three levels, ensuring that the rural development programmes are not just a plus point for the farmer-producers, but help completely reshape a sector and make lasting changes to the country's food balance.

At micro-economic level, the idea of the food strategies is to boost family food production through rural development programmes by offering the grower a remunerative price for what he produces and by providing the means of producing more and better - rural credit, for example, cooperative purchasing and higher-performance input. In the general framework of food strategies, these programmes have major effects in terms of local food autonomy, better standards of living and the creation of employment and social services.

The strategies also work at meso-economic and/or macro-economic level. In Mali, Kenya and Rwanda, for example, they are helping to reform the nation's cereal sector and trying to re-establish market efficiency. This, by definition, self-regulates supply and demand, with prices acting as referee. But until recently, most countries below the Sahara adopted interventionist policies, natural machinery being deemed, often rightly, sometimes unable to ensure food security and supply. The idea of the food strategies is to re-establish the fluidity of markets through collaboration between the public and the private sector, with the State opening the cereal market to the private sector, but stabilizing the macro-economic environment and guaranteeing the producer a remunerative price for his harvest. The attendant extra production means that cereal imports and food dependency on the outside world can be cut and savings made to benefit the balance of payments.

International macro-economic measures can further optimize the effects of the food strategies. A reduction in the exchange rates, often exaggerated in Africa, may encourage local production by making imports more expensive. Other trade policy measures - quotas and import dues or licences, for example - are also possible. On the international scene, the Community recommends and introduces regional operations such as the exchange of information on the state of harvests and the climate. Over the past few years, early warning systems which can detect climatic changes before they cause any damage have had the special attention of the funders, including those in the EEC.

Thanks to the food strategies, the rural development programmes encourage production by taking account of a multitude of factors, including:

- the price paid by the consumer;
- fair remuneration of the farmer - i.e. a price which encourages him to produce more and better;
- post-harvest (storage, processing and distribution);
- reform of the commodity marketing boards which have sometimes turned into food aid distribution or cereal import agencies.

The Community uses all the instruments at its disposal to serve rural development when setting up food strategies - financial and technical cooperation in programmes and projects, NGO cofinancing, Stabex and food aid (mainly thanks to the counterpart funds accruing from its sale).

TANZANIA - PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT FOR THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

In January 1987, Tanzania and the European Community signed a major programme of assistance for the agricultural sector, with no less than ECU 94 million for implementation. The original programming is based on three things:

- the state of Tanzania's food farming and cash crops;
- the Community's decision to take a food strategy approach to improve food security and ensure the involvement of the populations;
- lastly, the experience the EDF has acquired in 10 years of cooperation.

Practically speaking, the programme maintains a balance between food and cash crops and food security and coffee production have been chosen as focal sectors, with particular attention to the constraints of fertilizer production and the delivery of the products to the wholesalers and processing plants. The programming approach was chosen in preference to the usual project approach because it highlights the interdependence of the various aspects - the supply of inputs, the repair of roads and tracks, vehicle repair workshops etc. Above all, it makes it possible to plan the various components on a common timetable.

All the parts of the system serving agricultural exploitation must of course work properly. There is no point in offering remunerative prices to the farmers, as they will not produce any more than they need to feed their families if they know they will get nothing for any extra. And if they see last year's harvest rotting in the silos because the roads are not practicable and there are no trucks in working order to shift it, they may well decide not to run the risk of producing a surplus. Even if they do decide to step up their output, they will be put off if they cannot get fertilizer, seed and pesticide when they need them.

The joint management of the different parts of the programme also makes for greater flexibility in bringing the aims into line with trends in the economy, world prices, the population's needs, the climate and so on. One important aspect during programme finalization was how these various things affected the population. Traditionally the men grew the coffee and the women grew the food - something to be borne in mind in the work organization. The programme also has an environmental section to keep an eye on any ecological consequences. Rural Tanzania is based on a cooperative system, so one of the components of the EEC programme is an important one of assistance to the cooperatives, in particular via continuous training. The Tanzanian programme is made up of interdependent, jointly managed components.

In other ACP countries, rural development programmes account for the bulk of Community resources and get their effects from an integrated and interdependent approach. In Kivu (Zaire), for example, the cash crop section no longer covers just one crop, but several - coffee, palms etc. This programme also has an ecosystem section because no less than ECU 7 million is to be spent on running the Virunga national park, a sumptuous sanctuary for central African fauna. The Podor programme in Senegal stresses irrigated rice growing and food balance and, although it has no cash crop section, it does have assistance for SME, environmental protection and primary health care. The Mphaki project in Lesotho focuses on livestock, because it covers a mountain region of over-exploited, rundown pastures. It has sections on training, infrastructure, stabling, veterinary services and pasture management. The rural development programmes (and projects) in the Pacific islands are more modest, but they are based mainly on the sea, fishing and fish farming being the main sectors covered.

The future of ACP-EEC cooperation

Lomé III (1985-90) placed considerable emphasis on the sectoral focusing of financial and technical aid.

Lomé IV, which will be governing ACP-EEC cooperation over 1990-95, will remain faithful to this approach overall. The main innovation will of course be the desire to ensure the coherence of this sectoral approach (rural development and food strategies) with the macro-economic changes currently going on in many of these countries. Some 30 ACP nations are currently involved in a process of structural adjustment.

The common starting point for structural adjustment, particularly since the early 80s, has been the appearance of a serious macro-economic imbalance between domestic supply and demand. It is apparent in a growing deficit in the balance of trade, rising inflationist tendencies and a brake on economic growth and the excess of demand over supply has to be corrected. This is the meaning of structural adjustment, which may be defined as restoring lost balance.

For many of these countries, adjustment is enforced rather than managed and ordered. Financial revenue has to be ensured and the budget balanced again and this is achieved by cuts in the social spending budget, swingeing cutbacks, privatization of State firms, large-scale civil service redundancies and the opening up of the frontiers. These measures can well be a threat to the nation's social achievements, i.e. to the education and health services which are in some cases the result of long years of cooperation.

The EEC has decided to help the ACP countries soften the blows of structural adjustment on their development processes. Lomé IV will channel seventh EDF funds into projects and programmes which are likely to "humanize" structural adjustment and ensure that macro-economic demands (savings, privatization, liberalization and so on) are coherent with the patient workings of sectoral cooperation (food strategies). Already under Lomé II, sectoral import programmes were set up in some 15 countries, constituting direct help for the balance of payments and involving the EEC in providing such things as fertilizer to be sold on the local market to produce counterpart funds which can then be used to pay for local inputs for (rural) development projects.

The new Convention contains various new articles to supplement the ACP-EEC cooperation policy. The role of women as production agents is clearly recognized and so women will have access to all the factors of production, including rural credit facilities, in future projects and programmes.

The EEC encourages a regional approach to food strategies by fostering complementarity and synergy - trade in cattle and cereals between the Sahel and the countries on the coast, for example. Triangular food aid operations will enable regions with surplus cereals to feed people in neighbouring countries and regions with a deficit. Africa has regional organizations (CILSS, IGADD, SADDC, the CEAO etc) with which the EEC will be collaborating on this.

Agricultural research will also take on a regional dimension to avoid duplicating jobs and to optimize the work of the teams and the means distributed. Research topics (on coffee, cocoa and oilseeds, for example) will be defined and the association of the various networks will mean that teamwork can be coordinated, with one of them coordinating the different research units led by different laboratories in several countries.

The environment will be to the fore in the rural development projects and programmes - not so much as a specific area of intervention, but as an essential thing which is indissociable from the whole rural issue.

Under Lomé IV, rural development will automatically involve this environmental aspect, with a view to both the protection of the natural environment (anti-desertification) and the management of available resources.

PART TWO - RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND ASIA, 1976-89

Although European cooperation was initially for the former colonies of the Member States of the Community, it has gradually been extended to other parts of the world. In 1976, financial and technical aid was offered to countries south of the Mediterranean and to what were then called the non-associated countries of Latin America and Asia (LAA).

On 17 February 1981, the EEC Council of Ministers adopted a regulation "on financial and technical aid to non-associated developing countries", the text which founded the Community's cooperation with the LAA countries, putting rural development to the fore. Article 3 says: "The aid shall be mainly directed towards improving the living conditions of the most needy sections of the population of the countries concerned. Special importance shall be attached to the development of the rural environment and to improving food production".

Unlike what happens in the ACP countries, where cooperation is regulated by a multi-annual Convention, our cooperation with the LAA countries is written into the annual budget of the Commission. The Commission network of offices in these countries is less dense, so there are fewer staff to ensure the progress and the monitoring of projects. At the moment, two Delegations in Latin America (Venezuela and Costa Rica) and six in Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Thailand and Indonesia) have posts of agricultural adviser.

Latin America

When in 1976 the Community wanted to cooperate in the development of the sub-continent of Latin America, it found several funders, States and international bodies, which had been there, with considerable means, for some time and so it naturally associated with these more experienced funders - the World Bank, for example, the Federal Republic, the Netherlands and others. In 1980, it decided to promote its own projects and philosophy, with which the Member States sometimes associated themselves in their turn. The means are modest (ECU 250 million, on average, p.a. for the whole of the sub-continent), so the recipients of the aid are the least advanced nations. In Central America, this meant Honduras and Nicaragua and then Costa Rica, Guatemala and Salvador, plus the island of Hispaniola and the Dominican Republic. In South America, Bolivia and Peru are the main recipients, although Colombia and Ecuador also receive smaller amounts of the Community's food aid to Latin America. Thanks to the recipients' complete taking over of the projects, it has been possible to protect them from political upheavals and coups d'état.

Central America

In 1982, agrarian reform was adopted as the theme. This reform was backed in five countries of Central America - the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica. In 1989, the theme was still a pertinent one, mobilizing the bulk of the financial resources. Some countries even embarked on a second phase of so-called consolidation.

All these projects are aimed at the countries' rural proletariats, the poorest farmers who are unable to borrow because they have no land to offer as guarantee and who are unable to grow things properly because they have no means of production... because they have no access to production. These projects, confined to a few hundred families, are concerned with every aspect of rural life (production, housing, infrastructure, collective organization and so on), not forgetting the considerable synergy with the economic environment (rural credit, marketing networks and technical assistance to the ministries concerned). The projects are real little socio-economic experimental laboratories and they can be copied all over the country if the decision-makers and authorities wish. They inevitably generate political discussion, because they overturn habits and shed doubt on the national conditions of access to the land, which were originally designed for the big land-owners, the latifundistas. In Guatemala, for the first time in the region, the State has granted deeds of ownership to a Community agrarian project for the first time. Elsewhere, more dogmatic political choices have ruled out self-determination by the peasants and the results have not been so clear cut.

COSTA RICA - AGRARIAN REFORM

Until very recently, the land in Costa Rica belonged only to the latifundistas, the big landowners who had their estates worked by ordinary, wage-earning peons. In 1982, the Community suggested a programme of agrarian reform to the national authorities, aiming to enable these landless workers to be both farmers and owners of land. A first phase of the programme, the investment stage, was the opportunity to settle the first 1000 new owners on some 9000 ha of land, put a roof over their heads, give them access to credit and set up farmer groups because "you are stronger together than alone". ECU 18 million went on this five-year phase, which had both human and material results - human because here were once-exploited workers now masters of their own destiny and labour, with deeds of ownership, organizing themselves into self-managed groups to purchase inputs or undertake the joint running of machinery and infrastructure, and material because access to credit (partly of Community origin) made production prosper and diversify in both the cash crop (to release a financial surplus and repay credit) and food crop (for local consumption - rice, maize, vanilla, aniseed and goat rearing are just some of the specialities) sectors. During this phase, the Community was careful to include the new owners in the existing socio-economic fabric to avoid creating a ghetto cut off from reality.

The second phase began in 1989, consolidating experience and paving the way for the future. The farmer's groups are particularly concerned here, as it is they which will provide backing and assistance for the owner-farmers of tomorrow. This second phase will train cadres for management, accounting and marketing - i.e. for all the services of an agricultural sector bound for modernity. In a few years' time, these farmers will be autonomous and self managed. The farmers, who are now proud of their rights (of ownership), will be aware of their responsibilities (as workers of the land).

Still in Latin America, the EEC is channelling cooperation and regional integration into themes with agricultural components and food security is the most important of these. The first success is all these countries sitting round the same table to discuss their food problems and devise joint answers rather than seek to cut the cake into slices which everyone then exploits within his own frontiers. Tomorrow, with the EEC's help, this system could set up a warning and harvest monitoring system and provide other means financed from the food aid counterpart funds. Ultimately, this regional approach will have to develop and the bilateral approach decline. On the agenda now are joint agricultural research, regional agricultural credit facilities, improvements to the cooperative movement and support for SME.

South America

Some countries, Chile and Paraguay for example, are excluded from the benefits of European cooperation for political reasons and others, such as Brazil and Argentina, have a level of development which prevents them from receiving such financial and technical aid. In all these countries, however, the EEC is present with NGO cofinancing. Peru and Bolivia, in fact, are the main beneficiaries of Community assistance in South America and the land on the Andean highlands gets far more than the towns of both countries. The strength and the luck of the people who live in these areas is the solid social structures inherited from the Inca period, so even modest amounts of aid are coordinated and organized for the good of all. The EEC's agricultural assistance consists of microprojects (bunds and wells, dams for water supplies, farm equipment, tree planting, input supply, small infrastructure, market gardening and so on), with the Community providing the inputs and technical assistance and the recipient population the labour. More than ECU 90 million have made a host of microprojects possible in Bolivia since 1983 and some ECU 40 million in Peru since 1986.

This gentle approach, based on the organization and mobilization of small Andean producers, has made its mark and other funders have taken up the idea, using it in many other places and on other scales. Just recently, the Community adapted it and exported it to the Philippines.

In South America, the Andean Pact affects the Community's assistance with regional integration. As this inter-State organization modelled on the European example has no executive or legislative powers and can only make recommendations to its members, Community assistance comprises research and (feasibility, impact etc) studies, meetings and seminars and it is up to the States to use them. There too, the food strategies are proposed as subjects for joint action. Recently, the Community ran a study on using Andean techniques (traditional carts, potato preservation etc) to help agricultural production.

PERU - MICROPROJECTS ON THE ALTIPLANO

Living conditions on the Andean Altiplano in Peru are some of the hardest in the world. It is cold and arid and the air is thin. It is lost to gods and men and survival is only possible thanks to a social system which has been forged in solidarity over the centuries since the Inca era. The group is the opportunity for small, isolated farmers, particularly since the law of modern Peru recognizes its ancestral structures, giving them rights such as access to rural credit.

A Community programme is aimed at backing up the rural development drive of these basic communities. It starts with a group's urgent need for a well, a dam or a bund, a rural track, silos, greenhouses, seed or collective machinery, a school, a windmill, a refrigerator or seasonal credit, for example, and microprojects in which the EEC and the community group are involved on a 50-50 basis are set up to meet this need. The European Community supplies the materials, technical assistance or skills and the group supplies the labour and maintenance. Since the programme was launched in 1987 (ECU 21 million over three years), 200-300 microprojects have thrived on the Altiplano every year.

Although this is the first generation of rural microprojects in Peru, the Community us already into its second generation in Bolivia. For after the infrastructure generation came autonomy - a phase which is on the horizon in Peru too. What does it involve? No more nor less than handing over the complete management of the microprojects to the recipients. In the near future, training will mean that the farmers will allocate and recuperate the credit themselves. Experts are giving accountancy and literacy classes. The pumps will be repaired by someone appointed by the group and trained by a project-paid technician. Extension work and technical assistance will improve the potential of the basic groups.

The project is already a success because the population response is tremendous, as one EEC official has put it. The communities are very committed to carrying out these hundreds of village projects, because they know that the dam, the market garden and the other infrastructure will for them be the fruit of their labours. We only supply the material. This is also why the inhabitants undertake training - to keep, upkeep and manage their facilities.

Asia

Community cooperation in Asia began to take gradual shape in the mid-70s. As in Latin America, the Community had no experience and therefore associated with other, better placed funders - British cooperation (Bangladesh), the Asian Development Bank (Nepal), UNICEF (Bhutan), the World Bank and the Federal Republic of Germany to begin with.

From the word go, European cooperation had an undeniably rural character (in the broadest meaning of the term, including fishing and forestry as well as farming), particularly on the Indian sub-continent. In

the 80s, and in much the same way as it had done in Latin America, the EEC wanted to run its own projects and be recognized as a funder and political entity present in the region. It had also obtained some experience.

In principle, development projects in this area are decided at twice-yearly meetings of the recipient country and the EEC. In fact, this is often no more than a shopping list, a simple statement of the projects which the Government hopes to see financed, so there is no real dialogue on the national development policies as there is under Lomé. Some countries, India for example, have proper development policies and are not interested in discussing this.

India is the biggest European aid beneficiary in the region (with ECU 50-60 million p.a.), with land conservation projects, silos and sheds for food supplies, hurricane prevention schemes and rural credit and irrigation operations. This latter type of project (irrigation and drainage) is fairly common on the sub-continent. Bangladesh (ECU 20-30 million p.a.), for example, puts priority on controlling the waters of the major rivers crossing the territory. If these projects are to be efficient, then some regional coordination is called for, but there is little trans-frontier cooperation of this sort so far.

Bangladesh, like Pakistan (ECU 20 million p.a.), is running a livestock project to improve its use of draft animals and Tibet recently ran a scheme focused on the yak, that most versatile of bovines. In 1982, a plant life protection project was launched in Bhutan (ECU 2.5 million p.a.), essentially to prevent damage to the flora from the recent opening of the frontiers. In 1989, two other projects made a dynamic contribution to the rural development of this small Himalayan kingdom - technical assistance for the Ministry of Agriculture, extension work, research and the setting up of a soil study laboratory.

The Commission strongly believes in these superstructural, supervisory projects because of the snowball effect they have on the whole agricultural sector in the long run. Five projects are currently being run in Nepal (ECU 8 million p.a.), all concerned with the rural world and involving a study of mountain farming, rural development in one particular district, the rehabilitation of irrigated plots, forest management and an anti-erosion campaign.

Food aid is a valuable means of cooperation in these countries too. In India, the greatest beneficiary of Community aid between 1979 and 1988, with ECU 413.6 million (it was Bangladesh in 1986 and Egypt in 1988), it contributed to rural development with the counterpart aid accruing from its sale. Operation Flood, in fact, made it possible to boost national milk production, set up a powerful agro-industrial sector, supply the nation's conurbations with milk, a valuable source of protein, and give peasants and herders a daily income. In China, a similar project recently mobilized ECU 100 million (food aid).

The system of counterpart funds has been used just recently to sell grants of fertilizer and set up traditional projects calling for neither transfers of technology nor changes to growing methods. In Thailand (ECU 15 million p.a.), an equivalent programme granted agricultural credit in kind (fertilizer, pesticide, farm tools etc) to the farmers.

In the Philippines, the Community is backing a major project to train heads and managers of small peasant cooperatives - which should be the basis for genuine development independent of the political authorities, as in the Bolivian Altiplano.

BANGLADESH - EMPLOYMENT FOR LANDLESS PEASANTS

Bangladesh has 40 million landless peasants (out of a population of 110 million) below the breadline. Their only means of subsistence, and an unreliable one at that, is seasonal farm work, hired out at the will of the landowners. In 1984, the Government launched a strategy for rural development projects for these people, with the immediate aim of raising their standard of living and getting them out of their poverty situation by running rural development schemes for the landless and creating new jobs in the rural areas.

The EEC began working in the Rangpur region (7.5 million inhabitants, 93% of them rural) in the far north just recently with a global development project espousing all the aims of this Government strategy. This project, which goes well beyond agriculture itself and has a dynamic effect on the whole of the region's rural economy, will be costing ECU 37 million, ECU 32.5 million of it from the Community in association with the Netherlands.

It is in two distinct but fully complementary parts, both of them the responsibility of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives. The first part creates jobs and remunerative activities both in and on the fringe of the agricultural sector, in craft, local cottage industry, marketing and services. The second involves providing the region with the village infrastructure vital to the emergence and deployment of new economic activities. The project aims to achieve this by:

- financing technical training and literacy sessions, as everyone knows that education opens the way to employment;
- establishing the channels through which credit, the training courses, technical assistance and supplies are to be got to the recipients;
- transferring new agricultural methods which are higher performance ones, but adapted to the farmers' means and traditions;
- building the infrastructure (rural service tracks, bridges and culverts, markets and stores, shops, fish farms and village mills) needed to make the local economy dynamic once again;
- with the support of the local authorities, offering landless peasants (some temporary and some permanent) jobs.

PART THREE - RURAL DEVELOPMENT
IN THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

In 1971, a Commission report on development cooperation said that the Community had so far made only a limited contribution to the development of this part of the world (southern and eastern Mediterranean). In early 1973, the Commission proposed agreements of unlimited duration, containing a section on financial and technical assistance, to southern Mediterranean countries. Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia signed such agreements in 1976 and, a year later, similar agreements were concluded with Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Five-year financial protocols, which are negotiated, go with these agreements.

Unlike the Conventions signed with the ACP countries, these agreements are not collective, although the countries' needs are often identical. Algeria and Egypt, for example, have a large annual food shortfall to cope with and other (or indeed the same) countries are particularly badly affected by drought and desertification. Most have large rural populations living in poverty. So rural development is also a priority in these southern and eastern parts of the Mediterranean basin too.

The first two protocols (1976-81 and 1982-87) negotiated by the EEC and each of these seven countries had no priority on rural development (which got 17% of the total as compared to 52% for infrastructure and 24% for industry). However, one or two projects affected the rural world via the back-up measures. Morocco and Tunisia ran credit programmes for small farmers in their time, enabling hundreds of farmers and herders to diversify and intensify production and obtain new equipment and inputs. During these 10 years of European cooperation with the southern and eastern Mediterranean, there were also various small rural development projects and prospective studies on soil and water. The European Investment Bank, which plays a major role alongside the Commission, released large sums for rural infrastructure, roads, tracks and dams, but also contributed to the opening of lines of credit for the farmers. Of the two protocols, totalling ECU 1.7 billion, ECU 962 million were EIB loans, ECU 298 million special loans and ECU 424 million grants.

The drive to help rural Algeria involves training schemes in forestry, rural engineering and fisheries. In Jordan, there is a series of small arable land extension projects in the Jordan valley (ECU 1.6 million) and a scheme to improve a local species of cattle (ECU 2.1 million).

Egypt is in a special situation. First of all, it is the region's biggest recipient of EEC aid, far ahead of Morocco and Algeria, and, second, it has a constantly expanding population (of currently 55 million) to feed with the small amount of land in the Nile valley - which is limited, heavily exploited and cannot be extended. This is why many Community projects in this country try to optimize the existing agricultural potential. Under the first protocol, for example, an ECU 8 million project was run to improve (drain and desalinate) the land in the delta. This is a completed pilot experiment which can now be organized on a wide scale. Under the second protocol, there are such things as a rice and maize straw recuperation scheme to produce cattle feed, the straw being enriched with molasses (another agricultural residue) and ammonia to make it more nutritious and easier

for the ruminants to digest. This activity is now being privatized and widely extended. Other agricultural projects were introduced under the first two protocols - storage units for agricultural projects (ECU 15 million), for example, and a line of credit for small farmers (ECU 45 million). In 1988, Egypt was also the biggest beneficiary of EEC food aid, with more than ECU 35 million. Some of the counterpart funds accruing from food aid sales is used to finance agricultural development schemes.

The third protocol (1988-92) marks the priority on rural development in the countries south and east of the Mediterranean. Demographic pressure, a deteriorating environment and the increasingly distant prospect of food balance are the main reasons for this. In Tunisia, 85% of the financial resources of this protocol are being channelled into rural development and the figure is 64% in Egypt, 50% in Morocco and 40% in Algeria, where industry and energy are important. For these four countries, the basis for agricultural cooperation is the drive to cut the food shortfall. In Tunisia, for example, alongside two rural development operations, we should pick out a project which uses food aid counterpart funds to promote dairy production. In Algeria, there is an ambitious projet to reorganize national seed production, fishing and fish farming, which, a national report maintains, have long been neglected.

In Morocco, a large number of projects to lay on water to small centres are contributing to the wellbeing of the countryside. Irrigation works are another field of cooperation and Morocco will also be getting the benefit of considerable support with its campaign to control locusts, a scourge which afflicts every country of the Sahara, from north to south. In Egypt, a major agricultural programme (tens of millions of ECU) is being set up to boost the potential of various complementary branches of the food industry. Oil (rape and sunflower), for example, could be improved and what is left after milling used for cattlefeed to increase the output of milk, a source of protein.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Some figures on Community cooperation with rural development

ACP - the six European Development Funds

The first European Development Fund (EDF) provided ECU 580 million for cooperation between Europe and the Third World. The bulk (two thirds) of it went on basic equipment, although small agricultural projects - soil studies, livestock improvement schemes etc - saw the light of day here and there.

Yaoundé I (1964-69) provided ECU 800 million for the second EDF. This Convention put priority on infrastructure, although it also decided to channel funds into the promotion of production and the diversification of cash crops.

It was not until Yaoundé II (1970-75), with an EDF of ECU 1 billion, that North-South cooperation took more interest in food production and the standard of living of the local populations. Rural development only accounted for 28% of total commitments - ECU 800 million, spread over 250 projects - of these three Funds.

Lomé I brought large-scale cooperation. It was sophisticated, full and political and its instruments were of a size to cope with the food and agricultural challenges of the time. The primary sector quite naturally had a preponderant place in Lomé I, with 35% of the total sum (ECU 627 million for 446 projects). Food crops got 40%, but cash crops, seen as a safe way of raising the standard of living in rural areas, still got 30%. Village water engineering and fishing and livestock projects got 14% and 13% respectively of the agricultural funds.

Starting in 1981, Lomé II, with an EDF of ECU 4.6 billion, went along the same lines, allocating 44% of its resources to agriculture (568 projects for ECU 931 million). Local crops took the lead over cash crops once and for all and microprojects, born with Lomé and involving the recipients, the EEC and usually the State being closely associated in running a mini-project, got more means. Many of these microprojects (health care, well repairs, literacy drives, market gardening etc) were run by women's groups anxious to organize autonomous production areas or make the daily round easier.

With Lomé III, there was an even clearer priority on the rural sector through food strategies, with 60-90% of the sixth EDF funds, according to country (ECU 1 billion in all). The food strategies, setting up a method of cooperation, put rural development at the centre of the economy. Projects gave way to multi-sectoral programmes (see inset on Tanzania).

LAA countries - instruments and figures

The main instrument of aid to the non-associated countries - Article 930 of the Community's annual budget - and the food aid which supplements it represent 90-95% of the assistance to the LAA countries. To a lesser extent, the budget Articles on refugees, the anti-drug campaign (particularly in Pakistan), NGO cofinancing and regional integration all contribute to these countries' agricultural development.

Of the ECU 4 billion granted to the LAA in development aid (food aid, financial and technical cooperation, Stabex and NGO cofinancing) between 1979 and 1988, almost ECU 2 billion went to Asia and ECU 1 billion to Latin America (50% to the south and 50% to the centre). Overall, 80% of these sums went into rural development (farming, fishing and forestry).

Over the same period, there were 40 irrigation and drainage projects (ECU 345 million), 23 agricultural production projects (ECU 166 million), 24 fisheries projects (ECU 95 million), 10 livestock projects (ECU 35 million), 17 forestry projects (ECU 40 million), 10 rural infrastructure projects (ECU 100 million) and 17 supply schemes like the counter-part funds accruing from the sales of fertilizer in India (ECU 369 million), for example started up in the LAA countries.

Southern and eastern Mediterranean - three protocols

During the first two protocols (1976-81 and 1982-87), some ECU 336 million were channelled into rural development in these seven countries. The percentage varied from one country to another. Under the second protocol, for example, Tunisia spent almost all its financial aid on the agricultural sector (in the broadest meaning of the term, to include fishing and rural credit). Egypt followed with 40% (ECU 66 million of a total of ECU 446 million), the figure for Morocco and Jordan was 25% and Algeria 15% (ECU 23 million out of ECU 265 million). Lebanon and Syria channelled smaller amounts into irrigation works (ECU 12 million in Syria) and a line of rural credit (Lebanon, ECU 3 million).

Under the third protocol (1988-1992), a larger percentage of Community assistance went on rural development - 70% in Morocco (for projects encouraging agricultural development and self sufficiency in food), 64% in Egypt (food support and soil protection programme), 60% in Tunisia and 45% in Jordan (essentially to ensure water supplies).

ANNEX 2 - Community support for agricultural research

In 1983, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (TCARC) as laid down in the Lomé Convention, was set up near Wageningen (Netherlands). This joint body (ACP-12 Member States) is at the disposal of the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific to facilitate their access to information, training, research and innovations in the sector of agricultural and rural development.

The TCARC answers ACP requests for information, encourages exchanges, and organizes the distribution of scientific and technical information on rural development and agricultural research (with priority on food security and the preservation of natural resources). It has set up contact committees in some Member States and opened a representation in the Caribbean and another in the Pacific.

The European Economic Community backs agricultural research through the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), which sponsors 13 world research institutes, with the following specialities, in the developing countries:

- in India, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) - research into rice;
- in the Philippines, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) - research into rice;
- in Peru, the Centro Internacional de la Papa (CIP) - potatoes;
- in Colombia, the Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (CIAT) - tropical agriculture;
- in Mexico, the Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz Y Trigo (CIMMYT) - maize and wheat;
- in Lebanon and Syria, the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) - arid zone research;
- in Ethiopia, the International Livestock Center for Africa (ILCA) - livestock in Africa;
- in Kenya, the International Laboratory for Research on Animal Diseases (ILRAD) - veterinary research.

Various organizations in the developed countries complete this network. Between 1976 and 1988, EEC financial and technical cooperation provided them with ECU 60 million, or about 10% of their budget.

In 1982, the European Community launched a programme of research and development in science and technology in the service of development (STD). It was geared, in particular, to food crops and to complementarity between research in the Community and centres in the Third World. A first instalment of ECU 40 million was used (1983-86) for 228 tropical agriculture contracts and 183 medicine, health and nutrition contracts. A second instalment (1987-90) of ECU 80 million is being dealt with at the moment. Each of these contracts is a synergy between laboratories in the North and research centres, universities and laboratories in the South. — Cooperation which is firmly geared to meeting the needs of the developing nations.

TUNISIA - PARTNERSHIP TO COMBAT A CATTLE DISEASE

Tunisia decided to boost the milk output of its cattle some years ago and it did this by crossing local species with European ones. However, as milk production rose, so a new disease began to wipe out the crossbred animals, which are in fact weakened by the European component, having very little immunity to some of the local parasites. The country's cattle is threatened by theileriasis.

The Community is backing applied research, as part of the STD programme, which should lead to the marketing of an efficient vaccine against this parasitosis. The research, a three-year undertaking, is being carried out in tandem by the Centre for Tropical Veterinary Medicine at the University of Edinburgh (UK), the Ecole Nationale de Médecine Vétérinaire de Sidi Thabet (Tunisia), with, to a lesser extent, the Institute Agrovétérinaire Hassan II (Morocco), Morocco, like Tunisia and one or two other countries on the same latitude (Turkey and India), being concerned with this disease.

The present phase (1989-91) was preceded by another piece of research carried out in partnership and aimed at getting a proper grasp of the causes and effects of the parasite. It includes an epidemiological section (study and knowledge of the parasite) and an immunology section (experimentation and treatment) and is costing some ECU 200 million. Some of this money is being used to provide specific training for Tunisian researchers in Edinburgh and the exchange of scientific officers of all three centres. Another section involves fitting out the Tunisian laboratory with sophisticated equipment - which will be useful after the project is over. Practically speaking, the study of the parasite (which is in fact a variety of tick) is being run in the Tunisian laboratory using samples from herds in several parts of Tunisia. Part of the work, particularly the parasite's reactions to some chemical bodies, investigations which precede the search for a drug, is being done in Edinburgh.

The immunology and anti-theileriasis phase is being run by Tunisia, which is monitoring the results and testing the vaccine on groups of cattle. Most of the checking out of the work, however, is being done in Edinburgh.

Much of the collaboration between the partners revolves round the exchange of all the information which could lead to discovery of the vaccine. This is why Morocco is also a partner in the project, as it can transmit its knowledge of the disease on its territory and save time in eradication thanks to the progress of the Tunisian and Scottish work.

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