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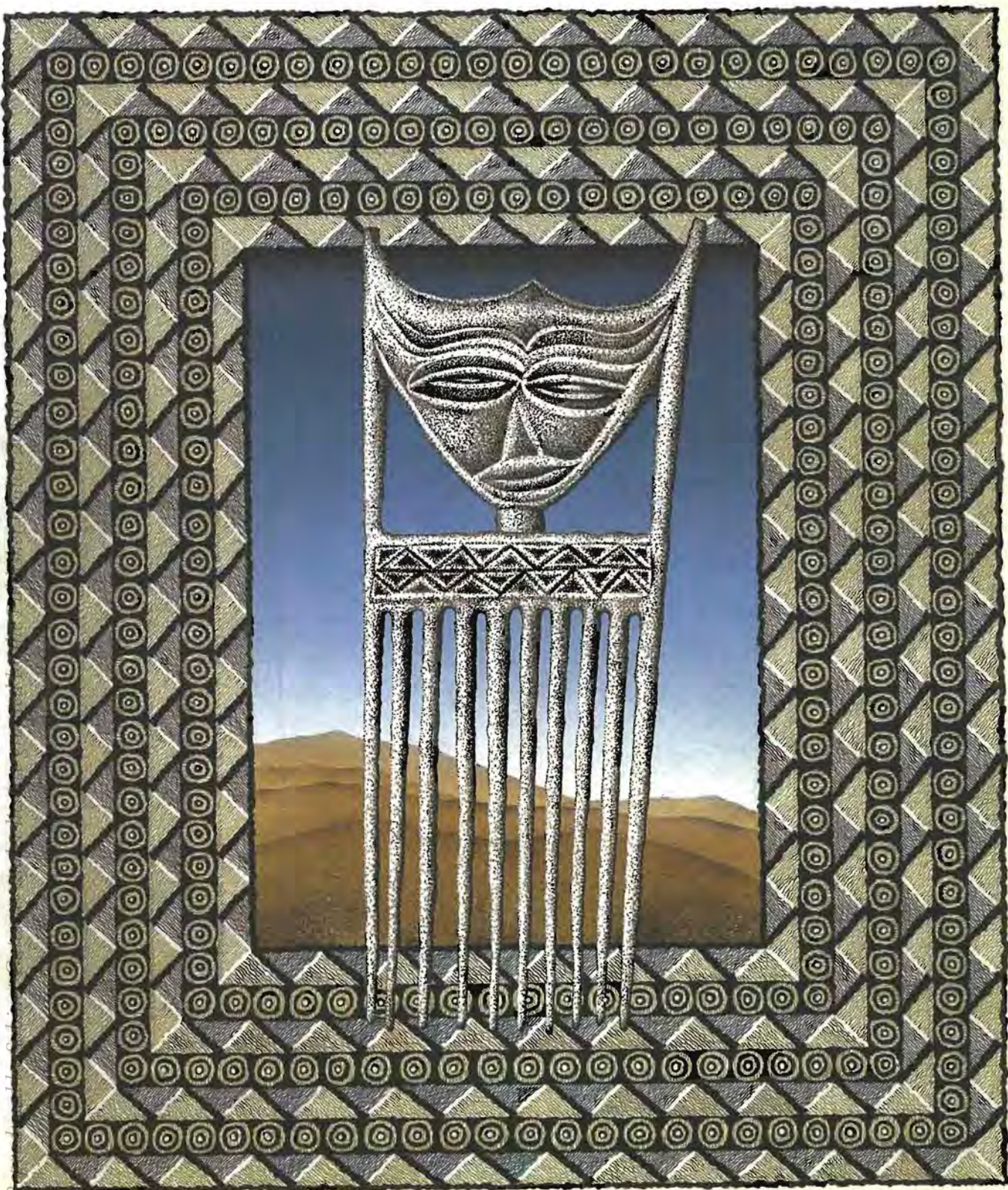
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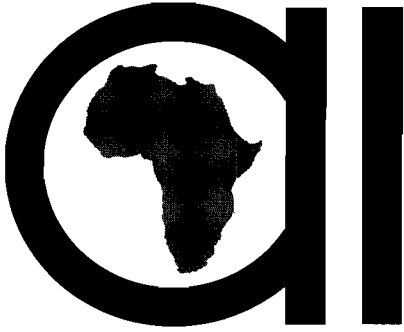
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Comment

Population and development

Madeline Lass

“THE key to solving the world’s booming birthrate is to empower women and reduce poverty.” This seemed to represent the consensus among the opening speakers at the UN’s nine-day Population and Development Conference in Cairo on 5 September 1994. This was the fifth worldwide population conference to be held under UN auspices. Once again the ostensible aim was to assess global population trends and explore solutions consistent with the development priorities, national laws, religions, ethical values and cultural backgrounds of the countries attending.

The final document, adopted at the end of the conference, claimed to reflect a growing awareness that the population question was “inextricably linked” to human development concerns, including the alleviation of poverty, the empowerment of women and the protection of the environment.

One chapter in the document was devoted to gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women. It urged the world community to ensure that women were fully involved in policy-making and that they achieved economic independence. The longest and most detailed chapter dealt with reproductive rights, reproductive health and family planning, setting out a “new approach” to family planning through the improved quality of reproductive health care and the reaffirmation of people’s right to choose the spacing and timing of their children.

Despite these lofty objectives, however, and the extensive coverage

provided them by the media during the conference, one is left with the uncomfortable feeling that whatever ideals may have been articulated, transforming them into reality will be an entirely different matter. There seems to have been no explicit recognition that the changes being advocated would require a social, economic and political revolution on a global scale.

It is also dangerously misleading to separate the population debate from the wider discussion about the hegemonies present in the world economic order.

To begin with, we must dismiss the common assumption that the population explosion is a problem directly afflicting the South, but of primary concern to the rich countries of the North.

The economic structures and gender attitudes underpinning the problem of rapid population growth in the South are not limited to the South. They determine the very distribution of political power throughout the global network.

The Cairo conference and its predecessors employed the usual rhetoric of “alleviation of poverty”, “empowerment of women”, “enhanced family planning services” and “protection of the environment”. But it is by no means clear that these are any more than platitudes long since emptied of any agreed or precise meaning.

Family planning

The focus upon the ideologically contentious issues of family planning and contraception serves to distract attention from the inequitable political,

social and economic relations at the root of rapid population growth. Indeed, spending millions of dollars on contraceptive services may actually divert resources from social services and structures that will genuinely alleviate poverty and reduce inequality in every sphere of society.

By now there is enough evidence to show that the provision of family planning services can never solve the population problem unless it forms part of a broader strategy including at its base, poverty alleviation, economic empowerment of women and protection of the environment. Despite a professed acceptance of this reality, however, between 1969 and 1991 the UNFPA devoted only 1.6% of its total assistance to the broader area of women, population and development, as opposed to 45.7% on family planning programmes.

Poverty alleviation

The reduction of poverty revolves around the question of government spending priorities. It is clear that governments have to invest adequate resources if they are to meet the basic needs of their citizens.

The UN Development Programme has calculated that just 20% of government budgets in the developing countries of the South (or US\$88 billion a year), and 20% of current bilateral development assistance from the North (or US\$12 billion a year) would suffice to meet the basic needs for all humanity. Undoubtedly this would go far towards solving the world’s population problem. Yet today Southern governments devote only 13% of their

budgets to these concerns (US\$57 billion) compared to \$125 billion a year for military spending. And bilateral donors allocate only 7% of their aid (\$4 billion) to these issues.

If the world's governments and aid agencies are serious about their professed commitment to meeting the basic needs of the citizens of the world, they will have to adopt measures their constituents will find disturbingly radical. Implicit in the frequently repeated liturgy of concern and intent about the alleviation of poverty is the need, on the part of those with power and money, to endorse a self-denying ordinance of daunting proportions.

Empowerment

There is also a danger in linking population development with the empowerment of women. The focus then tends to be fixed on women while the underlying problem of patriarchy remains obscured. Certainly, many women have secured their empowerment in the patriarchal system, though often at the heart-breaking personal cost of alienation and loneliness. Such sacrifices may be easier to bear for educated urbanized women with better access to support systems; rural women are usually less fortunate: for them, empowerment may imply social exile – greater responsibility, and an increase in their burdens.

Should one not also consider empowering men: helping them find a life outside patriarchy, taking responsibility for their own fertility and sharing family responsibilities? Viewed in the broader context, the majority of people in Africa – women and men – are disempowered.

Further, gender equality should be seen as an important issue in itself and not only a means of curbing population growth. Gender equality is a human rights issue. And here it is not only attitudes in the Southern countries that need to change: for all the years of active feminism, for example, only 10% of the serving members of the US Congress are women.

If the World Bank and IMF are serious about empowering women, alleviating poverty and reducing population growth, they will also have to reexamine their structural adjustment programmes. These programmes have involved drastic reductions in the provision of social services, especially health care, education and food subsidies. They have aggravated the marginalization of women and helped maintain the conditions creating high fertility: it is very difficult for a woman to see contraception as her salvation when she is poor and marginalized. Under these circumstances her need to maintain access to the resources of the family forces her to bear sons and to reproduce labour.

Consumption

While high population growth rates undoubtedly pose a genuine threat to the future of humanity, we should not lose sight of the related question of overconsumption and the waste of resources. Presently, 80% of the current consumption of resources is attributed to 20% of the Earth's population: 70% of its metals, 85% of its wood and 60% of its food are consumed by elites in the South and the people of the North.

If these levels continue, the 57 million people born into a high-consumption lifestyle in the 1990s will contribute more pollution to the Earth than will the 911 million born in the South during the same period.

Conclusion

It must be obvious that there are no quick-fixes to the issue of rapid population growth. The next generation of parents has already been born. Nor can the issues of social, political and economic inequality underlying the population boom be easily solved. Ironically, there seems a real danger that conferences such as those held in Cairo may help lull the concerned public at large into a false sense of security. Conference resolutions substitute too easily for action and invite delay, which may indeed suit those who seek to preserve their power and privilege by pretending that workable solutions are available at relatively little cost.

From reproduction to reinvention

Women's roles in African cities

At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the role of women in slowing down population growth once again received a great deal of attention. In this article, Dr AbdouMaliqalim Simone, of the Foundation for Contemporary Research, argues that population will not be "controlled" unless states find new ways to harness the multiplicity of social collaboration engineered – especially by urban women – to accomplish everyday survival and build institutions capable of mediating the intensification of household, gender, ethnic, generational and subregional conflicts exacerbated by increasing poverty.

SHOULD women constitute the primary locus through which African societies and the international community direct interventions to stem the tide of population growth within an overall context of economic deterioration? At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, many women tried to steer the issue toward an elaboration of women's rights, improved living conditions for all members of impoverished societies, and a reduction of consumption levels in the North.

Punctuating the bleakness

While the causes of population crises, and their implications for women and social coherence in particular, vary with the analytic frameworks and discourses applied, the persistence of current growth rates and likely life courses for African bodies do not bode well for "rational" societal development in the future. Africa faces an overall 3,3% population growth per annum; a fertility rate of 6,5% coupled with a persistent rate of infant mortality nearing one in ten, and a 5% rate of urbanization.¹ These demographic phenomena

are situated in an economic context where overall output stands at 2,3% (1991, and a downturn from 3,2% in 1990). Persistently unfavourable imbalances in terms of trade, debt servicing and inflation have made Africa a net exporter of capital and have severely curtailed per capita incomes.

While disputes remain over the extent of aggregate increases in the percentage of Africa's population living in poverty, there is no question that poverty has deepened, with severe declines in per capita consumption and expanding shortfalls in meeting the minimum requirements of food and essential non-food commodities.² Much of this deepening of poverty affects women and youth, and thus the capacity of a human resource base able to effectively produce growth and change in the future.

While family planning programmes may constitute the core of national population policies, African governments have concluded that issues of reproduction concern the overall economic and social environment in which women operate, and that integrated policies and interventions addressing women's health, education,

political participation, human, reproductive and social rights are essential aspects of population management.³

Key to this policy framework is the by now familiar emphasis on female education. For the link between fertility and education is clear – the greater the levels of female education, the most marked the declines in fertility rate, since education elaborates economic possibilities for women beyond the dependence on male impositions of their status needs or the need to mobilize child labour for survival.⁴ But the relationship once again signals an acute deepening of African poverty as well as the diminishing returns on education immanent if radical economic restructuring is not forthcoming.

For while poor households in, for example, Côte d'Ivoire were willing to expend twice the proportionate amounts of household income on education as the nonpoor in 1985, one finds a decade later that these levels have been largely reversed.⁵ Across Africa, there are falling enrolment rates, especially for girls, and rising age-grade mismatch – reflecting sporadic attendance.

Given the amount of investment resources necessary to finance such integrated population policies and human resource development, African states must find innovative ways to mobilize endogenous resource bases and maximize the scope of popular participation at all levels of policy formulation and implementation. Unless states find new ways to harness the multiplicity of social collaborations engineered to accomplish everyday survival and build institutions capable of mediating the intensification of household, gender, ethnic, generational and subregional conflicts exacerbated by increasing poverty, populations will not be "controlled".⁶

How are women to be engaged in their diverse settings by an array of actors, including governments, NGOs, international institutions, and the broad range of associational life? Here, a fuller understanding of the roles women play in this moment of social and economic crisis are important, especially in terms of their proactivities, rather than what is often a restrictive emphasis on the dynamics of their, nevertheless, very real marginalization and oppression.

Such an analysis requires a shift from looking at women as primarily the producers of household sustenance and the easily manipulable sources of inexpensive labour in rigidly gendered demarcations of capital accumulation. Instead, a more ambiguous terrain of social fields must be engaged in order to understand how women may be elaborating the basic outlines of new social economies and forms of socialization. To what extent does their marginalization from the complementarities and customary systems which had guaranteed access to certain resource levels now accord them a certain autonomy to configure new social arrangements?

That women are involved in thousands of social "reformation" projects throughout the continent is not only testament to the added dimensions entailed in women's "unpaid" labour and unofficial taxation, but further opens up an already acute basis of their vulnerability.⁷ Throughout the South, efforts to resuscitate local understandings of social convention and tradition in the midst of accelerating integration



Photo: Paul Blokland

in global circuits of production, exchange and consumption reflect an increasing desperation to maintain purportedly egalitarian norms.

But as Nash points out, the invocation of tradition increasingly has more to do with extracting labour and maintaining privilege on the part of an emerging elite than with the internal stability of communities.⁸ As a result, those that attempt to innovate upon the prescriptions of tradition often face increased levels of violence. While the integration of local economies into global capital circuits has most substantially diminished the sources of women's sustenance and power, it has been most incumbent upon women to compensate, improvise and change, not only their own position, but the larger social field as well. This dynamic, coupled with the historical and cultural meanings accorded to female mobility and independence, render women vulnerable to more blatant displays of violence and control.

Incidences of rape, sexual abuse, and violent assaults against women are not only increasing in Africa, but have become the normalized and standard ingredient of urban reporting, either in the various medias, but more importantly, in the repertoires of everyday conversation.⁹ As men face increasing hardships in their ability to sustain the status to which they were socialized, as providers for households and the disposers/consumers of household surplus, and within persis-

tently repressive political climates possessing little history of intergendered formal organizational life, women become easy targets for the venting of male frustration and rage.

Most African cultures do not enforce a direct association between conjugality and cohabitation. Nevertheless, marriage and household formation is being deferred or abandoned by many men and women. The difficulty in maintaining the conditions necessary for balanced gender complementarities leads to more pathological interdependencies. Here, women's specific contributions to conjugal and household relationships are distorted to maintain the failing powers of cultural symbols.

For example, in Algeria, as young men face the now normal prospect of unemployment, they adopt a new mentality to compensate for their situation. Fewer and fewer agree to take on the complete responsibility for a home, a wife and children. As Fatiha Kakiki Talahite points out: "Nevertheless, your Algerian males have not taken the step which consists of sharing this responsibility with women. Because they would then lose compensation for the dependence, namely their wives' submission and obedience. They are wavering between what amounts to resignation of their traditional economic role as head of the family, because objectively they can no longer assume it; and exaggerated affirmation of their supremacy over women which, since it no



Photo: Paul Blokland

longer has an economic basis, has become even more violent and virulent."¹⁰

How women and men share the responsibility for addressing economic and political crises seems to be the crux of the issue, and thus a matter of governance and institution-building. Yet, such institutions, or even a range of provisional organizational structures that begin to cohere diffuse social experiences within and between communities, cannot evolve without a broader understanding of the complexity of women's contributions and sacrifices in the social field. These contributions are often highly ritualized, liminal and diffuse.

The following is just one of thousands of stories of women's operations which begin, in an exceedingly provisional way, to address these acts of change agency:

Amira Sibray, Niamey, Niger

A prominent imam faced a severe dilemma when his youngest daughter, Amira Sibra, returned home after spending two years living with cousins in Abidjan. For she had converted to an evangelical Christianity and was speaking in tongues in the central market – in an overwhelmingly Muslim country. As is common practice for irruptions in the local social fabric, a *tkedjir* (a combination of religious healer-sorcerer) was consulted to rectify the situation – but he

balked at making a definitive intervention. Some decision as to who and what was culpable for her conversion first had to be made. Because of the father's religious position, it was dangerous to place the responsibility solely in his hands.

The mosque committee was consulted in an acrimonious meeting where some demanded the daughter's death, while others pointed blame to lapses of the extended family in Abidjan. A representative was appointed to make inquiries in Abidjan and, there, every indication was that the daughter had shown no signs of her new religious preference. As the mosque committee was structured as an assembly of positions – representatives of local political leaders, artisans, teachers, traders – each consulted his own sector to solidify a common position. But even within these consultations there were disputes, overdetermined links of differing family and political loyalties, friendships, business interdependencies.

Since the daughter has spent a lot of time with women teasellers, there was some thought that perhaps envious subgroupings had placed some evil upon her. More and more people in the neighbourhood were drawn into the deliberations, tied to an ever-widening story where discrete events taking place for over a decade were seen as somehow significant, causative. Relatives of a new minister responsible for water in the neighbourhood who had migrated to Abidjan and sold jewelry in a stall in Treichville, where the daughter often visited, were contacted. They reported links with three brothers who drove cattle from Niger to Côte d'Ivoire and whose father had been bypassed for the imamship at the father's mosque owing to some reputed sexual indiscretion, that was later discovered to have been fabricated.

In the end, the boundaries of the relevant local domain were too diffuse, the possible causative factors too many, the story too complicated, and peoples' loyalties, assessments and positions in other family and social networks too multiple. A Sudanese theologian from a new Islamic university at nearby Say was brought in to deliver a *fatwa*, a theological judgment. He decided that the daughter

was mentally ill and arranged for her hospitalization in Jeddah.

So while the old modalities of solidarity, neighbourliness and association were indeed mobilized, the neighbourhood, through the anomaly of one of their own becoming something they were not, also began to discover that they were not who they assumed themselves to be. They discovered that their collective lives had grown more complex than their immediate ability to restore a scene of cohesion, and thus turned to the outside for help – a practice not new for African localities, but the start of an incipient affiliation with an Islamicist intergrist discourse trying to plant itself in Niger. Such an affiliation was further reinforced when the daughter returned home "cured".

But the cure was constructed in ways in which Amira exerted some control, albeit in circuits already over-travelled. Because the home to which she returned was largely restructured in her absence, by her absence, and with her money. For she had simply walked out of the hospital in Jeddah and indentured herself to a Senegalese merchant – in the meantime learning a sufficient amount about his business to abscond with enough money for a passage to Cyprus and then to Italy where she worked in the pizzeria kitchens of holiday resorts and offered herself as a *sage* (a *tkedjir*) to young tourists on the beach. She selectively remitted earnings back to Niamey, specifically to women who had been both sympathetic to her case and most against her. For she cultivated rivals whose moves she could eventually counter as a locus of economic opportunity and trustworthy associates who would put money in the schemes she learned from Senegalese, Malien and other Nigerien compatriots working the Italian circuits.

When eventually she did return to Niamey, she began her own *medressa* classes (religious training) for girls and established several compounds with disparate compositions. One became a kind of woman's "service" centre with healers, teachers, craft-makers; another a loose-knit association of young women "affiliated" with two powerful men, eg those who had slept with them, who cared for their

children, cleaned their offices and; still another of West African young women from different countries that traded in the highly precarious yet rich smuggling terrains of the Mali, Niger and Algerian border.

As for the neighbourhood itself, to what extent there evolved any longterm Islamicization in integrist terms remains to be seen, but many have adopted its cause – a move which has profound affect on the reshaping of local dynamics. Local practices may remain largely intact, but they are configured and connected in new ways to external communities and emerging identities – in part, to salvage what is familiar. Yet in these connections, the conventional and familiar interpretations of religious practice, of what it means to be a Muslim in Niamey, are reshaped, often reappearing as a means of resistance to change as well as the motivation for it. But in the interim, a young woman inserted herself, perhaps inadvertently, in the interstices of these changes. She becomes the object on which the changes are deliberated and proactively functions in an unexpected way in the face of them – if not necessarily outside the limited capital accumulation options available for most young urban Africans.

Mobility and cities

African cities without real industrial bases absorb at most only 20% of their inhabitants in formal wage labour. Despite the availability of land and labour (in absolute terms) and the possible equilibration of rural and urban incomes in the light of increasing fusions in rural and urban activities,¹¹ the rural areas of Africa continue to be drained of their bodies to the cities. And cities have never been easy places for women.

While there exists a history of self-propelled female migration to the urban areas, motivated largely as an escape from various forms of rural coercion, the economic practices relied upon by women to support urban residence, eg prostitution, reinforce the negative cultural constructs organized around female mobility and independence. Even if from the outset women pursued urban trading

(or quickly transferred assets from prostitution into trade), they were still largely harassed by local authorities.

Even with their reliance upon informal sectors, local authorities persist in demolishing informal markets and discriminating against women in the issuance of licences. Whereas rural self-help initiatives are usually more palatable to national regimes, those in the cities are generally less capacitated owing to their implications for enhancing women's financial independence.¹² Urban taxation policies often reinforce the idea that husbands are the sole providers for child welfare, when in actuality this is hardly the case – especially as the common practice is for spouses to maintain separate financial management of their resources. Tax clearance policies as a prerequisite for licensing to trade also cuts into women's incomes without the tax reliefs usually accorded to men.¹³

As mobility is the locus of control exerted over women, it is also mobility which constitutes the essential ingredient of a gendered social economy. In conventional terms, women move from household to household; they are the medium of exchange which enables the formation of interhousehold alliances and thus access to opportunities and resources for all. In most instances of customary law, mobility is neither initiated nor structured by women themselves, wrapped up as it is with connotations of the supposed dangers inherent in women's sexuality.¹⁴

Without the strict territorialization of capital accumulation and the specialization of labour which the city conventionally represents, African urban areas are thus largely deterritorialized configurations. They hover somewhere between being a relocation or massification of intact rural social structures and an incessant social provisionality of a service-oriented economy relying upon permutations in the kinds of consumption urbanity makes possible. In other words, people work to elongate and insert themselves in chains of circulation trying to make the most of limited external resource inputs – making a lot of somethings out of next to nothing. For example the contents of a case of beer may find itself passed



Photo: Paul Blokland

through many hands, applied to many social transactions and purposes, interacting with many other trajectories of cash flow and objects, before it is finally consumed.¹⁵

Limitations in the national productive base further deterritorialize the organization of urban space through migration and cross-border trade – in turn intensifying the connotations of mobility as a threat to social integration. In fact, migrations in Africa have become one of the continent's predominant methods of survival, and will inevitably grow in importance.¹⁶ The investment of time, energy, money, creative intelligence, and information exchange related to migration is exceeded in Africa only by attention to the basic necessities of everyday life.

In several countries, such as Niger, remittances from nationals working in other countries is the chief source of income. Thousands of both rudimentary and sophisticated networks have been established to handle the retrieval and remittance of foreign earnings; attainment of documentation and permits; transportation of goods; the passage and/or circumvention of exchange and customs controls; the negotiation of social supports, employment, marketing opportunities, communications, and information generation.

The capacity to steal, forge and even legally attain passports, visas and various other documentation from invoices, licences, letters of credit, etc is



Photo: Paul Blokland

so extensive as to constantly frustrate issuing and monitoring agencies. But the nature of the African economic crisis leaves little choice for households other than to invest in small amounts of working capital to cover travel costs for select members to find opportunities to make money away from home.

The significant aspect of this migration is that migrants are not moving into employment defined in a conventional sense, ie wage-earning jobs or even conventionally defined small-scale entrepreneurship. Rather, the bulk of migrants convert the leftovers of colonialism, ie differences in the currencies, customs regulations and pricing structures of "nominally" independent nation-states, as a way to make money. As much income is made in the various "crossings" or borders as is made "within" borders themselves.

As such, there is a growing dissociation between paid productive activities carried out "elsewhere" by, most usually, men and social reproduction which continues at "home" as the burden of women. Material survival often takes the constituents of households and kin groups further from an identifiable "home base".¹⁷

Urban communities become increasingly spokes in a network of highly variegated, if tenuous, transactions with other sectors and communities. What new modes of social interconnection supplement existing affiliations? What conduits and tactics of

exchange are employed to maintain some sense of cohesion to this dispersed structure? For what has largely transpired is a shift from the parochial concerns of household production and reproduction in rural economies to an internationalized circuitry of petty and medium-scale trade launched and deployed across a network of cities – and without the mediating function of cities acting as the engineers in the elaboration and consolidation of a national productive base.

Although women, too, join these migratory circuits,¹⁸ their ties to household sustenance remain strong and thus place them most usually at the interface of the declining territorial specificity of rural production (as it is increasingly incorporated into global circuits in the export of primary commodities) and the expansion of urban economic boundaries into the proliferation of, albeit, overextended and largely informal trade networks. While the mobility of the majority of urban women may be limited to movements within cities or, increasingly, among cities within a subregion, it is a mobility still construed to be a problem for various levels of authority.

Since women largely operate within various contexts of informality, in the economic, social and political spheres, the ability of bureaucracies to monitor and codify practices of solidarity, information exchange and income generation remain limited. While affinal and kin relations remain important as

contexts for urban production partnerships, women are restructuring their former dependence on them – moving into partnerships based on coresidence and intricate networks of non-related women anchored in diverse positions within the city.

In an extreme example within some of the poorest neighbourhoods in Addis Ababa, women organize themselves into loose networks providing temporary hiding places for a continuous stream of thieves, whose opportunities for the theft itself are cultivated by a different social class of women able to secure paid jobs within the state and businesses. The women then collectively pool a "cut" of the assets to ensure an equitable coverage of school fees for their children. In Bamako, networks of social support are cemented through a wide-ranging practice of distributing gifts and service which act as long-term investments in multiple reciprocities.¹⁹

As the acquisition of urban property has historically been a key focus of women's investment in the city, the escalating declines of trading income, the inflation of land valuation and the frequent inability to convert property into loan collateral also motivate new forms of association among women to facilitate property investments.²⁰

Even when urban compounds consist of distinct conjugalities related by kin, the mode of organization usually accentuates the distinct positions and external networks available to a specific family unit, and thus encourages a heterogeneity rather than an evening-out, of different resource allocation patterns and fiscal transfers both within and outside the compound.²¹ Whereas marked discrepancies in accumulation possibilities generate conflict within compounds – largely as a carry-over from rural emphases on surface egalitarianism – and precipitate an overreliance on remediation through sorcery,²² urban compounds are increasingly forced to find ways of cohering intensifying internal differentiations and the increased levels in individual autonomy that go with it.

The sex economy, therefore, becomes increasingly normalized and widespread in cities, engaged in more and more by younger girls in order to meet the new consumption standards

generated by HIV – younger girls are taken to mean less chance of infection (epidemiologically an incorrect assumption). As the sex economy expands, thus goes the appropriation of sex as a medium of discourse and exchange in the configuration of power relationships at all levels of institutional life. This dynamic may be nothing new, but the expanding parasitism upon female sexual labour and its incorporation into more and more aspects of everyday life is. As Mbembe points out, sexual practice of the urban elite no longer refers to any sense of customary generosity, nor a function of cementing alliances. "The problem is instead how, in the postcolony, these baroque practices have become an integral part of the bureaucrat's lifestyle, how the economy of pleasure has become inseparable from vice."²³ Thus if the urban centre is largely cohered as one of administration, then the carrying out of administration has come to make increasingly essential the role of sex work.

A by-product of this social economy is the investment women make in being noticed and turning it into something else. Young women frequently pursue multiple sexual affiliations either hoping that they will accrue direct material benefits, be "passed on" to someone else who will provide for them, be paid off by a jealous competitor, or produce a child from the liaison that might cement a longer term financial commitment. In Dakar, the common understanding is that the three most important men in a woman's life are her tailor, father and boyfriend – in that order of importance.

The growth of the African city is thus largely the growth of a repository of symbolic excess, the conversion of limited resources and elements into ever-expanding possibilities of consumption, and the inextricable link of consumption to the display and cementing of power. And it is through this very excess that a space is created for the disenfranchised to identify some form of participation. Drained of any framework of legitimacy based either on adherence to ethical principle or the efficacy of services delivered, the power of urban-based political regimes rests precisely in its banality, its undermining any



Photo: Paul Blokland

basis of resistance against it because, in the end, it doesn't pretend to be anything other than what it is.

So while sexual economy may have been normalized, the mobility of the earnings generated by it, and the increased role women play in deciding upon its eventual disposition opens up a new cause of male concern. For as women grow more detached from the strictures of rural social economies, what they do with their limited money, once household needs are addressed, becomes the major cause of concern on the part of institutions everywhere. In part, the concern is generated because financial assets are a relatively new phenomenon, especially in many rural cultures. They are less constrained by the custom of male ownership, and the mobilization of savings, especially among groups of women, is likely the key in the short term to availing them a greater range of economic options.²⁴

Now, this concern is especially evident in the attitudes toward women who either forego or delay marriage, birth and raise children in compounds of non-kin related women which provided expanded scope for individual mobility, or who forego heterosexuality altogether – a dynamic being displayed with increasing frequency despite the taboos.

While it is evident that the harshness of the demands and climate of urban life severely tax the capacities of women, the city still stands out as a

place of opportunity and contest. But rather than experiencing a radical disjuncture from rural life, urban existence simply defers resolution of addressing the decline in the bargaining position faced by women in the rural context. More important, it defers confronting the inadequacies of rural forms of governance, management and social organization in addressing the changing status of rural economy within a changing national and global system. As such, there is no formation of adequate structures able to capitalize upon land and labour availability in ways satisfactory to labour, and particularly women. Instead of resolving these issues within cities based on industrial growth and services linked to international trade, the incompleteness and relatively deterritorialized process of African urbanization act to maintain them in a critical state of flux.

Back on the farm

In order to fully appreciate the ambiguities of urban existence, it is important to revisit what has taken place in rural areas and agriculture, particularly as it involves women. Given the multiplicity of roles women play in rural areas and the relative constraints women face in using this multiplicity as means of broadening their economic and political power, great levels of contestation exist on household and village levels over the sexual designations of labour, and the purpose and

scope of its mobilization. This issue has become particularly acute as macrolevel agricultural interventions occasioned in the post-structural adjustment era can act to intensify conjugal dependence. Here, women spend larger amounts of time working as labourers on their husband's holding, thus mitigating their access to independent sources of income.²⁵

The following then appear to be key features of this contestation:

- 1 *How women respond to changes in the organization of agriculture. eg crop change, instituted at various levels, generate unanticipated material conditions which in turn structure the options available to women.*

The derivative nature of land right, access and use institutionalizes what are understood to be the most efficacious continuities in agricultural practice, as well as social arrangements which might preserve the customary no matter what conditions it must operate under. In the light of changes prompted by external forces, rural communities attempt to adapt their conventions to changed external realities, as well as accommodate those changes of those conventions.

What ensues is a patchwork of accommodations and revisions reflecting any community's efforts to distance, balance, or integrate the different interests and interpretations incumbent in different social positions that evolve over time. As a result, agriculture is subject to subdivisions, where a sense of stability is continuously pieced together through a rearrangement of elements, synchronies and investments. Some of these subdivisions cohere and reinforce a household economy, while others intensify conjugality, nuclearization, gender independence, and multiple bases to resource claims, as well as conflict, in different instances.²⁶

In Jane Guyer's work on Beti farmers,²⁷ for example, crop change might initially fit into prevailing cycles and labour systems, but, as in the case of cocoa, diverge, making it impossible for intercropping and severing complementary land use cycles. The change has differing implications for male and female farmers as the latter lose an established practice of ensuring staple food.

While women did not pursue adjustment of the implications occasioned by these changes through political bargaining, they, nevertheless, consolidated their "control" over marketable cropping within the terms of the labour they had access to all along. As such, Guyer points out, resultant conflicts are over income and not labour.²⁸

The haphazard interventions of a modernizing state in turn affect the scope of women's adaptation to these changing conditions – sometimes strengthening modes of inheritance and thus male privilege, while at others providing legal backing to the actual use of land (thus supporting women's cultivation rights). What transpired in Cameroon was a progressive separation of women's income from the cycle of activity and claims on income from the male cycle that had enclosed it – a dynamic which precipitated a major political crisis in the mid-1980s.

The compensatory strategies can also ramify throughout the entire rural economy. For example, as tree cropping in Sierra Leone competes with rice production for both land use and male labour, women's compensatory strategies, eg, cassava production for domestic consumption, can affect the periods that land is allowed to remain fallow, and thus long-term productivity. As male use of land is informed by the availability of labour, men now often try to combine household rice production and tree cropping on contiguous plots – removing some aspects of conventional land use rights, such as intercrops, for wives. In response, wives may turn to vegetable production with new demands on their time.

As urban areas require greater amounts of wood products, farmers can generate substantial earnings through the commercialization of fuel wood – a process increasingly controlled by men. In order to generate marketable supplies, the bush is either overthinned or the burns suppressed – decisions which affect yields of intercrops and rice, and increase the amounts of time women must devote to weeding.²⁹

- 2 *The scope of women's bargaining power in the rural area is increasingly reliant upon informal modal-*

ities of governance and alliance-making that act to pluralize both the opportunities and constraints for the diverse interests of different sectors of women.

As the forms for eking out some kind of livelihood become more complex, regulatory systems become more dispersed and activated through more situationally invoked and personally negotiated social arrangements.³⁰ As such clearly demarcated distinctions between labour and cultural production become difficult to sustain.³¹

Faced with multiple vulnerabilities, opportunities and changing conditions, the locus of struggle for both men and women is what implications the incorporation of their localities into larger systems will have on their symbolic meanings, organizational forms, social practices, expenditures of time and individual desires. While the penetration of a larger outside world exerts a transformative force, struggles over how that penetration changes the meaning of what localities do and value, as well as how they organize themselves, constitutes some space for them to manoeuvre their own specific ways of linking themselves to that world.

So while women may be increasingly abandoned in the country or are abandoning the country for the city, the activities of urban women are not necessarily delinked from their rural female counterparts. Rather, urban women may take advantage of situations where there is a "feminization" of the countryside in order to secure advantages over urban food markets and diminish dependence on middlemen and retailers. These steps then provide rural women with some leverage in dealing with usually male elders who remain the nominal sources of authority in the rural areas. In many parts of the Sahel, while girls may not be in school, they are on buses moving back and forth between city and country as the "conveyors" of this exchange, as "coparticipants" in several compounds, both rural and urban.

The centring of sociocultural systems on the control of female mobility will ultimately become increasingly ineffective as new forms of that mo-

bility are required to enhance the overall productivity of society – thus opening up a space for the “unstructured” and “uncodified” flows of women’s activities. At the same time, the apparatus of social control officially remains intact, constraining mobility – not so much because it retains a proficient instrumentality – but because it remains “official”, the discourse through which men and women talk to each other.

It is in this interface of persistence, collapse and change that women have not really moved from the rural areas, not moved “into” the city, but have charted out the concept, reality and economy of the “peri-urban” – the social formation that is coming to dominate most of Africa. Elaborating this cultural domain in turn gives rise to specific material conditions, opportunities and economies, as much as it is shaped by them.

For as Jane Guyer’s discussion of the “small” reorderings of social life in a western Nigerian farming community points out, the response to economic conditions occurs “within a framework of thresholds and not against them, and within that framework they are inclining toward certain values rather than ranging up and down incremental scales”.³²

The stability of social relationships, particularly conjugality, is not necessarily rooted in the economic collaborations implied by the household. The attempt to balance conjugality, social reproduction, extended family relations and economic sustenance is a highly problematic juggling act, where no aspect finds essential grounding in any other despite the cultural obligations to integrate them. On the contrary, “the balances that are achieved appear to be rather situations of compromise, in which social and cultural adjustment to fundamental organizational needs – such as those regarding the functioning of the domestic unit of production – leads to side effects in terms of tensions, which, in turn lead to mechanisms of internal counterbalancing (eg divorce) which may hinder integration”.³³

The reassertion of polygamy without coresidence as an urban survival strategy coupled with the preponderance of intensified migrations, child-



Photo: Paul Blokland

birth outside of marriage and, in some areas, higher rates of male mortality tend to further undo any direct relationship between conjugality, household production, and extended family, especially as more provisional and heterogeneous forms of both economic survival and social arrangement are pursued. Within such a context, practices of what Oppong calls “substitutability” thrive. Children are increasingly fostered; persons, especially children, come to play a multiplicity of roles in households and single roles and identities are played by several people. Such practices serve to intensify sibling and age-grade solidarities, while engendering more tentative and

problematic relationships between the multiple caretakers any given child is likely to have.³⁴

Additionally, as a consequence of these practices, the responsibility for socialization of children becomes more diffused, and the lines of authority more unclear.³⁵ In general the enforcement of authority within all social relationships becomes more difficult. While men functionally retain the bulk of rights in most location decisions (household, schooling, custody, property), their increased inability to support these decisions with either appeals to custom or financial capability means that their “need” to be in control is more vulnerable to manipu-

lation. The sheer intensity of household survival needs forces women into "playing this card" more frequently, even if the objectives are to secure a measure of autonomy away from such sexual politics.

New institutions

In all of these instances, local institutions and organizations need to focus on engendering a climate of more transparent negotiation, dialogue and compromise. This is of course a difficult task as most such local organizations centre on socio-religious institutions which are now in many instances involved in attempting to reinvigorate the cultural bases of male authority. It becomes increasingly evident, especially as one moves to the city, that the locus of authority moves in two distinct hierarchical trajectories.

Despite the democratization processes under way throughout Africa, political authority still rests in the ability of a faction of a political elite to "eat power whole"³⁶ – to control all aspects of life through the personalized consumption of resources enforced through the deployment of arbitrary violence. But at the same time, authority increasingly devolves to the sheer proficiency of households, urban compounds, and social networks to live by their wits, to engender new opportunities to provide services for those pursuing the strategy of consumption as a mode of social power.

It is here that urban women tend to demonstrate themselves as more resilient "players" even if the concrete bases of their economic actions are more limited. Their ability to configure networks of operation which cut across geographic territory, institutional placement, class position and other forms of stratification is increasingly evident. While young men may be forced to "indenture" themselves to family members or an assortment of patrons just to secure an opportunity to migrate, to go somewhere else, young women, faced with persistent formal and institutional discriminations, compensate with more imaginative, uncoded and unexpected terms of alliance-making.

The question becomes, what then, are the external conditions of governance which constitute an enabling environment for new forms of negotiations between men and women to take place, and then from a position of mutually recognized complementarities and strength? For without such institutions, there is a tendency to displace the conflicts onto other terrains, to exit from them without fundamentally constructing options to "begin anew" in some alternative arrangement.

Equally important is the question of what kinds of selves and notions of partnership and cooperation are being cultivated in the pedagogical systems within which the development system seeks to ensure girls' participation?³⁷ To what extent can formal education articulate the repositories of cultural knowledge and the multiple improvizations on it occasioned by periods of crisis to the technical skills thought to embody the possibilities of self-sufficiency and collective growth?

Not only do women require the organizational forms capable of altering the economic structures which enforce all forms of inequality, and empower greater self-reliance and internal strength – the position of Development with Women for a New Era³⁸ – but ways of ensuring that emerging structures of governance, management, training and resource mobilization are informed by the social practices and arrangements pursued in everyday life. While not necessarily or efficiently having to formalize or institutionalize those practices and arrangements, the seeds and forms of these new institutions must either expand the scope and efficacy of such practices, or at least enable women to set the terms for their transformation.

For the shape of the city, within its porous and diffuse boundaries, is largely being configured through the pursuits of women, regardless of the appropriations and violence of national regimes. Thus their capacity to generalize their specificities beyond their local applications as well as their own practices of articulating their particular needs to others, constitute the basis of institutions capable of facilitating and enforcing compro-

mise as well as the larger agenda of cohering disparate social identities and economic activities.³⁹

There are few precise understandings within the international development community about how African cities survive, and particularly the role women are playing. This, in large part, stems from the inability and unwillingness of development workers to proliferate their own engagements with women within the logics applied to their social networking and distributive activities and to constitute themselves as one of many nodes in an overall approach to urban sustenance and change. For most development activities, women are a problem to be solved and addressed rather than a resource to be enlisted and deployed in restructuring the African city along the lines which its diverse populations can make sense of it.

Here it is not simply a matter of valorizing locality or context-specificity – since then local social arrangements cannot be critically assessed and thus changed by anyone. Rather, the viability of the provisional, situational practices and knowledge pursued in African cities rests in their targets through which they seek to exceed themselves, through which they seek to deterritorialize the scope of their operations and take their "practioners" somewhere else.

The marginality of women from the possibilities of powerfully shaping the policies and procedures which enforce this marginality does not make them impervious to either addressing this position, finding ways of inserting themselves as "international actors", or reinventing the terms through which they understand and act upon their everyday lives.

For while urban compounds are seeking to reproduce their survival, they generate new sets of implications, detours, objectives, possibilities which they attempt to keep open in order to pursue – a means of hedging bets. Therefore, issues of development and governance do not require the impositions of technical standards and predetermined evaluation systems, but disparate and heterogeneous engagements of women, households, compounds, neighbourhoods with others.

For this is largely what women in

cities are doing, and doing not in anticipation of external interventions that might subsume their practices to clear and unequivocal definitions of place, roles, identities and functions. For the pursuits of urban women in Africa are simultaneously engaged in an ambiguous, subversive, complicit, compensatory, reproductive and transformative relationship with the prevailing logics and instruments of social power.

Therefore any expectation that women are to embody a culmination of a definitive oppositional stance to power or the imagery of a new society is to further marginalize the details of their everyday efforts.¹⁰ And it is the process of interweaving these very details into the evolving process of institutional reform, capacity and urban management that will serve to redefine the city as an engineer of women's aspirations.

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Mozambique

The newest kid on the democratic block

Mike Chapman, of the Economic Intelligence Unit, provides an overview of the recent Mozambican elections.

OCTOBER 27, 28 and 29 1994 saw Mozambique's first ever multi-party legislative and presidential elections. Preparations for the elections, as well as the voting itself, took place under the watchful eye of a host of international observers, dominated by the United Nations (UN). There were assorted hiccups and scares during the period of preparation, and even on the first day of voting, but the elections were open and smooth enough to be unanimously declared free and fair by all the monitors. The result of the vote was a narrow victory in the legislative vote for the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Frelimo), the party which has ruled since Mozambique's independence from Portugal, and a more comfortable win for its leader, Joaquim Chissano, in the presidential vote. Substantial support was, however, shown for the former armed rebel group, Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Renamo) and its leader, Afonso Dhlakama and both were firmly and legitimately established in Mozambique's political scene as a result. The elections marked the final end of decades of bloodshed in the country and, as a result, they were hailed as a remarkable achievement on the part of the country's political leaders and the UN.

A key concern which remains is whether the new system will become permanent, given the entrenched nature of the enmity between Frelimo and Renamo. There are also related concerns as to whether Mr Dhlakama is happy with the role which has been reserved for him in the new political

arrangements. Other widely held worries include doubts over Frelimo's ability to manage the economy and suggestions that the flow of vital financial support from donors may soon diminish as part of a global trend. However, it must be borne in mind that the elections took place in a very different Southern Africa to that which existed even at the beginning of this decade. The situation in the subregion is now a much less hostile environment from a Mozambican perspective. In turn, the global political rivalry, which existed until the end of the 1980s and which had led to a destructive search for spheres of influence even in Mozambique, had completely disappeared long before 1994. Whichever factors eventually exert the most influence over the course of political events in Mozambique, the jubilation exhibited after the elections by the Mozambican population, the UN and the other international observers was entirely justified. A hard fought, protracted civil war had been conclusively ended (inconceivable as recently as 1989) and it had been demonstrated to the world that, despite being widely accepted as the planet's poorest country, Mozambique (with a little help from the UN and other donors) could stage elections as well as any other democratic nation. The general acceptance of the freeness and fairness of the electoral process was so complete that even the losers accepted the results as legitimate. This last feature gives the Mozambican democratic process a vital touch of authenticity, so often lacking in similar exercises elsewhere on the continent.

Of course, the seeds of the events of October 1994 were sown much earlier in Mozambique's history. In 1975 Portugal was forced to grant independence to all of its African colonies, most of which had seen extended and bloody wars of liberation. In Mozambique eleven years of struggle had been led by Frelimo, which provided the country's first government and president. The rapid and comprehensive withdrawal by the Portuguese left the country with little infrastructure and difficult to govern. The Frelimo government's response was to become increasingly autocratic. It attempted to manage the economy with central planning and it banned all other political parties. Inevitably there was opposition to the regime. By the early 1980s this was led by Renamo, a group established in what was then Rhodesia and said to have been largely funded by that country's government. Renamo chose guerrilla war as the main means of expressing its animosity (and that of various foreign governments) towards the Marxist-Leninist Frelimo regime. There were various international attempts to bring about peace in Mozambique but the negotiation process which was to eventually end the civil war did not begin until mid-1990, under the guidance of mediators from the Roman Catholic Church. The government showed willing by introducing a new, more liberal constitution later that year and in October 1992 the Acordo Geral de Paz was signed, with terms agreed for a cease-fire and the elections.

In addition to the general exhaustion of the military machines serving



death knell rang for this source of succour when P W Botha was replaced as president of South Africa by the less belligerent F W de Klerk. Finally, by 1993 the UN was becoming increasingly desperate for a success story. High-profile failures in Angola and Somalia meant that the organization had an urgent need to justify its existence and no chances were taken in the arrangements it made for the cease-fire and elections in Mozambique.

At the time of the elections, and during the immediate aftermath, both sides were then aware that they could no longer turn to their traditional international allies for sustenance should this attempt to establish an elected government fail. The only alternative to participation in the electoral process was a return to civil war, with nothing but limited local sources of funding for their exhausted armies. Mr Chissano and Mr Dhlakama were also conscious of the fact that any side seen to be responsible for bringing to an end the electoral process would automatically confer a degree of international legitimacy upon the other. It was also clear that if either side did opt out of the process, it would face an uphill struggle to avoid comprehensive international ostracism. Essentially, both sides perceived that they stood to gain most by participating in the electoral process. This was further ensured by the money which the UN was so willing to commit to the peacekeeping operation and the electoral process. The sums of money spent by the UN in Mozambique (for example, the \$64m given to organize and monitor the elections and the \$10m given to Renamo to fund its election campaign) were considerably more effective than the much larger sums spent in, say, Angola. The reason for this is purely economic. Mozambique is regularly classified as the poorest country in the world, with GNP per head estimated to be around \$80. Furthermore, there is no possibility of earning foreign exchange by sales of, say, oil or diamonds (as in Angola). Consequently sums of hard currency count for many times more in Mozambique than they do elsewhere.

Motivated primarily by such considerations, Mr Chissano and Mr Dhlakama

each side, international events were crucial in bringing about a situation in which a cease-fire could be signed and elections held. The end of the global rivalry between the USA and the USSR meant that the importance of creating and maintaining spheres of influence in the rest of the world diminished considerably. Whatever were the material-effects of the withdrawal of substantial, open Soviet support for Frelimo and alleged US assistance for Renamo, the psychological impact of the cessation of East-West rivalry was a decisive factor in pushing the leaders of the two groups to the negotiating table. Also impor-

tant in forcing the armed rebels to agree to talk were changes in the governments of neighbouring countries. Renamo had been hit by the ending of minority rule in what became Zimbabwe in 1980 and, from 1982, Zimbabwean troops were deployed in Mozambique, expressly to combat the activity of Renamo guerrillas. Only extensive military and financial support from the South African government of the time (which considered Frelimo as a legitimate enemy because of its support for the African National Congress) allowed Renamo to keep up its military campaign. However, in 1989 the

kama led their respective supporters to the voting booths at the end of October. The atmosphere throughout the country was tense, with national TV and radio interrupting their programmes every few minutes for solemn updates. The streets of Maputo were deadly quiet, apart from the areas around voting stations. Here queues snaked repeatedly until each appeared to be a disorganized throng although, in fact, voting was on the whole extremely orderly. The queues had begun forming at dawn on the first day of voting and persisted until well into the evening. Each ended in a pair of ballot boxes, one for the presidential election and the other for the election to the new legislature, the 250-seat Assembleia Nacional. There were rumours of violence between rival supporters in some of the regions and even of a Renamo bomb attack on one voting station. In the end, however, none of the scare stories was confirmed and all went off sufficiently calmly for the UN monitors, as well as for those provided by the European Union (EU), to declare that the elections had been "satisfactorily free and fair".

During the months before the elections Maputo had come to be dominated by the UN presence. The organization had built its own airport outside the capital in order to fly in all the required equipment and personnel. The effect was that, by the day before voting began, virtually every other vehicle on the city's streets was white with "UN" painted on the side in black letters. By that time, the UN Operation in Mozambique (Unomoz) peacekeeping force stood at a total of 7 000 troops from a wide variety of countries including Bangladesh, Botswana and Italy. In addition there were 3 000 international election monitors spread throughout the country.

Ensuring that the country's hotel capacity was stretched to its limit, all of the world's media were also heavily represented. The information ministry's offices in Maputo were overrun with foreign journalists while hundreds of film crews and reporters also headed out to the regions in search of an original angle. As if not wishing to disappoint, Mr Dhlakama treated the world's press, TV and radio to a nail-biting drama just hours before voting

Election results, October 1994

Legislative election	Votes	% of total
Frelimo	2 115 793	44,3
Renamo	1 803 506	37,8
Democratic Union	245 793	5,2
Presidential election	Votes	% of total
Joaquim Chissano	2 633 740	53,3
Afonso Dhlakama	1 666 965	33,7
Wehia Ripua	141 905	2,9
Carlos dos Reis	120 708	2,4

*Valid votes only.

Source: National Electoral Commission

was due to begin on 27 October. Claiming that the National Electoral Commission (CNE) had failed to take sufficient measures to prevent foreign Frelimo supporters from voting, the Renamo leader announced that his organization was pulling out of the elections. He called upon all Renamo supporters to boycott the polls until such "vote-rigging" had been dealt with. For a while it appeared that the whole election process was in jeopardy. However, heavy persuasion by neighbouring heads of state (in particular Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and South Africa's Nelson Mandela) and the UN's special representative in Mozambique, Aldo Ajello, as well as an agreement to extend voting by a day, saw Mr Dhlakama call off the boycott less than half a day into the elections. In any case, poor communications and the determination of a significant proportion of the population to vote, come what may, meant that thousands of Renamo supporters had cast their votes long before Mr Dhlakama rescinded the boycott. The enthusiasm for the elections among the Mozambican electorate was clearly demonstrated by the turnout rate of nearly 90%.

Despite Mr Dhlakama's wavering, the election result saw Renamo shatter Frelimo's traditional complacency. Although the ruling party won a majority (129 seats) in the Assembleia Nacional, Renamo came a very close second (112 seats), winning outright in five of the country's provinces (Manica, Nampala, Sofala, Tete and Zambezia). Nine seats were won by the Democratic Union, a coalition formed by three lesser ("unarmed")

parties. The presidential election was more clear-cut, with Mr Chissano winning over 53% of the valid votes cast and Mr Dhlakama around 34%.

President Chissano thus finds himself at the head of a government with a slim working majority in parliament. This should allow him to push through Frelimo's policy programme, such as it is. Part of the legacy of more than a decade of civil war is that Frelimo deputies will, in general, vote very loyally, if only because of the anathema to them of the alternative: voting with the old enemy. However, as more contentious policy decisions have to be passed into law, the government may find itself unable to push through the required legislation. The issue of land ownership and, in particular, the sale of a vast tract of Mozambican territory to President Chissano's personal guru, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, for the establishment of a "paradise on earth", is a likely source of trouble on the immediate horizon. If the Democratic Union votes with Renamo on an issue such as this, then all that is required for the government to be defeated is that nine of its deputies abstain or that five of them vote with the opposition. While this is undoubtedly not the situation which President Chissano had hoped for, such a check on government policy will ensure that Mozambican democracy is seen to be working. The newly elected president may be regretting his stubborn rejection in the run-up to the election of suggestions from various quarters that a government of national unity be formed with Renamo or that aspects of the election result be "negotiated", in the manner seen earlier in 1994 in South Africa. That way he

would at least have reduced the animosity felt towards his party by Renamo. As it is, the former rebels appear to have opted to minimize, for the present, the level of involvement in the new political arrangements, with Renamo deputies sometimes setting en masse in silence in the *Assembléia Nacional*. Nonetheless, President Chissano has continued to attempt to force some sort of reconciliation. In mid-December he announced the formation of an expanded Council of Ministers, including six vacant posts thought to be on offer to Renamo politicians. It has also been reported that the president has confirmed his intention to offer a major national post to Mr Dhlakama. This is likely either to be the post of vice-president or the presidency of the recently formed Consultative Forum. This forum was established by President Chissano as a wider arena for policy debate and it will be composed of the leaders of all political parties as well as high-ranking members of the public and private sectors.

The civil war has left the government with a daunting collection of problems. Two obvious examples are the difficulties raised by the repatriation, largely from Malawi, of over one million refugees and the need to make provision for those who served in the armed forces of Frelimo and Renamo. Regarding the latter problem, as signatories to the *Acordo Geral de Paz*, both sides had firmly committed themselves to the disarmament of all their troops. Despite the huge numbers of personnel involved (an estimated total of 135 000 soldiers), this had largely been achieved by August 1994, under the close supervision of Unomoz. The second part of the plan was for some of the disarmed fighters to volunteer to join the new national army, *Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique* (FADM). It was envisaged that the FADM would number some 30 000 troops but by the time of the elections only 11 000 had signed up. Although the months after the elections have seen the level of recruitment to the FADM increase (primarily as former fighters decided that civilian life is not for them), encouraging former soldiers to join the new army is a key priority for the government, desperate as it is to use donor funds provided

for the purpose and to remove any possible burden on the country's ailing economy.

Apart from in specific instances such as those above, the new government will, whether it likes it or not, very quickly come to be preoccupied with economic policy issues. Firstly, only if it achieves an improvement in the lot of ordinary Mozambicans will Frelimo be able to ensure repeated electoral victory. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the government must be seen to be following the policy advice given out by bilateral and multilateral donors in order not to jeopardize flows of aid. In Mozambique's case the most important economic policy advice will be that given out by the World Bank, although this will follow the line taken elsewhere by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other bilateral donors. The emphasis, then, will be on liberalization of the economy (a process which was begun, albeit haltingly, by Frelimo in 1990), the privatization of state-owned enterprises, the elimination of government budget deficits, the battle against consumer price inflation and the encouragement of private sector activity.

Annual aid inflows of around \$1.5bn are roughly equal to Mozambique's GDP and without them the country's already low living standards would drop significantly below subsistence level and a humanitarian crisis would quickly result. Part of the problem is the country's external debt which now stands at around \$5bn. Debt-service payments cost the equivalent of between 20% and 25% of Mozambique's annual export earnings and this makes the continued inflow of donor funds even more vital. Creditors have been generous with debt rescheduling and cancellation deals and these have reduced the impact of the accumulated debt. However, as debt deals are generally not struck with countries which are seen to have ignored the policy advice of donors, the need for debt rescheduling represents yet another source of pressure on the government to toe the accepted policy line. Renamo may, out of stubbornness, vote against much of the legislation necessary for the implementation of donor-inspired

economic policy. However, the ideology behind such policy is much closer to the traditional stance espoused by Renamo than it is to Frelimo's past Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Mozambique's transition has come at the tail end of the tide of change which has swept across the entire continent. As in all the countries of Africa which have adopted new political systems in recent years, the hard work is likely to have barely begun. It may take many years to complete the transition and to establish the type of political and economic system which is hoped for. In the meantime, it will remain a very real possibility that the frail peace could give way to a descent back into civil war. There are many areas of concern but some of the more important are:

- The limited political power given by President Chissano to Mr Dhlakama. The latter's main motivation appears to be that he considers himself a very powerful person. It will be important to him that whatever post he finally accepts reflects this and that he is accorded sufficient status in the new Mozambique. One snub too many from President Chissano and Mr Dhlakama could easily regroup and re-arm Renamo loyalists.
- The haste with which the UN wants to end its involvement. So desperate is the UN to claim an unqualified success that it almost appears to want to wash its hands of Mozambique before it can be blamed for anything which does go wrong. The first 1 000 members of Unomoz left in December, creating a worrying vacuum in the absence of a fully staffed FADM.
- The increased demands from other countries put on limited donor funds. With Eastern Europe a relatively new and urgent target for aid funds, the competition for such money is tougher than ever. The conditions placed on aid payments are getting ever stricter and talk is increasingly common in Western countries of reduced aid budgets. Without substantial inflows of aid, the task of rebuilding the economy would become impossible. Discontent would grow quickly and would

probably translate into violence and conflict (given Mozambique's history) before it had a chance to be expressed as electoral defeat for the Frelimo government.

- The difficulty the government might face in delivering a noticeable economic improvement in a relatively short space of time. Mozambique has limited natural resources (though if exploited fully they could provide a healthy core for an economy), as well as an underdeveloped manufacturing sector. Most of the nation's infrastructure has been destroyed in the civil war. To make matters worse, the economic policies required of the government by donors include the withdrawal of the state from the economy which, initially at least, will have a negative impact upon economic performance. It would undoubtedly be argued that the long-term benefits of donor-recommended economic policy are huge but, if living standards go on declining, there may be no elected government around to ensure that policies are maintained in the long run.
- The presence of large numbers of demobilized, largely unemployed soldiers. Official figures indicate that well over 100 000 former fighters currently have no occupation. There has already been a marked rise in the level of armed banditry outside Maputo and it is widely accepted that demobilized troops, unable to make their way rapidly enough in civilian life, are responsible. As their desperation increases and unless significant numbers can be recruited speedily into the FADM, they could come to represent a serious threat to the new establishment, particularly if they began to organize and form armed pseudo-political organizations.

There are, however, also reasons to view Mozambique's future optimistically. For the first time in over three decades the population does not have to cope with a war against either a colonial power or between government and armed rebels. The fact that this situation has been brought about, largely on schedule,

as a result of a negotiated settlement and that there is now an elected government, is a tribute to the efforts of all those involved and an indication of the desire to exist in peace on the part of the mass of the population. The likely lack of support for any party wishing to return Mozambique to a state of war is the most striking reason to expect this young democracy to survive. Others include:

- The level of enthusiasm for elections shown by the population as a whole. The turnout at the legislative and presidential elections was exceptionally high and gave a good indication of the faith being put in the new political system by the electorate. Similarly, the obvious reluctance of Renamo supporters to heed Mr Dhlakama's boycott call stemmed from an insistence on completing the democratic process. This level of commitment will be vital in ensuring that democracy persists.
- The new global political reality. There is no prospect of the Cold War between the West and the former Eastern Bloc being restarted. Neither is it conceivable that some other international rivalry will lead a foreign power to seek either the loyalty of the Mozambican government or that of forces opposed to it. The so-called Pax Americana has seen this method of acquiring global power made redundant and it is most unlikely to come into vogue once more even if, as is widely suggested, the USA adopts a more isolationist foreign policy in future. Given that much of the impetus of Mozambique's civil war came from the support (financial, ideological and military) provided to the government and the armed rebels of foreign powers, the absence of this possibility greatly reduces the chances of a return to civil war.
- The changed circumstances in the other countries of the Southern African subregion. Virtually all of Mozambique's neighbours have seen a change of government in recent years. In most cases this has also involved a substantial change to the political system. Regional

integration and cooperation is now being pushed as a mutually beneficial objective. In other cases, the extent and pace of political change have meant that governments have had to focus their gaze inward. There has been little time, and even fewer resources, for seeking to support sympathetic movements or to undermine potentially hostile governments. The absence of destructive external interference will, again, only boost Mozambique's chances of making its new political system work.

- The limited size of the Mozambican economy and, ironically, the extent of the country's poverty. The withdrawal of military and financial backing by other governments – from within the region or from further afield – will have another, more indirect, positive bearing upon the success of Mozambique's transition. With international and domestic sources of funds extremely limited, donor countries will have little difficulty in ensuring that it is more rewarding for all parties to persevere with the new democratic arrangements than it is to return to civil war. Similarly, if the situation does deteriorate, the UN (or any international body with an interest in maintaining the peace) should find it easy (and affordable) to ensure that it is far more lucrative for any wayward party to return to the fold than it would be to jeopardize the country's stability.
- The potential, starting from a very low base, for the economy to perform reasonably well. With several neighbouring and nearby countries struggling to recover from the effects of a series of droughts, the possibilities for expanding Mozambique's agriculture sector, particularly maize growing, is not insignificant. Tea, sugar and tobacco are also all grown and all benefited from last year's recovery in world commodity markets. The ending of the civil war itself has meant that Mozambique's ports are once more being used by land-locked neighbours and a substantial industry could easily develop around commerce and trans-

portation. Despite cutbacks elsewhere, Western donors may make a special effort to be generous with Mozambique, keen as they are bound to be to see a country which has recently adopted their political and economic systems survive and, indeed, prosper. Donors could be central in persuading Mozambique's creditors (who, at any rate, have always given Mozambique special treatment) to be even more generous with debt relief. The granting of the so-called Naples Terms (which would see as much as two-thirds of outstanding debt written off) is a distinct possibility.

It is with all of these factors, among many others, bearing down upon it that Mozambique became, in October 1994, one of the last sub-Saharan African countries to throw off the autocratic political system which had evolved to replace the dictatorship exercised by some colonial power or other. Although it is in the last wave of countries to achieve a transition to a multiparty democratic system, Mozambique is outstanding in being

among a select few countries which have managed a political transition at the same time as ending a protracted civil war. As in all of the countries of the continent which have recently undergone such extensive change, it is far from certain that the new system will be permanent. What is certain, however, is that it is the will of the Mozambican people that an open, multiparty system be made to work. The greatest source of hope for the country is that the will of the people eventually wins out against all of those factors which would push the country back towards civil war.

Vital to the survival of Mozambican democracy is a stable regional environment. Economic integration and cooperation with the rest of the countries of Southern Africa are objectives which are as vital to Mozambique as they are to its neighbours and, in turn, the achievement of these objectives depends critically upon political stability in each of the countries of the subregion. The fates of President Chissano and Mozambique are now inextricably tied up with those of others who have recently seen far-reach-

ing political change; Frederick Chiluba and Zambia, Bakili Muluzi and Malawi, and Nelson Mandela and South Africa. The relationship cuts both ways; the successful completion of an extensive political transition in Mozambique will add vital new force to the claims of other governments to be leading their nations in the right direction. Mozambique is like the newest member of the local street gang, already fully initiated, its fate is intimately wound up with those of the other members. If the Mozambican political transition is halted or reversed for any reason, then dire repercussions are possible for other countries in the subregion. Similarly, the threat is ever present of the loss of all the progress made so far in Mozambique as a result of a change in the circumstances in any one of the other countries of Southern Africa. Mozambique's move to multiparty democracy, as well as laying the government open to the preferences and whims of its own electorate, has resulted in a heightened, mutual dependence on events in the other countries of Southern Africa.

Electoral trends in Botswana

A geographical perspective

In this article by Stephen Rule of the Department of Geographical Sciences at Vista University's Soweto Campus, the patterns of support for the political parties of Botswana are examined in the light of the country's population and geography. The historical context of its modern political development is also considered.

BOTSWANA is unique in Africa in that seven successive elections have taken place there over a period of almost thirty years of democratic government. The October 1994 elections in Botswana ended three decades of political domination by the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP). For the first time an opposition party received more than one-third of votes cast. The Botswana National Front (BNF) increased its representation in parliament from three to thirteen seats, primarily at the expense of the ruling party. Botswana National Front leader, Kenneth Koma, was quick to plead for a government of national unity, and his party protested strongly at BDP nominations to the new BNF-dominated town councils.¹

Pre-independence political party formation

Democracy in Botswana evolved peacefully, in contrast to the protracted liberation struggles in neighbouring South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. This was a consequence of the early cooption by the British colonial authorities of Tshekedi and Seretse Khama, leading members of the dominant Bangwato tribe. Any need for the development of strident Botswana nationalism was thus effectively obviated. In 1959, after steps had been taken towards the establishment of a representative Legislative Council, the first modern political party was formed in the territory. The Bechuanaland Protectorate Federal Party (BPP), led by

Leetile Raditladi, was opposed to the rapid movement towards democratic representation that was taking place, preferring to entrench traditional authority. Raditladi was from a section of the Bangwato aristocracy that had been excluded from Khama's inner circle,² the probable narrow motivation for his founding of the BPP, and an explanation for its failure to win much popular support.

In December 1960 a greater potential threat to the coopted nationalists emerged in the form of the Bechuanaland People's Party (BPP). Philip Matante, also a Mongwato, led this group of non-traditionalists in calling for the rapid independence of the Protectorate, nationalization of some land and Africanization of the civil service. The party had strong ideological links with the African National Congress and Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, which had just been banned. Support for the BPP was limited to some of the towns along the railway (especially Francistown), amongst urbanites who had relatively weak links with traditional authorities. A faction of the BPP led by Motsamai Mpho soon broke away to form the Botswana Independence Party (BIP) and was able to consolidate an ethnic support base amongst the Bayei, in the northwest of the country.

In response to the formation of the BPP, the nationalists and traditionalists who dominated the Legislative Council decided to create the Bechuanaland (later Botswana) Democratic Party (BDP) in 1962. Led by Seretse Khama,

the BDP articulated the aims of its ideological predecessor, the BPP, with greater flair. Its genre of "bourgeois nationalism" immediately became the ruling ideology in the Legislative Council, by virtue of the BDP's overwhelming dominance thereof.

It was against this background that preindependence parliamentary elections were held in 1965. Seretse Khama's royal lineage and prestige appealed widely to the traditionalist majority of the electorate. The colonial administration treated the BDP as the de facto government because it held 10 of the 12 Legislative Council seats and was thus the incumbent party. The European and Asian minorities used their considerable economic influence to facilitate a BDP victory at the polls because they "feared the consequences of the more 'radical' BPP's coming to power".³ Even in remote Ghanzi and Kgalagadi, the BDP launched campaigns and sought local party candidate nominations amongst the non-Tswana electorates. It was no surprise that the BDP easily won the majority of votes in 28 of the 31 parliamentary constituencies, and that Khama became the first president of Botswana at independence on 30 September 1966. The BPP was able to win the remaining three seats, all in the north-east, with the support of the Bakalanga majority in that region. An explanation for this regional exception was that nearly all of the land in the north-east was owned either by white farmers or the Tati Concession Exploration and Mining Company, a

Table 1: Botswana national election results

Party		1965	1969	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994
BDP	C	31	31	32	32	34	34	40
	W	28	24	27	29	28	31	27
	%	80,4	68,3	76,7	75,2	67,9	64,8	54,6
BPP	C	26	15	8	14	13	11	11
	W	3	3	2	1	1	0	0
	%	14,2	12,1	6,6	7,4	6,6	4,3	4,1
BIP/IFP ⁷	C	24	9	6	5	4	4	9
	W	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
	%	4,6	6,0	4,8	4,3	3,2	2,5	2,7
BNF	C	–	21	14	16	27	33	39
	W	–	3	2	2	5	3	13
	%	–	13,5	11,5	12,9	20,5	27,0	37,1
BPU	C	–	–	–	–	4	1	1
	W	–	–	–	–	0	0	0
	%	–	–	–	–	1,3	0,9	1,1
Other ⁸	C	1	–	3	2	4	3	8
	W	0	–	0	0	0	0	0
	%	6,0	–	0,5	0,2	0,5	0,6	0,4
Voters ('000)		189	157	237	243	294	367	390
Percentage poll		74,5	54,9	31,2	58,4	77,6	68,3	70,0
Total seats		31	31	32	32	34	34	40 ⁹

C = Seats contested; W = Seats won; % = Percentage of total votes cast

Sources: Calculated from S Bernard,¹⁰ *Botswana*; ¹¹ *Midweek Sun*.¹²

situation against which the BPP was easily able to mobilize opposition.⁴

Post-independence political developments

The poor performance of political parties other than the BDP in 1965 prompted the emergence of the Botswana National Front (BNF). Its primary aim was to unite opposition to the BDP. The Kalanga-speaking leader, Daniel Kwela, provided an articulate critique of the government and found support amongst the Bakalanga population in the north-east and the urban population in general. In a totally unrelated context in 1969, Chief Bathoen II of the Setswana-speaking Bangwaketse in the south-east, resigned his chieftainship because of what he perceived to be poor treatment of traditional authorities by the government. He joined and was subsequently elected leader of the BNF, which became an uncomfortable coalition of Bangwaketse traditionalists, Bakalangas and middle-class urbanites.

The BDP were shaken from their complacency in the 1969 elections when they were able to win only 24 seats. The BPP retained the three north-eastern seats that they had won in 1965. The new BNF won three seats in the Southern (Bangwaketse) Region. These included the seat held by the country's then Vice-President, Ketumile Masire,⁵ who was defeated by Chief Bathoen, and had to be given one of the four nominated seats provided for by the constitution. The BIP won one seat in the north. In the 1974 elections, the BDP regained three seats, but the percentage of the electorate who voted, declined dramatically in comparison with the first two elections. This apparent voter apathy embarrassed the government and reflected poorly on its legitimacy. It proved to be the incentive for an aggressive registration campaign, which resulted in much higher polls in subsequent elections. In 1984 and 1989 support for the BNF grew dramatically to 20,5% and then 27% of votes cast, at the expense of the BDP, as well as the other opposition parties.

The single member constituency plurality system operated in favour of the governing party, however, which still won 31 (91%) of the 34 seats in 1989, on only 64,8% of votes cast (see table 1). The BNF won the other three seats, namely Gaborone North, Gaborone South and Okavango. Closer analysis indicates instances of mal-apportionment and gerrymandering which prevented the BNF from winning more seats. The Gaborone South seat was grossly overloaded with 70% more than the average number of voters in other constituencies. The urban electorate of Lobatse, with a large component of BNF support, was combined with rural Barolong voters who tended to support the BDP. Similarly, urban Francistown was combined with the rural village of Matsiloje in the North-East district. Motswagole⁶ claims that excessive influence over the Delimitation Commission by the BDP enabled the latter to facilitate gerrymandering of this nature. In contrast, the Ramotswa seat had only 60% of the national average number of voters, and Mmadinare, Shoshong, Kweneng East and Kgatlang/Tlokweng had 70%. Not unexpectedly, all of the latter were BDP strongholds.

The constitution of Botswana requires that the size of the electorate in each constituency be as nearly equal as possible. This is termed the "population quota". The only proviso is that "the number of inhabitants of a constituency may be greater or less than the population quota in order to take account of natural community of interest, means of communication, geographical features, density of population, and the boundaries of Tribal Territories and administrative districts".¹³ It is evident that the Delimitation Commission had made liberal use of the proviso. Although the official population quota was approximately 25 000 prior to the 1984 delimitation, greater Gaborone had 120 000 residents and consisted of a single constituency only.¹⁴ It should thus, at that stage, have been divided into four or five, but was divided into only two in 1984. The BNF thus won 27% of the votes cast in 1989, but a mere 9% of the seats in the National Assembly.

Prior to the 1994 elections, a re-delimitation of seats was commissioned,

which added six new urban constituencies. These were an additional three in Gaborone (Central, West and Mogoditshane) and one more in Francistown. Lobatse and Palapye were constituted as separate urban seats. In the elections on 15 October the BNF increased its share of the vote to 37%, which translated into 13 seats in parliament as opposed to the 27 won by the BDP.

The contemporary population geography of Botswana

A brief discussion of the social and economic geography of Botswana at the time of the 1994 election will facilitate a clearer understanding of the election results. The area of the state is 581 730 km² and the population enumerated in the 1991 census¹⁵ was 1 326 796. The overall population density of 2.3 persons per km², one of the lowest in Africa, is misleading because most live in the strip of land located between the 400 mm isohyet and the eastern boundary with South Africa and Zimbabwe (about 150 km wide). The country is divided into ten administrative districts, the largest and most populous of which is the Central District.

Ten per cent of the population (133 468) is domiciled in Gaborone, which has developed from a minor village in the 1960s when it was selected as the new capital city in place of the then Mafeking. Apart from the large civil service sector based in Gaborone, the city is the home of 41% (71 173 in 1991) of all employees in the private sector or parastatal organizations, including more than 60% of those in the construction, transport and communications, and finance and business services sectors. A further 23% live in another nine towns with populations exceeding 25 000 people each (see table 2). Francistown is the only other urban centre of a significant size.

An outstanding feature of the population is the relatively low proportion of males resident in most districts of the country. This has been primarily a result of the migration of male labour from the southern regions of Botswana to South Africa, although to a lesser extent in recent years.¹⁶ The

Table 2: Distribution of population in Botswana, 1991

District	Population	% male	Urban centres	
South East	230 104	44,1	Gaborone	133 468
			Lobatse	26 052
Southern	158 577	46,8	Kanye	31 354
			Jwaneng	11 188
Kweneng	170 437	47,1	Molepolole	36 930
Kgatleng	57 770	47,3	Mochudi	25 542
Central	436 797	50,4	Selebi-Phikwe	39 772
			Serowe	30 264
			Mahalapye	28 078
			Palapye	17 362
			Orapa	8 827
			Francistown	65 244
North East	108 598	47,5		
Chobe	14 126	54,1		
Ngamiland	94 534	46,9	Maun	26 768
Ghanzi	23 725	50,3		
Kgalagadi	32 128	48,4		
Botswana	1 326 796	47,8	(36%)	480 849

Source: Botswana.¹⁷

exceptions are the city of Gaborone, where 51% of residents are male, and the mining towns of Selebi-Phikwe, Orapa and Jwaneng, where males dominate as a result of the presence of migrant labourers at the copper and diamond mines there.

Chobe district had a significant male majority (54.1%) because of the large construction sector employed there in 1991.

Recent statistics do not record the distribution of ethnic or linguistic groupings, as a result of a deliberate policy decision aimed at suppressing official recognition of ethnic diversity. A probable rationale for this is to obfuscate a Bangwato-dominated BDP hegemony. The last population census

in which such data was collected was in 1946, during British administration. Mpho,¹⁸ leader of the IFP, points out that the original ethnic Bangwato formed only 20% of the population of the Bangwato reserve which they ruled at the time of that census. Table 3 indicates the approximate ethnic proportions, as estimated in the 1980s. These figures, unlike those of 1946, represent amalgamations of the major groupings of subtribes with cultural or linguistic affinity.

The various ethnic and linguistic groups of Botswana have been settled in specific regions since the nineteenth century land struggles (see figure 1). The pattern has been blurred by large-scale migration to the railway and min-

Table 3: Botswana ethnic groups (c 1980)

Group	Subgroup	Population	%
Tswana-speaking	Bakgatla	44 000	5,2
	Bakwena	98 000	11,7
	Bamalete/Batlokwa	25 600	3,0
	Bangwato	280 000	33,3
	Bangwaketse	98 000	11,7
	Barolong	16 000	1,9
	Batawana	59 000	7,0
Others	Bakalanga	120 000	14,3
	Other African ¹⁹	70 000	8,3
	Non-African origin ²⁰	30 000	3,6
Total		840 600	100

Source: L A Picard.²¹



Figure 1: Distribution of ethnic groups in Botswana

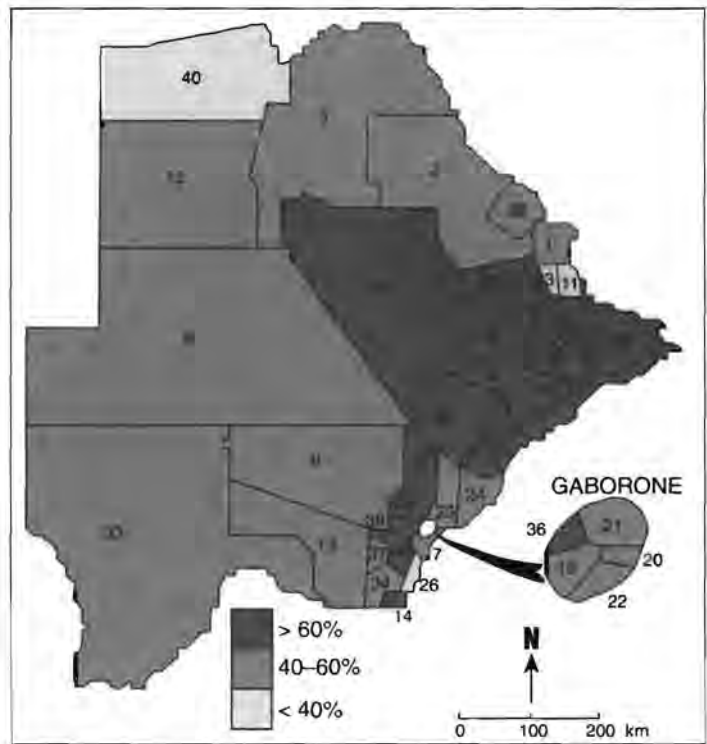


Figure 2: Percentage of votes cast for the Botswana Democratic Party in each constituency in the 1994 elections

ing towns in recent decades. Almost three-quarters of the population are Setswana-speaking. Parsons²² points out, however, that "... Botswana is only a mono-ethnic state insofar as a Tswana minority has successfully imposed its culture on a majority population of extremely diverse ethnic groups". The largest of the Setswana-speaking groups is the Bangwato, who, in spite of their history of political dominance, number only about one-third of the population. They are domiciled primarily in the Central District of Botswana, around the traditional capital of Serowe. Two other Batswana groups, the Bakwena and Bangwaketse, are about equal in size and predominant in the Kweneng and Southern Districts respectively. The Bakgatla live mainly in the Kgatleng District and the Batawana in the Ngamiland District. The Bamalete and Batlokwa are the longest settled groups in what now constitutes the South-East District, where Gaborone is situated. The last of the Setswana-speaking groups, the Barolong, lives mainly in the south-eastern corner of the Southern District.

About one-fifth of the people of Botswana are not indigenous speakers of Setswana. Amongst these are the Bakalanga, who are the second largest

single group in the country. Although they have ethnic roots amongst the Shona of Zimbabwe, a large degree of assimilation appears to have taken place with the Setswana-speaking majority. The Bakalanga are numerically predominant in the North-East District around Francistown, and in the adjacent regions of the Central District. Other non-Tswana groups are the Bakgalagadi and the Basarwa²³ in the drier central and western parts of Botswana; the Batswapong, east of Palapye and Mahalapye in the Central District; the Bayei, Bambukushu, Bakavango, Baherero and Damara in the Ngamiland and Chobe Districts; and the Babirwa, in the region of the Central District protruding eastwards towards the Limpopo River.

Analysis of the 1994 election results

Overall BDP dominance

The BDP won 27 of the 40 contested seats in the National Assembly, representing the electorate of most parts of rural Botswana (see table 4). In excess of 70% of the vote in the Central District's Tswapong North and South, Mmadinare, Serowe North and South, Bobirwa and Shoshong constituencies

went to the BDP in 1994 (see figure 2). This was also the case in the Kweneng District's Molepolole and the Southern District's Barolong. A further twelve constituencies gave more than half of their votes to the BDP: six in the Central District, three in the Kweneng District, as well as remote Ngami, Ghanzi and Kgalagadi. Significantly, the voters in 18 of these 21 constituencies are primarily Setswana-speaking Bangwato, Bakwena or Barolong. The only constituencies with non-Tswana majorities that gave more than half of their support to the BDP were Ngami, Ghanzi and Kgalagadi. All three are situated on the sparsely populated western side of the country.

One of the reasons for BDP political dominance is to be found in the respect given to the BDP by the Batswana tribal chiefs. The constitution provides for a House of Chiefs in addition to the National Assembly of elected members of parliament. Eight of the twelve seats are reserved for the eight Setswana-speaking groups, which are represented by their traditional tribal chiefs: Bangwato, Bangwaketse, Bakwena, Bamalete, Barolong, Bakgatla, Batlokwa and Batawana respectively. Tswana ethnic affinity plays an important role in keeping the BDP in power.

The first three groups mentioned constitute almost 60% of the population, and the other five about another 20% (see table 3). Support for the BDP is perceived, especially by members of the Bangwato and Bakwena groups, to be "an affirmation of ethnic membership".²⁶ The ruling party has been virtually guaranteed victory in the 16 constituencies located in the Central and Kweneng Districts where the two groups predominate. However, it has had to rely heavily on the support of the constitutionally recognized chiefs, who wield effective hegemony amongst their subjects in the rural areas. It was thus a crisis when Bangwaketse Chief Bathoen opposed them and joined the BNF in 1969. In order to lessen the dependency, the BDP has gradually attempted to reduce the chiefs' powers. Local authorities have now assumed the chiefs' previous roles in the fields of business licensing, local taxing, land allocation, the construction and operation of primary schools, rural road construction and maintenance and the supply of water. The chiefs are still, however, empowered in the important function of resolving private litigations.²⁷

The socio-economic differences between chief and subject appear not to cause differential voting behaviour. The majority of BDP support comes from the rural "peasantariat",²⁸ who are highly dependent on the tribal leadership and petty bourgeois for the "loan cattle" which earn them a livelihood.

The effective role of the national government is very limited in the lives of ordinary rural peasants. People's grievances and aspirations are expressed at the local level through the traditional *kgotla* meetings. Tribal headmen, rather than members of parliament, are generally perceived to be their leaders.²⁹ One of the consequences of the lack of grassroots involvement in the central government is that most of the important political bargaining or conflict that does take place, occurs between elected leaders and the civil service bureaucracy.

Holm identifies four elite power groups in the country who compete with one another in wielding influence. These are:

- the big cattle ranch owners who are mainly politicians, but who are

Table 4: Percentage distribution of votes received in each constituency by political parties in the 1994 elections

Constituency	% BDP	% BNF	% BPP	% IFP	% Other
1 North-East	50	3	47	0	0
2 Sebina Gweta	58	19	23	0	0
3 Maun-Chobe	44	26	2	28	0
4 Boteti	64	36	0	0	0
5 Serowe North	87	13	0	0	0
6 Serowe South	83	15	1	0	LLB 1
7 South-East	53	45	2	0	0
8 Ghanzi	54	46	0	0	0
9 Letlhakeng	55	45	0	0	0
10 Mahalapye	62	36	0	0	LLB 1 BLP 0,3
11 Francistown East	39	34	27	0	0
12 Ngami	58	0	0	42	0
13 Ngwaketse West	49	44	0	1	UDF 5
14 Barolong	71	29	0	0	0
15 Palapye	68	26	0	2	UDF 4
16 Tswapong South	76	24	0	0	0
17 Tswapong North	87	13	0	0	0
18 Mmadinare	85	15	0	0	0
19 Gaborone West	28	72	0	0	0
20 Gaborone Central	38	60	0	0	UDF 1
21 Gaborone North	28	70	2	0	0
22 Gaborone South	31	69	0	0	UDF 1
23 Francistown West	34	39	27	0	0
24 Kgatleng East	40	60	0	0	0
25 Kgatleng West	40	60	0	0	0
26 Lobatse	39	56	1	1	USP 3
27 Selebi-Phikwe	40	58	2	0	0
28 Nkange	51	6	0	0	BPU 42
29 Tonota	67	20	14	0	0
30 Bobirwa	82	18	0	0	0
31 Shoshong	73	27	0	0	0
32 Lentsweletau	69	31	0	0	0
33 Kgalagadi	60	40	0	0	0
34 Ngwaketse South	44	53	0	3	0
35 Molepolole	72	28	0	0	0
36 Mogoditshane	47	51	0	0	LLB 1
37 Kanye	37	55	0	8	0
38 Moshupa	64	32	0	4	0
39 Thamaga ²⁴	62	38	0	0	0
40 Okavango	35	52	0	14	0
Botswana	53	41	3	2	1

Source: Calculated from statistics in Botswana.²⁵

against governmental interference in their agricultural activities;

- the smaller cattle post holders who are mainly civil servants, and who tend to be "conservation orientated";
- officials in the ministries of finance, local government, planning and lands, who attract and manage foreign aid monies and who promote the *kgotla* as a democratic

forum for policy discussion and feedback from the electorate; and

- the traditional tribal authorities who resist commercialization and cling to their inherited power bases.³⁰

Picard observes wryly that much of the ruling function is left to the civil service while elected parliamentarians see to the wellbeing of their cattle enterprises.

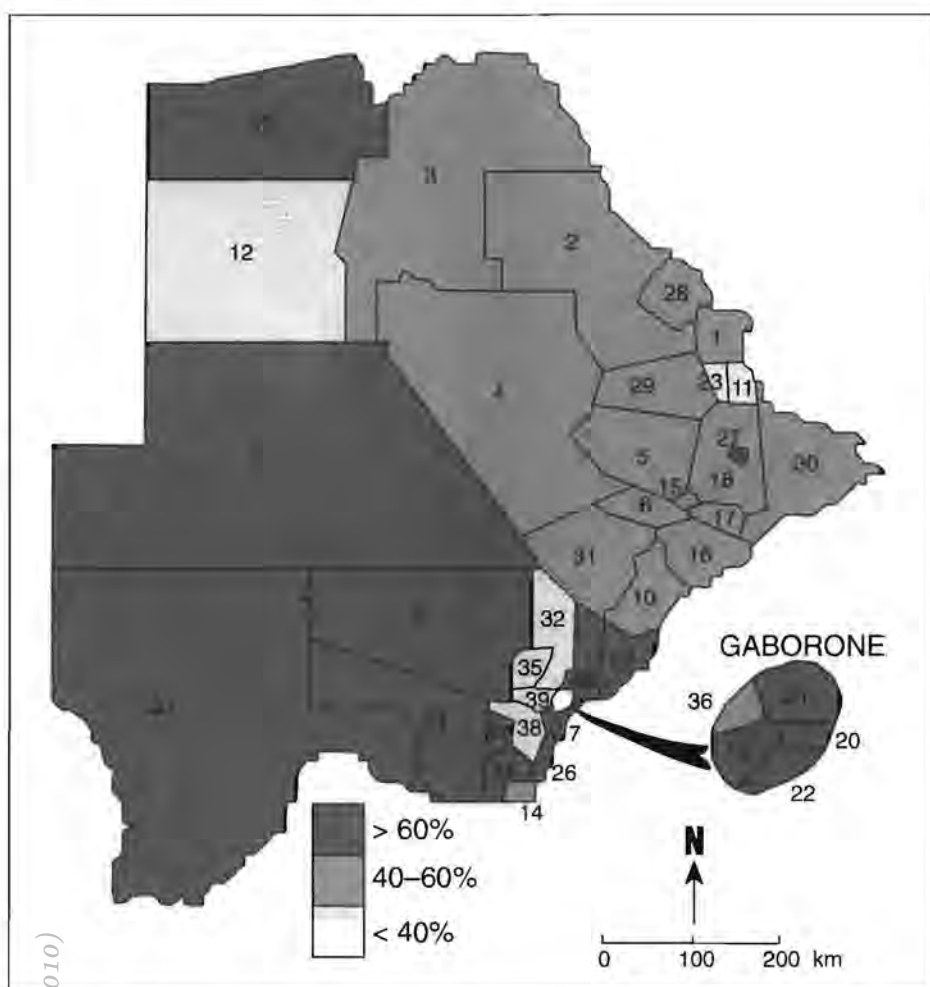


Figure 3: Percentage of votes cast for the Botswana National Front in each constituency in the 1994 elections

These circumstances suggest that a bureaucrat-based *coup d'état* need not happen. In spite of rapid urbanization and radicalization, the BDP elite perceive that the most important potential threat to their political hegemony is the possibility of "discontented traditional authorities"³¹ who would be well placed if they used their widespread influence to initiate rural-based resistance to the government. Rural development projects appear primarily to have been implemented in response to such possibilities.

The socio-economic elite of Botswana would be hard-pressed to find grounds for criticism of the BDP government. The GNP per capita for Botswana grew at an average rate of 8.3% per annum from 1965 to 1985. Financial benefits have accrued accordingly to the business and state sectors with more than one-third of revenue being invested in additional state projects on a sustained basis. The apparent suc-

cess of the democratic system can be attributed largely to accumulation of capital by the elite.³²

Opposition support

The BNF is the only party that has demonstrated growth in the last four elections. This has been at the expense of the ruling BDP, as well as all the other parties. Botswana politics has arguably reached a turning point in that an articulate and credible opposition has emerged as a substantial threat to BDP hegemony. The BNF propagates a policy of social security benefits such as pensions and unemployment allowances. This stands in contrast to the BDP's emphasis on economic diversification and privatization.

In the 1989 elections, apart from its victories in Gaborone North, Gaborone South and Okavango, the BNF had narrowly missed winning another four seats: Mochudi by only 29 votes;

Selebi-Phikwe by 87 votes; Mgwaketse South by 164 votes and Kanye by 481 votes.³³ In 1994, however, the BNF won all of these seats (Mochudi, now Kgatleng West) as well as Francistown West, Kgatleng East, Gaborone West and Central, Mogoditshane, Lobatse and Selebi-Phikwe (see figure 3). Five of the six most populous urban centres as well as the rural constituencies of Ngwaketse South, Kgatleng East and Okavango were thus most supportive of the BNF.

The dramatic growth in support for the BNF was largely attributable to dissatisfaction with the BDP. The government lost popularity as the economic boom of the 1980s came to an end. Between 1989 and 1993 the rate of growth of GDP declined from 13.2% to -0.7%. Inflation increased to 14.3%, while exports declined by 20% and imports increased.³⁴ A decrease in the demand for diamonds, copper and nickel, related to the world economic recession, as well as reduced revenue from sales of beef,³⁵ resulted in widespread unemployment. Informal squatter settlements mushroomed on the peripheries of Gaborone and Francistown.

In addition, the integrity of the BDP administration became questionable. The Vice-President, Peter Mmusi, and Agriculture Minister Kwelagobe had had to resign their positions in the cabinet as a result of the illicit sale of tribal land. A deputy minister was jailed for bribery involving the Botswana Housing Commission. Regional factions emerged within the party, when the Bangwato-dominated northern sector, led by Merafhe, Temane, Blackbeard, Baluti and Magana, clashed with southerners Mmusi and Kwelagobe,³⁶ and their powerbase amongst wealthy cattle owners. President Masire and Ministers Mogae, Mogwe, Chiepe and Kedikilwe attempted to maintain a neutral centrist position.³⁷ The BNF also exploited the BDP's refusal to lower the voting age from 21 to 18, or to allow BNF participation in the organization of the elections.³⁸ Masire commented after the elections that the results constituted a "protest vote" and that the electorate was only "temporarily unsatisfied".³⁹

Geographical patterns of voting allegiance to the BNF are related to ethnic distribution and urbanism. Particularist

Table 5: Demographic characteristics by constituency

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Constituency numbers	M:F ratio	Population density	Migration	Household size	Dependants	Males in agriculture	% Unemployed males
1	83	7,2	0,9	4,9	319	41	11,1
2, 28, 29	86	1,6	0,9	4,9	240	55	12,5
3	95	0,5	1,0	3,5	195	30	10,0
4	86	20	1,2	4,0	175	30	10,0
5, 6	86	2,9	0,7	4,9	228	54	13,2
7	87	17	1,1	5,3	243	30	10,6
8	99	0,2	1,2	4,0	216	35	12,6
9, 32, 35, 39	84	3,3	1,0	5,1	198	67	7,7
10, 16, 31	86	4,8	1,1	4,9	213	54	9,3
11, 23	104	400	1,4	3,4	138	4	13,5
12, 40	87	0,6	0,7	3,6	203	58	2,9
13, 34, 37, 38	84	3,8	0,8	5,0	272	60	13,2
14	91	14	0,8	6,0	251	50	8,5
15	86	50	1,1	4,8	213	54	9,3
17, 18, 30	86	3,3	1,1	4,8	247	54	7,8
19, 20, 21, 22, 36	104	615	1,2	2,6	89	1	9,2
24	85	5,6	0,8	4,2	212	54	12,7
25	90	50	0,8	4,5	212	54	12,7
26	98	635	1,0	4,0	177	2	10,6
27	104	589	1,2	3,7	109	3	12,8
33	93	0,2	1,5	5,1	213	39	9,2

A = Number of males per every 100 females; B = Population density per square kilometre; C = Index of migration efficiency: number of in-migrants divided by number of out-migrants; D = Median household size; E = Number of dependants per 100 economically active people; F = Number of males involved in family agriculture per 100 economically active; G = Percentage of males not formally employed.

Source: Extrapolated from Botswana.⁴²

ethnic support from the Setswana-speaking Bangwaketse group has prevailed since the defection of their Chief Bathoen from the BDP in 1969, especially in the east of the Southern District. The resignation from the BNF of Bathoen⁴⁰ shortly before the 1989 election, however, caused an additional split of allegiance amongst the Bangwaketse between the BDP, BNF and Bathoen's new Botswana Freedom Party (BFP). This resulted in the loss to the BNF of its strongholds of Ngwaketse South and Kanye to the BDP. In 1994 the BNF regained these two seats with substantial majorities, and obtained significant support in adjacent Moshupa (32%) and Ngwaketse West (44%).

Urbanism appears to be a common feature amongst many BNF supporters. Some of their greatest successes have been achieved in urban areas, where voters have become less closely linked with their rural traditions and loyalties, and the influence of tribal

authorities. The five constituencies of the Gaborone area (North, South, West, Central and Mogoditshane) fall into this category. This is also the case with Francistown, Lobatse and Selebi-Phikwe. The role of urbanization and industrialization and the resultant urbanism⁴¹ are evident. A Gaborone bank clerk told me that the "younger generation" were tired of the BDP and were now supporters of the BNF. Another two young men from Maunatlala (Central District) felt that the BDP was corrupt and oppressive. They perceived it as a party without a future and that it was for "old timers" because they were easy to "convince and bribe". In order to elucidate patterns of affiliation, I made a thorough search for official statistics. This enabled me to compile a list of the approximate demographic characteristics for each of the constituencies (see table 5). In cases where statistical regions were larger than constituencies, the data had to be extrapolated over

more than one constituency. The Okavango and Ngami constituencies fell into the same statistical region, as did Tswapong South, Shoshong and Mahalapye.

Common to the constituencies where the BNF had its greatest electoral successes are urban-related demographic characteristics. The most important determinant of these urban characteristics is the larger-than-average proportions of males, as a consequence of labour migration to urban centres. Towns have higher population densities and thus promote more interaction and exchange of political and other ideas between individuals of diverse origins. High rates of in-migration reflect the continuing attraction of rural people to towns. Lower rates of fertility, and the resultant smaller household sizes and lower dependency ratios distinguish urban populations from their rural counterparts. Income is derived primarily from secondary and tertiary activities, so there are far

fewer males involved in family subsistence agriculture. Official unemployment rates are, however, higher. All of these are typical of households which are in a phase of socio-economic "development". A clear positive statistical correlation existed between the proportion of the electorate which voted BNF and the population density of a constituency (0,62). Conversely there was a strong negative correlation between BNF support and median household size (-0,54), number of dependants (-0,56) and number of males involved in family subsistence agriculture (-0,49) (see table 6). The opposite was true in the case of support for the BDP, where correlations indicated lower population densities (ie rural areas), larger household sizes, more dependants and males employed in subsistence agriculture.

Other opposition parties

The only other parties of significance, the BPP, IFP and BPU (Botswana Progressive Union), depended largely on ethnic bases. In contrast to the Setswana-speaking groups, the diverse non-Tswana groups are entitled by the constitution to elect four district chiefs to the House of Chiefs to represent their combined interests in the North East, Chobe, Kgalegadi and Ghanzi Districts. This situation is strongly opposed by Mpho⁴³ of the IFP, who maintains that the BDP government effectively neglects to recognize the other "tribes" of Botswana, which "were all forced to submit to the eight main war-mongering tribes, now constitutionally entrenched". Much of the ethnic-based opposition to the BDP originates amongst the non-Tswana groupings, of various sizes and resident in different localities.

The minorities in northern Ngami-land (Bayei, Baherero, Bakavango, Bambukushu), the location of the Okavango constituency, were divided in their allegiances. The BDP, IFP and BNF all received substantial numbers of votes, but the latter received the largest proportion (52%) in 1994.

Since its inception in 1960, the BPP has appealed mainly to the Bakalanga of the North East District and adjacent areas. The support which it used to enjoy in other urban centres appears largely to have been lost to the BNF.

Table 6: Product moment correlations between percentage of votes for BDP or BNF and selected demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristic	BDP	BNF
Agricultural males	0,58	-0,49
Dependency ratio	0,46	-0,56
Size of household	0,52	-0,54
Out-migration	-0,16	0,00
Population density	-0,50	0,62
Male population	-0,47	0,58
Male unemployment	-0,07	-0,16

Source: Author's calculations.

Chief Linchwe of the Bakgatla actually won the parliamentary seat of Mochudi for the BPP in 1969, but in 1989 the BPP received the support of only 2% of voters there, marginally preventing the BNF from beating the BDP.

The inability of the BPP to diversify its support base significantly, and the large-scale migration of BDP-aligned Bangwato labourers into the Francistown area, accounts for its gradual decline. The highest level of support that the BPP ever managed to garner was 14,2% in the 1965 election, on which occasion it won three seats. The party suffered a continuing waning of support in all subsequent elections. In 1989 Kenneth Nkhwa failed by 351 votes to retain the North East seat, the only one held by the BPP in the 1984 general election. The BPP leader, Dr Knight Maripe, lost the North East seat in 1994 by 264 votes, and the BPP obtained only a quarter of votes cast in the two Francistown constituencies. A mere 4,2% of the electorate voted for the BPP in 1994.

The IFP has suffered a similar fate. Previously known as the BIP, it held a single seat in the Maun region, on the basis of support from the Bayei, from 1969 until 1979. In 1969 it achieved 6% of the national vote but this had declined to only 2,5% by 1989. In that year the party leader, Motsamai Mpho, polled only 2 898 votes (17,9% of the electorate) to the BDP's 6 064 (37,4%) in the BIP stronghold of Maun/Chobe. Subsequent to the failure of a number of attempts to unite the opposition par-

ties in January 1993, the BIP merged with another minor party,⁴⁴ the BFP, to form the Independence Freedom Party (IFP). The IFP received 2,8% of votes cast in 1994. Its best performance was in Maun-Chobe, where Mpho received 30% of the vote.

Kalanga ethnic politics?

The BPU was formed in the early 1980s under the leadership of David Kwele, the Kalanga-speaking first leader of the BNF. Its support was limited to the Nkange constituency, where 24% of the largely Bakalanga electorate voted BPU in 1989. This did not prevent a clear victory for the BDP, however. Kwele died soon after the election and was succeeded by Tabulawa Mokgethi. In July 1993, Dr Knight Maripe, the BPP leader, agreed to a pact with the BPU for the 1994 general election. Clearly hoping to mobilize the Bakalanga vote, Mokgethi stated that "the constitution should be amended to include all tribes, since the exclusion of other tribes was discriminatory and undemocratic".⁴⁵ The BPU thus obtained 42% of votes in Nkange in the 1994 election, to the BDP's 52%, the BPP abstaining from the contest.

The teaching of Kalanga at school is one of the policies propagated by the BPP. John Mosojane, a Francistown attorney and legal affairs secretary of the BPP, suggested that the future of the BPP lay in a realization by the Bakalanga youth that they had been culturally deprived as a consequence of the unitary language policy in Botswana. He told me that some local students had already been refusing to write exams in Setswana.⁴⁶ He felt that many of the Bakalanga who supported the BDP had previously worked in the south of Botswana, and might now be "wanting to protect their positions" by continuing to do so. He conceded that BPP supporters in Gaborone tended to side with the BNF, with whom the BPP had broken off unity talks before the 1994 elections. This had happened because of the BPP's objection to the BNF's proposal of a political alliance rather than a merger. Asked about accusations from opponents that the BPP was narrowly based, Mosojane could only counter with the fact that

some of the party's executive members were from the south and that they supported fully the BPP policy on the language issue.

During a visit to Francistown in January 1993, a hawker selling fruit and vegetables on a Francistown pavement told me that she supported the BPP "because" she was a Kalanga, which is arguably a consequence of the manipulation of Kalanga ethnicity by BPP politicians. Her stated rationale would suit their strategy. In contrast, a campsite official in the same town expressed his strong approval of the BDP because of the availability of jobs and food in the country. His mother was Kalanga and his father Ndebele, and he had been a member of the Rhodesian army. His political conservatism was also evident in the opposition that he expressed for the governing party in Zimbabwe, and his support for former Prime Minister Ian Smith as well as for Unita, Renamo and the then President de Klerk. A Kalanga-speaking till operator in a Francistown bookshop told me that she had attended a school at Shashe, about 25 km south of the town and that most of her school friends had been Batswana. This did not appear to bother her unduly.

The views of Kalanga-speakers were sought in greater detail on a brief visit to the North-East District in July 1993. The perspectives given were, once again, varied. I spoke to a primary school teacher with a Motswana father and a Kalanga mother. She expressed strong support for the BDP because of the development projects for which they had been responsible. She said that she did not perceive any general antagonism between the Batswana and the Bakalanga. Her opinion was that criticism of the government was ill-founded since most critics seemed to be demanding clerical jobs for which they were not qualified.

A local pastor told me that he had heard many Batswana say that they "hated" Kalangas, but that when challenged, they could not give a reason for their sentiments. He felt that this tended to give the Bakalanga a complex and possibly motivated them to "work harder" than the Batswana. A man at a beer hall in Nlphkane, near the Zimbabwe border, said to a com-

panion that he should not give me the impression that he was a Motswana, because he was in fact a Kalanga, and told him that "the Tswanas are over there in Francistown". On the other hand, an elderly Kalanga man, who was not fluent in Setswana, felt that there was no difference between a Motswana and a Kalanga. A Setswana-speaking man from Tsamaya said that he supported the BDP because it "had done a lot for the people of Botswana", irrespective of language group. A woman also expressed a preference for the BDP because it was doing its best to promote general prosperity in the country. She felt that if the BNF or BPP came to power this would not automatically provide everyone with a job. A Babirwa man from Selebi-Phikwe said that he preferred to conduct his business and do his shopping at Selebi-Phikwe rather than Francistown because the latter is a "Kalanga town". He admitted to supporting the BNF and that he felt the BDP was corrupt. His perception was that the majority of BDP supporters were elderly people who had liked Sir Seretse Khama. The BDP's land policies had resulted in preferential treatment for members of parliament and therefore "most" youth and working class members of the community favoured the BNF. He had heard that the BDP had prevented non-Tswanas from taking high offices in parliament, which he felt was ridiculous.

It is thus evident that views on the importance of Kalanga ethnicity vary widely. Although it is an important factor which can be exploited politically, it is superseded by demographic and economic realities. As indicated in table 3 above, only 14.3% of the Botswana population are Bakalanga. A far greater threat to BDP hegemony is the potential loss of allegiance of the major Setswana-speaking chiefs and their rural clients.

Concluding comments

The stable democracy of Botswana has been characterized in its seven democratic elections by the dominance of the Botswana Democratic Party. Support for the BDP has been largely based on membership of the dominant

Setswana-speaking groups, especially the Bangwato and Bakwena, who predominate in the east and central regions of the country. The BDP has won in excess of 60% of votes cast in every election except the most recent one. BDP voters are mainly rural-based. The allegiance of the constitutionally elected tribal chiefs, who wield a powerful patron-client influence over their subjects whether or not they are tribal members, has been cultivated and maintained by the BDP with few exceptions.

One exception is the Bangwaketse, a Setswana-speaking group based in the south east of the country, whose Chief Bathoen joined the BNF in 1969 because of his perceived neglect by the BDP of his region. The chief's authority ensured that many of his fellow Bangwaketse followed his example and voted BNF. Also, the non-Tswana groups such as the Bakalanga in the north east, the Bayei in the Maun region and the minorities in the north, have generally been fertile ground for opposition to the BDP. Substantial proportions of these groups have given their support to the BPP, IFP and BNF. In the most recent elections, opposition support has also been won on a non-ethnic platform, concurrently with the growth of a larger industrialized urban workforce. The BNF, in particular, has emerged as a major challenge to the BDP amongst the urban electorate. In 1994 the BNF won 37% of the total vote, and 13 of the 40 parliamentary seats.

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- 9 In the Thamaga seat, the election was postponed until 26 November, following the death of the BDP candidate, Peter Mmusi.
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The Aids threat in South Africa

What lies ahead?

John Luiz of the Department of Economics at the University of the Witwatersrand, Leon Roets of the Department of Sociology at Vista University's Welkom campus and Hiske Smart, a private nursing practitioner, have collaborated in writing this article. They examine the incidence of Aids in South Africa and its social and economic implications. They also assess what the current health system has to offer to the Aids patient and conclude by suggesting a realistic Aids policy for South Africa.

THE worldwide Aids epidemic has created extreme reactions, ranging from mass hysteria to absolute complacency and indifference. Neither of these attitudes fosters anything constructive. Whilst the Aids virus is exceptionally powerful and damaging to human health, it is extremely difficult to effectively transmit from person to person, as it is a weak micro-organism outside the body. The acquired immune deficiency syndrome (Aids) is not a disease in itself, but a condition in which the immune system is severely damaged by an invading virus, the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV); and, because of the damage to the immune system, the body is subject to infection and attack by other diseases.¹ Aids can be transmitted from one person to another by three transmission methods, namely sexual intercourse, direct blood-to-blood contact, and from an infected pregnant woman to her unborn child.

Extent of the Aids epidemic

Since Aids was first diagnosed in 1981, the numbers have escalated to a frightening extent. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that over 13 million people were HIV positive in 1993.

According to the WHO, Aids is a worldwide killer disease and has its

Estimated distribution of infected HIV adults worldwide for 1993

Australasia	25 000 +
East Asia/Pacific	25 000 +
Eastern Europe & Central Asia	50 000
North Africa/Middle East	75 000 +
Western Europe	500 000
North America	1 000 000 +
Latin America & Caribbean	1 500 000 +
South East Asia	1 500 000 +
Sub-Saharan Africa	8 000 000 +
Global total	13 000 000 +

Source: J Crisp, "Knee-deep but still complacent", *Interface*, Sept/Oct 1993.

worst effect on Africa. The Aids doubling period is increasing especially rapidly in Africa owing to the following factors: high population growth; inadequate health systems; poor living standards; dramatic urbanization and migration; political unrest, conflict and violence; refugee camps; and gender discrimination. Sexual promiscuity tends to be especially rampant in the urban areas owing to migrant workers spending long periods away from their families. Poverty and poor living conditions contribute to the increasing numbers of victims. In many Third World countries women are subjugated and denied any sexual rights. This in turn leads to high birth rates and fosters prenatal infection.

The WHO indicates that Africa has 71% of the world's Aids population, Europe 5%, the Americas 9%, Asia 1%, USA 13% and other countries less than 1%.² South Africa, too, is facing an escalation of reported Aids cases. Between January and July 1994, 391 cases of Aids were reported. The estimated number of HIV-infected persons in South Africa (excluding former TBVC) stands at 565 856.³ Nearly half of the South African Aids cases are in the 18-to-25-year age group. Heterosexual transmission has now dramatically exceeded homosexual cases, with 2 520 reported heterosexual cases in comparison to 493 homosexual cases. KwaZulu-Natal has been the worst affected region: it has over a third of all reported Aids cases. The Centre for Health Policy⁴ estimates that by the year 1995, almost one million people will have been infected and that by the year 2010 about 27% of South Africa's adult population will be infected (if there is no change in sexual behaviour). However, the centre maintains that behavioural change will occur and that the epidemic will reach its plateau in the year 2005, with about 18% of the population infected.

Economic costs of Aids

The cost of the Aids epidemic will affect every sphere in South Africa. Whiteside⁵ divides the financial cost of this disease into direct and indirect

expenses. The direct costs being the actual expenses incurred in dealing with the disease. As he points out, from the time one is first tested HIV positive to the point when one dies, a significant amount of money will have been spent on health care. These costs may be borne by the individual, the family, medical aid society, insurance companies, or the public health system.

American statistics indicate that these costs vary dramatically from case to case. Puckett and Emery⁶ illustrate that the typical cost of an Aids case in the USA varies from \$25 000 to \$100 000 from diagnosis to death. In South Africa, Aids-related death and disabilities insurance claims have risen from zero a decade ago to over 400 in 1993. Total assurance payouts to date on Aids-related claims now exceed R30 million (it is believed that these figures could be higher if the fact that some deaths are attributed to other causes is taken into account). Whiteside⁷ maintains that: "AIDS does not necessarily cost more than any other long-term or chronic illness. What makes it different is that it hits the population in the peak of their productivity years; people who would not normally require medical care; and the numbers are likely to increase rapidly." Other direct costs of Aids include: testing, pre-and-post counselling, research undertaken by medical and social scientists, and elaborate and expensive education programmes. There are many other costs which are simply too difficult to measure, especially various opportunity costs, and of course the emotional anguish and suffering.

Whiteside⁸ explains that indirect costs result from the loss of productive members of society. These costs include morbidity when people are ill and mortality when people die and years of production are lost to the country. He states that the indirect cost of an Aids death is estimated to be between 65 and 75% of the total costs, and 90% of the indirect costs being accounted for by premature death rather than disability or morbidity.

The broader macroeconomic impact of Aids provides a similarly gloomy picture. More and more researchers now believe that the Aids epidemic will have a negative effect on eco-

nomical development and growth. Whiteside⁹ quotes World Bank simulations that show that Aids will reduce the annual GDP growth rate by between 0,56 and 1,08% in 30 African countries. This figure could be even higher, depending on the number of skilled people infected, especially considering that Africa's skill base is so small. Likewise, if Aids care is funded from savings, it will have an adverse effect because it may crowd out investment. It has been estimated that Aids will have cost South Africa about R16,7 billion by the year 2000 in production losses and health care costs.¹⁰ Whiteside¹¹ also warns that there is a real danger that the increase in Aids cases may cause other health care problems to be neglected, thereby adversely affecting the nation's health status. Lastly he says that in a country such as South Africa where large-scale unemployment exists, it is a harsh reality that the key issue will not be how many people die (Aids is not expected to cause the population to decline although it is likely to slow population growth rates), but rather who dies and which skills are affected.

Human impact of Aids

The impact of Aids will not only be felt on the medical level, but it will have an effect on all social structures of society. Individuals might experience psychological discomfort through discrimination and grief, whilst the family will have to adjust and accommodate the Aids patient physically. Community structures will have to reorganize to provide social support and security. Aids will require radical change from all quarters, not only by the individual concerning his/her behaviour, but also society's perceptions in general.

According to the Kubler-Ross model of grieving,¹² for a person to accept his/her terminal illness, a process similar to mourning is needed. In the first stage, one will experience shock or relief – depending on the result of the HIV test. If the test is positive, the shock tends to be very intense. Specialized counselling is needed to assist the person and his/her family. Shock could lead to either denial or aggression. The aggression that people experience is

sometimes so intense that they go to the extreme of transmitting Aids to other people as a form of revenge. Denial occurs when the individual rejects the situation: "It cannot happen to me!" Depression sets in when the truth dawns on the person and he/she accepts that certain adjustments are called for. This period can be prolonged by factors involving the working environment and/or the need for secrecy. The individual will experience pendulous emotions ranging from high spirits to extreme depression. Feelings of guilt and numbness on the part of the patient may affect relations with family and loved ones and may intensify his/her fluctuating emotions.

The fourth phase introduces a process of bargaining. A dramatic change of behaviour commences. The person will start to eat healthy food, participate in more sport, take excessive amounts of vitamins, and will project an overcompensated personality around friends. All this is done to suppress the fear of rejection. The person may prolong this process until physical signs of Aids start to appear. They will even try to fulfil some long-forgotten dreams. Acceptance of the terminal nature of Aids is the most important phase. The person now reaches the point of living out his/her health condition. This public announcement leads to adjustments to the new way of living and forces the individual to reach out for social support. Final arrangements are made for the dying process.

During all these phases of grieving and acceptance, the family also faces the need to adjust in order to accommodate this new dimension in their daily relations with one another and the broader community. Social discrimination from the community might force the family into social isolation and to develop their own coping mechanisms, which is not always healthy.¹³ Alterations to the home in the form of a specialized nursing room for the Aids patient, lead to new family routines. An Aids case could destroy a family or bring the members closer together. Owing to the lack of proper caretaking infrastructure, the pressure is put on the family to fulfil this task. Practical arrangements to accommodate a terminally ill person

need to be made: rails in the bath, special beds and the disposal of infected material can all cost the family a great deal. Inadequate medical aid policies on Aids contribute to the problem and forces the family to be the main source of support. Family roles become entangled and confused. The same phases of grieving that the individual experiences apply to the family. New family dynamics, such as leadership, coping mechanisms, and acceptance of change, have to be learnt.

During this phase the Aids patient as well as the family will start to affect other sectors of society such as the church, work place and friends. As the physical signs start to appear, social relations become increasingly important. Only the community can provide the acceptance and social support that might ease this period of grief. But the community at large tends to discriminate against such individuals and their families, which leads to social isolation.

On the physical side the symptoms which develop include: mass reduction, tiredness and malaise, the loss of muscle tone, oral thrush, enlarged lymph glands, diarrhoea, headaches and changes in the senses, and even sometimes a loss of consciousness. The family will have to adjust their daily arrangements and nursing will have to be intensified to help the Aids patient to prepare for death. The reincorporation of the family into community activities after the funeral is important as it may take away the harsh effects of social discrimination experienced during the illness.

Whilst the moral responsibility of Aids lies primarily with the family and the community, this responsibility needs to be supported by the state and particularly the health system.

Aids in the workplace

Most of the people with HIV/Aids are economically active in the age group 20–35 years. The work environment can therefore not be isolated from Aids as an illness.

The importance of an Aids policy

Aids policies are hard to draw up and are therefore often overlooked, espe-

cially in smaller enterprises. Big companies such as the Chamber of Mines, Anglo American (in all their divisions) and Telkom have meticulously drawn up policies specifically aimed at Aids in their working environment.

Elements of their Aids policies include: the rights of the employee and the employer, future planning for the person with Aids, the employer's responsibility, and so forth. Some companies (such as the mining companies) made use of proposals provided by their relevant unions (eg National Union of Mineworkers) as directives in planning an Aids policy.¹⁴

The development of a clearly defined policy not only provides the employer with a set of rules in dealing with Aids-related issues, but also functions as a protective measure for the employer. Policies have to be acceptable to the working body and hence the importance of dialogue between management and the working body in developing such a policy.

If the high cost of Aids care is taken into account, the possibility of workers ill with Aids making financial demands on the employer cannot be overlooked. Taylor¹⁵ suggests that rather than denying the reality of Aids, which will eventually result in crisis management, companies should plan ahead. Alternatives in funding can include:¹⁶

- the support of medical aid options to minimize in-patient treatment and lower cost of drugs;
- investigating longer-term funding options during healthy stages to save for expenses later;
- maintaining employment as long as possible; and
- flexibility with group insurance benefits to meet patient needs, for example partial payout of group life policies at terminal stages.

The workplace has to deal with the ill. Aids cannot be exempted as it is a sensitive human rights issue. Also Aids has been politicized and needs to be addressed with caution.

The workplace as health education asset

Aids can never be the sole responsibility of employers (infected persons must eventually take the responsibility), but

employers do have a role to play. The workplace is a valuable asset in Aids prevention education as it could be the only health education that employees receive.

Freegold (Anglo American Gold Division in the Free State Goldfields), for example, took a firm stand on Aids-related matters. All the mine-workers who are diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease or tuberculosis are tested for HIV, as these persons are regarded as markers for predicting the range of HIV in this working environment.¹⁷ These data are statistically analysed to supply trends. The company is thus prepared for the future effect of Aids. To combat Aids in the company, health education about Aids is given and healthy lifestyles promoted. In this way emphasis is placed on peer-group education, which is not only conducted in the workplace, but also in the mineworkers' hostels.¹⁸

The mines expect each employee to abide by safety regulations in order to provide a safe workplace. Likewise, Aids prevention strategies have emphasized personal responsibility. The workplace is therefore one of the most suitable places to receive such health education, as it is in line with other safety education.

The effect of future planning

The person who is tested HIV positive at Freegold will receive counselling and treatment as is the case with many other diseases. According to policy, the rules and regulations of the relevant employee's medical aid scheme are applicable for his/her medical care. The service of the employees will not be terminated prematurely and when the employees are no longer able to work, the rules of their provident/pension funds become applicable.¹⁹

In this case study, it is clear that Freegold regards Aids as a disease which poses a threat to both employers and employees. It is interesting to note that the Aids policy is integrated with other existing policies (medical aid schemes and pension funds), which also form part of the employee's conditions of employment.

The screening policy acts not only as a service rendered to the individual,

but it allows for the discovery of changing trends. This enables the simulation of future scenarios, which leads to advanced planning. Inasmuch as Aids can be cured only by prevention, the employer will survive the Aids financial burden only by planning ahead and drawing up suitable preventive Aids policies.

Coping with Aids in the South African health care system

The Aids policy of the National Aids Committee of South Africa (Nacosa) has been accepted as protocol by the Department of National Health in South Africa. The budget set aside for Aids in the 1994/95 financial year is R42 million. This is double that of the previous year, when just over R21 million was allocated to combating Aids. In 1993/94 South Africa spent only R0,63 per capita on Aids prevention, whilst Zimbabwe spent R2,79 per capita. The WHO suggests that South Africa spend R3,68 per capita on Aids prevention or R143 million a year.²⁰

Hypothetical case study

If a person suspects he may be HIV positive, there are two possible roads to follow. The person with a medical aid will have to rely on the strength of his/her medical aid and will not be able to turn to the public health sector for minimal fee medical services. The person without medical assistance and who earns below a certain income threshold, is provided for by a minimal fee medical service in the public health sector.

First, the person will have to go for an HIV test to confirm his/her suspicion. With a medical aid the cost laid down by the South African Institute of Medical Research (SAIMR) will be R34. If HIV positive, a Western Blot test is done, which adds R41,00. HIV tests at Aids Information and Training Centres are free only for "worried wells" who after counselling have been determined as high risks (the Department of National Health pays for the test). The person without medical aid can turn to any HIV clinic at a provincial hospital for counselling, testing and follow-up after paying a minimal clinic fee.

Treatment comprising AZT or Retrovir is not covered by either public health care or medical aid schemes. The price of one tablet of AZT can range from R4,34 to R12,00. A six-week course can cost between R1 100 and R4 300. People who insist on the use of AZT for inhibition of reverse transcriptase will have to pay for every tablet themselves.

When the person with HIV starts falling ill with opportunistic diseases, such as pneumonia, oral thrush and glandular fever, medication and doctors' fees are paid for by the medical aid in terms of the yearly benefit limits and as long as the diagnosis is not specified as HIV positive/Aids. The patient without medical aid will still use the HIV clinic and will receive medical attention and the necessary medication with the payment of the nominal clinic fee of R30.

If hospitalization is needed, the person with a medical aid will have to arrange to pay his/her own costs. The person without a medical plan will be classified as a state patient and will receive free hospital treatment. The cost of care is provided for in each provincial budget. Even the terminally ill patient with Aids is treated in hospital. No provision for home care has been made in the Aids budget. If Aids patients want home care, they will have to pay for it either themselves or via their medical aid (if home care is specified as a benefit).

Aids care in South Africa

For the time being, the public health sector makes available the necessary care for the person from HIV to full-blown Aids, with the patient having to bear a small part of the cost. By the year 2005 the cost of Aids to the health service could reach the level of R18 billion (in 1991 rands), which could account for 34–75% of annual health care expenditure.²¹

It is clear that the public health care system would not be able to cope with the increasing demand being made on its resources. The Centre for Health Policy²² assumes that the balance between private and public health care will be maintained, but that the relative cost of private health care will increase more rapidly. This indicates that yearly benefit

limits of medical aids will be reached more quickly and that the patient will have to rely either on him/herself or another source of support. This stresses the importance of employers having a suitable Aids policy.

The most striking feature of Aids in South Africa is its relationship to socio-economic factors and poverty in general. It is clear that the heterosexual epidemic is concentrated on poorer sectors of society, made up largely of black South Africans.²³ This means that when the epidemic gets out of hand it will be left to the state to finance treatment.

What lies ahead?

The ANC believes that South Africa's existing health budget of 6,5% of GDP is adequate to provide high quality care for all. In addition to general taxation, the ANC proposes that health care be funded by a national health insurance scheme based on employee and employer contributions, as well as increased taxation on tobacco and alcohol. The draft plan for health care includes mass education and counselling to combat Aids.

There is still no cure for HIV/Aids. Education programmes to change lifestyles appear to have limited effect. Condoms are freely available, but cultural preferences are preventing the use of condoms as an effective tool against the spread of Aids.²⁴ The role of circumcision also needs to be looked at, because of the apparent lower prevalence of HIV infection in areas and cultures where circumcision is the norm, such as in the rural Xhosas.²⁵ If circumcision has a role to play in limiting the spread of HIV, it will be wise to render a service where males can undergo circumcision as part of the Aids prevention programme.

Aids is expensive both for the public and private health care systems. At the moment the current health care budget is providing for the patient with Aids, but it is unlikely to be adequate in years to come. It must also be asked whether the public health service is not taking too much responsibility for the Aids patient? Would a shift of responsibility back to the individual not act as a further deterrent to the disease? The answer is

probably not, because if death in itself is not a deterrent then neither will finance be. However, the cost may be too large for society as a whole to bear in the future and then individuals will be at a loss for alternatives.

Government Aids policy in South Africa

The National Party government underestimated Aids when it was still manageable and South Africa will pay the price for this in the future. More recently the National Aids Committee of South Africa (Nacosa) set up a Task Force on Aids to:

- devise a national Aids plan for implementation;
- define objectives, interventions, activities, responsible persons or organizations, target indicators, process indicators, estimated budgets and sources of funding; and
- propose structures for implementation at national and regional levels.²⁶

Input was given by the Global Programme on Aids of the World Health Organization, the Centres for Disease Control of the United States and the United States Agency for International Development. According to Professor Alan Fleming²⁷ the new Aids plan was based on accurate serosurveillance and credible predictions, in contrast to the inaptitudes of the past decade.

The new Aids plan of the National Aids Task Force²⁸ set out three main objectives consisting of various types of interventions. These are listed below:

Prevention of HIV transmission

Prevention of HIV transmission will be achieved by the following:

- Promote safer sexual behaviour through information, education and counselling
- Provide condoms
- Improve sexually transmitted disease control
- Provide a safe blood supply
- Promote the adoption of universal precautions for invasive, skin piercing, surgical and dental procedures

- Prevent unsafe drug behaviour
- Provide information and counselling about HIV, prenatal transmission and related services
- Support policies and programmes which promote the status of women
- Support the development of policies and programmes that promote a healthy socioeconomic environment

Reduce the personal and social impact of HIV infection

Interventions consists of:

- Provision of comprehensive health care and counselling for persons with HIV/Aids and their families
- Provision of a continuum of counselling for persons who are considering HIV testing, persons with HIV/Aids, their families and the community
- Protection of individuals from HIV/Aids-related discriminatory practices
- Development of appropriate and sustainable social policies, programmes, services and social benefits to meet the needs of persons with HIV/Aids, their family and the community
- Promoting policies to address the social and economic consequences of HIV/Aids

Mobilize and unify national, provincial, international and local resources

The interventions aim to:

- Promote common inter-sectoral strategies and coordination
- Ensure financing through mobilizing provincial, national and international funds
- Promote community involvement and coordination with NGOs
- Strengthen national planning and management with decentralization to provinces, districts and local areas
- Undertake programme monitoring and evaluation and appropriate research activities

- Monitor and forecast the spread of HIV/Aids and STDs and advocate action
- Share experience and technical expertise
- Coordinate National Aids programmes in the Southern African region

The major advantage of the new plan is the meticulous way in which every aspect of Aids is described and tackled. It consists of definite action plans which are easily understandable to society at large and is not merely academic. Funding of the new Aids plan will remain a problem. The estimated cost for implementing the Aids plan is R256 million.²⁹ Of this amount R137 million (53%) is taken up by preventive measures. It will be impossible to rely on government funding alone. Promoting local and international funding will be difficult, given other pressing demands. South Africa is not the only country in need of financial back-up, as Aids is a worldwide phenomenon. International funding will hence be scarce. Local private companies will not be able to remain profitable if excess funding demands are made frequently to assist to balance the health budget.

South African per capita expenditure on Aids control is only slightly higher than Ethiopia's at \$0,18 per capita. This will rise to \$1,73 per capita per annum with the new plan.³⁰ The Nacosa plan remains an ideal and only the future will tell whether it will be affordable and practical in the long run.

Conclusion

Aids can no longer be wished away or ignored and must be faced head on. It will affect every sphere of South African society, and as such must be addressed by everyone. The disease is here and it is unlikely that a cure will be found before the turn of this century. But this should not mean the acceptance of the inevitable. The battle has just barely begun. It is important that South Africa's Aids strategy be proactive and not merely reactive. The spread of Aids cannot be stopped, but it can be, and must be, slowed.

Likewise, it is vital to prepare for the socioeconomic impact of this deadly disease. The state, all health sectors and the community must accept their moral obligation to assist those affected by this death sentence. We, as the people, on the other hand, must accept responsibility for our sexual behaviour and our attitudes and change whatever needs to change. No one can afford to be neutral in this struggle – Aids does not recognize neutrality!

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Planning environmentally sustainable cities in Africa today

Kwabena Amankwah-Ayeh, of the Department of Town and Regional Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand, examines the principles underlying the planning of some pre-colonial African towns and cities and discovers that there are many lessons to be learnt.

THE modern world, as reflected in the present forms of our cities, is driven by technological advance as well as by demographic proliferation. Together, these have created spaces which have served the interest of, and have been controlled by, the affluent "haves" of society. New demands for the redistribution of scarce space (for housing) and for accessibility/resources, and the need to reconstruct identities in the face of inequitable relationships of power, calls for rethinking the old path followed. Few would deny that urban Africa today has begun to display certain highly undesirable characteristics of Western urbanism. Crime, prostitution, poverty, social disorganization and anomie have become part of the modern urban scene in Africa. Yet there are still basic elements of pre-colonial urban Africa that are worth preserving (or possibly modifying) to meet the changing demands for better living standards.

This article attempts to focus on the dilemmas of building sustainable environments by analysing the ways in which pre-colonial African towns minimized urbanism and the feeling of congestion, maximized their use of urban space, and maintained a delicate balance of mass and space. It is recognized that the differences in social organization between tribes have resulted in planning achievements which are not necessarily uni-

form or even similar (see map 1).¹ Despite the diversity in the composition of Africa's peoples, certain generalizations can however be discerned from a study of their town planning principles. The debate concentrates on seeing traditional environments not as a static legacy of the past but as a model for a critical reinterpretation of the present. This model's application to South Africa, it is hoped, will provide clues that will help us to move beyond the present impasse in city and town planning principles, procedures and processes and the sort of (unsustainable) environments that have emerged.

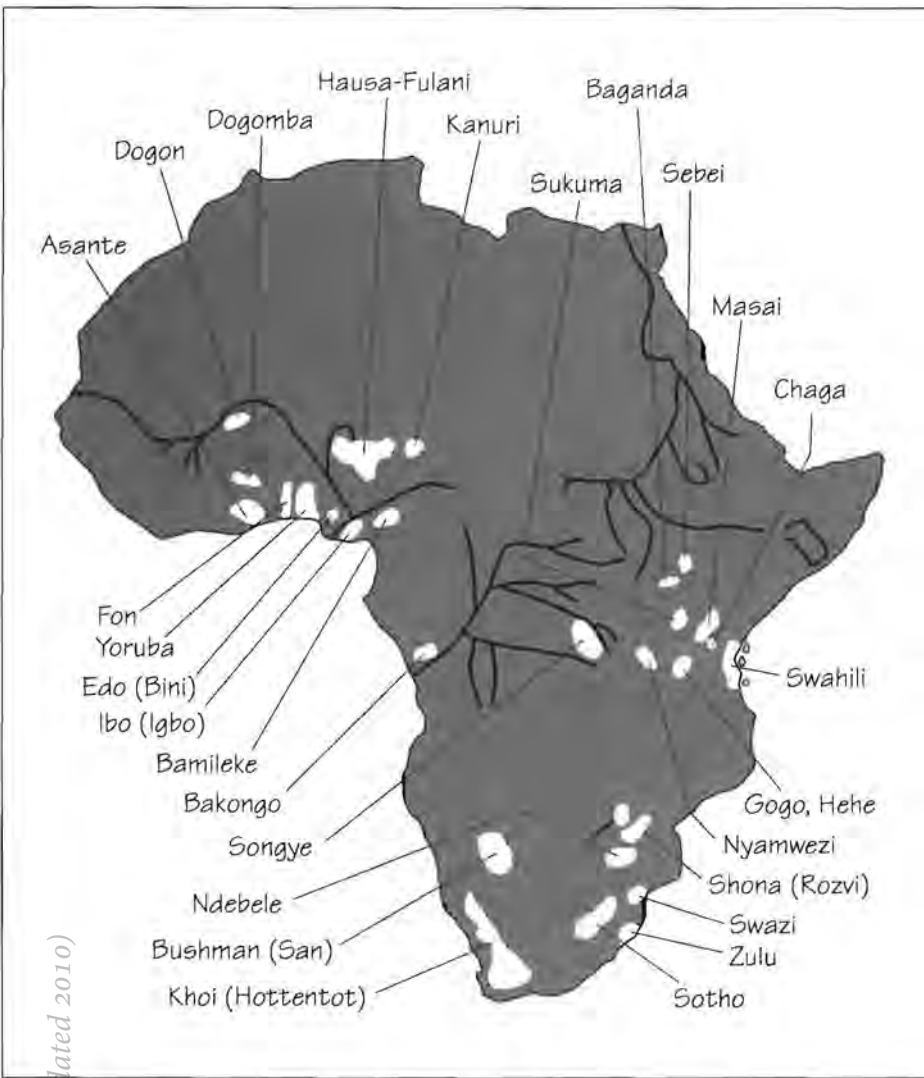
Myths and legends dispelled

The nineteenth century's triumphs of geographical exploration in Africa led largely to the disappearance of certain geographical myths and legends. Davidson's² discussion of many of these legends, myths and/or misconceptions includes, among others, the belief reflected in early maps that the "Niger river flowed to the westward". Then came Mungo Park's vivid description of this river, "... I saw with infinite pleasure the great object of my mission, the long sought-for majestic Niger, glittering to the morning sun, as broad as the Thames at Westminster, and flowing slowly to the eastward". Overnight, this single statement changed the misconception

held by Europeans, at least by the English, concerning the River Niger and set straight an age-old confusion.

The zeal for geographic discovery which followed earlier successes in this field, led to certain facts being clearly fixed upon the continental map of Africa through research and inquiry. One misconception after another was corrected, very much as happened in the field of African history a century later. One can say, in fact, that what the nineteenth century achieved for the geography of Africa, the twentieth century moved well towards achieving for its history.

The negro of black Africa south of the Sahara, many have believed, is a person without a past, and one who by his own effort has never raised himself much above the level of the beasts. I would agree with Basil Davidson³ that comments such as "No indigenous manufactures among them, no arts, no sciences" (David Hume), "No approach to the civilisation of his white fellow creatures who he imitates as a monkey does a man" (Trollope), "For countless centuries, while all the pageant of history swept by, the African remained unmoved in primitive savagery" (a former governor of Nigeria), were calculated to reinforce this misconception. These are a mere sample of the extent to which falsehood was carefully refined to make it appear true – to illustrate the commonly held belief that Africans, until the coming of Euro-



Map 1: Map of Africa showing the various tribes to be discussed.

peans, had lived in universal chaos and stagnation.⁴ The false impression that the African, without history, was naturally inferior, became an ideological basis for segregation, separate development and oppression in many parts of the world.⁵

Perhaps the twenty-first century requires the virtues of the past two centuries – when, as we have noted, geographers and historians worked tirelessly and rigorously to reveal the truth about the African continent – to show and/or prove in turn that the pre-historic towns of Africa were built on sound town planning, design and architectural principles. The work of earlier pioneers, Hull,⁶ Mabogunje,⁷ Davidson,⁸ and that of many others in the inquiry into traditional African settlements point to facts that could help future generations preserve Africa's heritage, and, in their turn, make a

worthwhile contribution to a valuable tradition.

This article will argue that the notions and romances of Sheba and Ophir, of strange Phoenicians building cities in Zimbabwe, of mysterious "peoples from the north" who came and stayed in sub-Saharan Africa but altogether vanished,⁹ do little but diminish human achievement in Africa. New things are being discovered which outline African development, tolerably clearly and firmly, as in essence neither "inferior to" nor "mysteriously different" from the story/development of any of the major families of man.¹⁰

The study of pre-colonial African towns and cities holds invaluable lessons for today's development in several ways, not the least of which are the various, long-demonstrated patterns of sustainability and balance

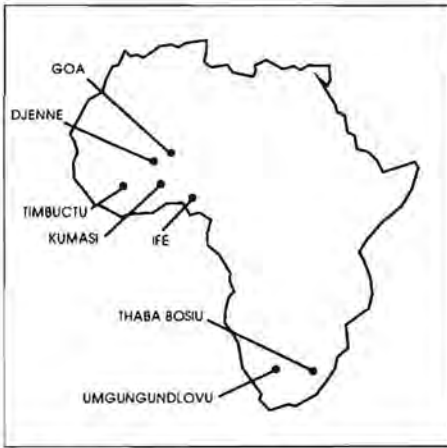
between continuity and change evident in pre-historic African towns.

It is argued here, from evidence at hand, that

- indigenous patterns of planning were firmly rooted in the planning, building, construction and maintenance of towns and cities in Africa long before the advent of colonialism;
- pre-colonial African towns and cities minimized "urbanism" and a feeling of congestion while making maximum use of urban space. The planning principles behind the form and structure (organic and/or military) attained by pre-colonial African traditional towns reveal tight layouts around compound clusters;
- a delicate balance of mass and space that accompanied such spatial intimacy permitted a feeling of cohesion and group control of local spaces and environments within and between the cities and towns. Perhaps these factors accounted for the environmental sustainability of the pre-colonial city;
- there are planning elements among the principles called upon for the planning of pre-colonial towns and cities that could play a role in shaping a new urbanism for the Africa of tomorrow.

In contrast, the modern world is torn by paradoxes and conflicts borne out of the drive for technological advancement, the demands for redistribution of scarce resources, and the need to construct identities in the face of inequitable relationships of power. We need to rethink the old colonial and post-colonial paths that were followed in planning the environments we witness today. And we need to do so if only to avoid adding to our present ills – the chaos arising from sprawling shack dwellings in our urban living spaces around the world, the general squalor accentuated by homelessness, helplessness, the decaying moral fibre of society and our dying rural living spaces.

This article does not attempt to examine every pre-colonial African town or city; that would be extremely ambitious. It attempts to examine the principles underlying the planning of



Map 2: Map of Africa showing cities discussed

some of these cities in order to elucidate those particular elements within pre-colonial African town planning that are worth preserving or at least modifying to meet changing demands.

Town planning principles in pre-colonial African towns

No attempt will be made to condemn modern city plans by exposing once more to ridicule what has been designed in our day. Instead, pre-colonial African cities will be analysed in a purely artistic and technical manner so as to discover their compositional elements. Our decisions thereafter can lead to our securing harmony and enchanting effects or disunity and dullness in the African cities and towns of tomorrow. We must start by analysing the form, structure, purpose, and design or layout principles behind plazas (open spaces in the city), passageways or streets, walls and dwellings, and then compare their manifestations in the modern and in the pre-colonial African city.

Several great cities and towns had arisen and fallen in Africa long before the arrival of foreign influence on the continent. Goa, Timbuctu, Djenne,¹¹ Thaba Bosiu,¹² Umgungundlovu,¹³ Kumasi,¹⁴ Ife,¹⁵ Kilwa,¹⁶ are but a few examples of these old cities (see map 2).¹⁷ Great Zimbabwe had a population of 30 000 at its peak in the early sixteenth century (1505+);¹⁸ Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti confederacy, had in 1817 a population roughly estimated to have been upwards of 100 000.¹⁹ Muller also reports that "the



Figure 1: Umgungundlovu-Dingane's royal elliptical kraal

fourteenth century village of Ntsu-natsatsi accommodated some 1 500 people".²⁰ Accurate estimates of the population size, hierarchical function and economic prosperity of these settlements are more difficult to determine.

A study of the above towns and many others reveal important compositional elements including circularity. It is this which I next discuss.

Circularity

The principles behind the layout of pre-colonial African cities can best be explained by starting with the circularity in the pattern of their dwellings, roads/passages, walls, plazas and settlements. Muller,²¹ writing on early settlements in South Africa such as Broederstroom in the Transvaal (which dates back to between AD 350 and AD 600), indicates clearly that "these villages comprise a complex of houses, each circular in form" and that "the circular house is arguably the most distinctive element of vernacular South African architecture, as is the circular spatial arrangement of dwellings of indigenous urban planning". This principle of circularity in African culture reveals a hierarchy in the urban structure – but one which does not lead to a total alienation of the masses – and at the same time maintains a good sense of control of the environment. The African settlement patterns, then, were curved, non-rectangular, with a strong

sense of enclosure and a fine sense of adaptation to the environment.

The evolution of the circular house or dwelling from incipient grass shelter to the stone wall structures of the Bantu-speaking people in Southern Africa is well documented by Frescuro.²² The rigid social-class hierarchy and authoritarian top-down control revealed in the square and rectangular forms in traditional Western culture are, of course, predominantly non-African in origin and therefore pose several challenges to adaptability, maintainability and sustainability in Africa. In physical, economic, material, social-organizational, and environmental terms, such forms constitute the very basis of cultural imposition and the forcible displacement of indigenous structures.

A typical example of a circular-plan settlement form in a pre-colonial African city is Umgungundlovu, Dingane's elliptical royal kraal (see figure 1).²³ Zulu towns, constructed under the supervision of Shaka's well-disciplined warriors, were ideally situated, well conceived and visualized, and rationally planned.²⁴ "In a typical new town, fourteen hundred domed grass huts were constructed around a circumference of three miles and situated on the side of a hill for purposes of drainage. Structures were evenly spaced and designed so as to retain the privacy of the traditional isolated homestead."²⁵

A cattle enclosure lay at the centre

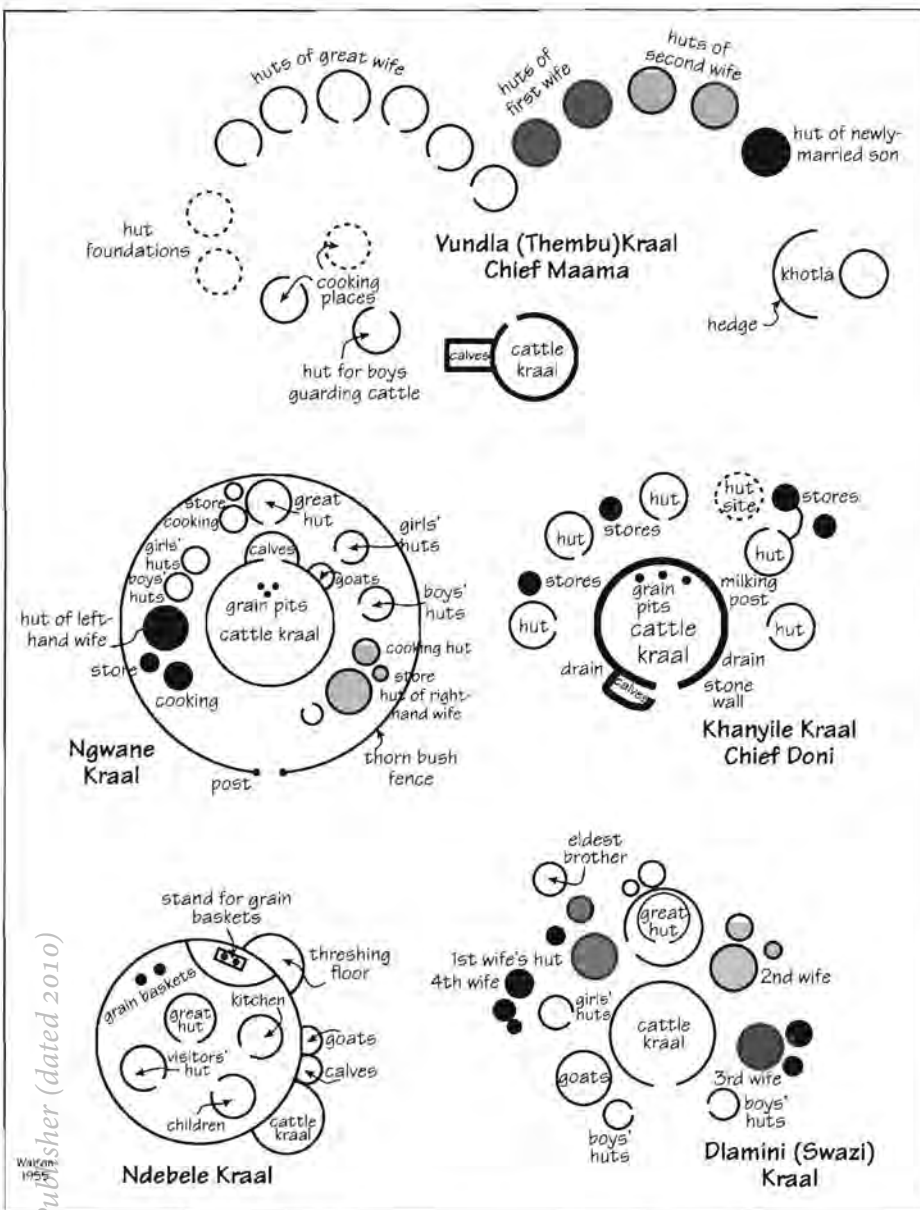


Figure 2: Nguni kraals

of each settlement, which is constructed on sloping ground, so that the main hut is at the highest point and the main entrance at the lowest (see figure 2).²⁶ The huts to the right of the main hut (Indlunkulu sector) belong to the Iqadi sector, those of the left, to the Ikhohla. This traditional Zulu settlement has two general semiological structures, one dualistic, the other triadic.²⁷

Drake and Hall,²⁸ in their study of traditional Tswana settlements, allude to the "remarkable consistency, with a density of one person per fifty square metres ..." and demonstrate that "the spatial layout was not random, but ordered and conceptually underpinned by a set of principles

that were used consistently over many hundreds of years".²⁹ Kuper,³⁰ in his attempt to understand the living organizations of the southern Bantu-speaking tribes, synthesized the principles of their spatial organization into a general structural model known as the Central Cattle Pattern. This model reveals rules involving several dualisms expressed by gender (female – left, male – right); ritual (back – sacred, front – secular); and status (upslope or centre – high, downslope or sides – low)³¹ (see figure 3).³² Mason,³³ in his description of the more complex urban settlement centres of the pre-colonial era in South Africa, made a particularly interesting case for circularity as a motif, as well as the male/female, high/low dichotomies, in the town plans found etched on rockfaces.

African tribes without central authority, though they did not build such big cities as those elsewhere, were adept at maintaining a feeling of smallness and rural intimacy, keeping strong social, economic, cultural and physical links even in areas with high population densities. The Ibo people of Nigeria, according to Hull (see figure 4),³⁴ achieved an astonishingly efficient use of space by establishing a cluster plan of development. Within an area of high human density, which nevertheless retained a refreshing sense of rurality, hundreds of Ibo vil-

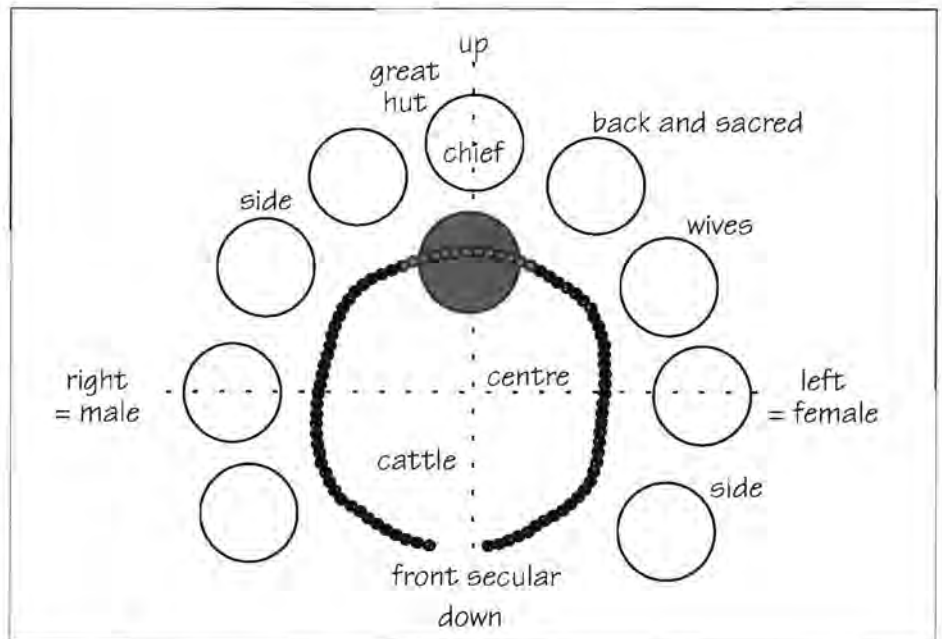


Figure 3: The Bantu cattle pattern

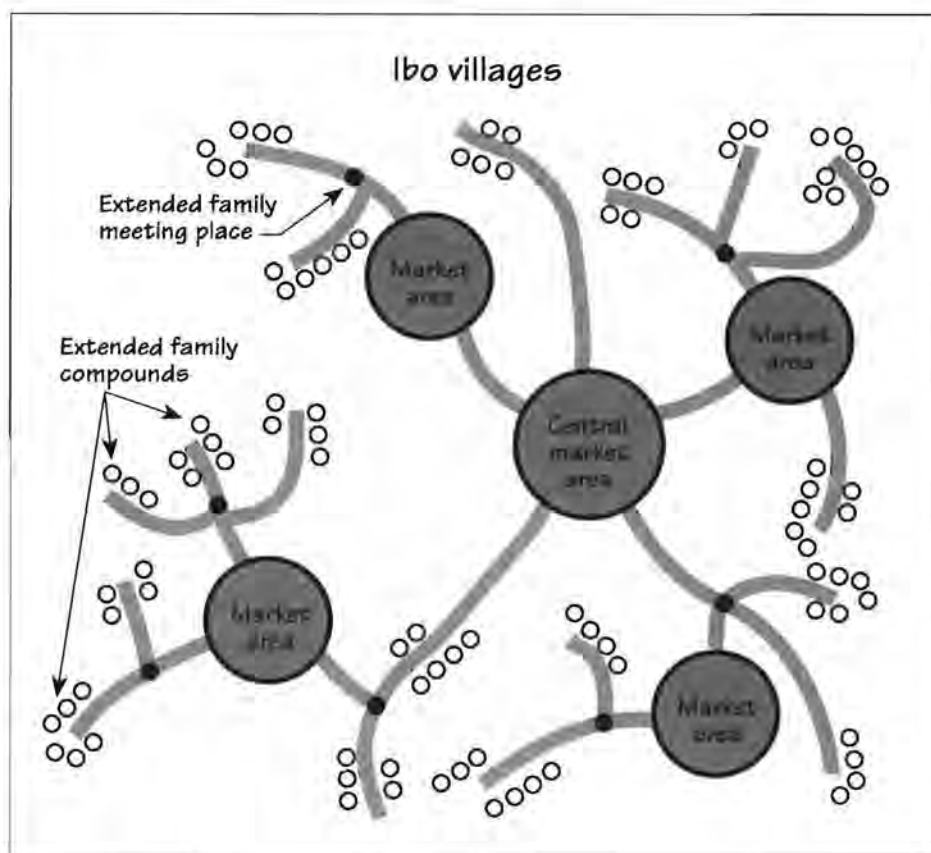


Figure 4: Ibo villages – conceptual diagram

lages were separated by large open spaces and groves of shady trees that led to extended family meeting places. A central market place, utilized by several extended families, was a central focus for all the paths that led from the extended family meeting places. The invaluable environmental conservation principles involved in this arrangement will only be disputed by infants in environmental awareness studies or by prejudiced interest groups.

The well-spaced houses in eighteenth-century Mbanza Kongo,³⁵ the building of houses around existing trees to avoid disrupting the ecological balance by the Bashilele near Mbanza Kongo,³⁶ and the traditional building rules practised in the Bangala towns in present day northern Zaire (Congo) in which towns had to be bordered by rectangular patches of banana plants and double rows of palm trees laid out in a straight line,³⁷ were all natural measures arising from conservational and environmental considerations and put in place by social planning systems in pre-colonial African communities.

Circularity itself is based on people-centred tradition. Yoruba tradition has it that the sacred settlement of Life, the model on which Yoruba settlements are patterned, originally consisted of four sectors, all ordered around a central hill, or higher area where was to be found the palace of the religious chief. According to Mabogunje³⁸ "... Yoruba compounds ... divided into numerous rows housing a number of related families, ... might cover about

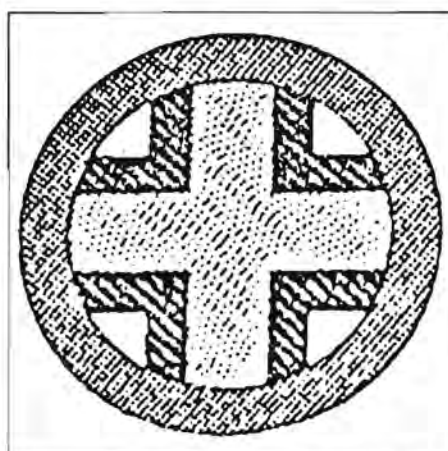


Figure 5: The Egyptian hieroglyph for city

half an acre of land; the compounds of chiefs cover several acres". The form of the world, it is believed by the Yoruba, is circular, and is regarded by them as bipartite but also quadripartite. This can be so because of the two road axes (oriented N-S and E-W) which intersect at the world centre.³⁹ This compares closely with the belief held by Egyptians concerning the circularity of the earth, illustrated by the Egyptian hieroglyph for city shown in figure 5.⁴⁰

Dispersal of facilities in the pre-colonial African city

Facilities, most offering multiple usage, were dispersed here and there throughout pre-colonial African cities to make them more easily available to all the inhabitants and to avoid overcrowding, strife and violence. This is lost in the city of today with its town planning and zoning systems that assign specific uses to fixed city areas. Sokoto was built to become the new capital of the Fulani caliphate. Its new elegant mosques were, for example, "deliberately dispersed throughout the city to facilitate the teaching and practice of Islam by everyone".⁴¹ Public squares lined with shade trees stretched from one mosque to another to enable people to pray communally and comfortably (see, for example, the plan of Abomey in figure 6).⁴²

This multiplicity of uses to which certain spaces were put was alluded to by a French missionary who spent several decades in what is now Lesotho and described Thaba Bosiu in 1833 as a "jumble of low huts, separated only by narrow lanes, crowded with children and dogs. In the town centre was a vast space where cattle were penned at night in well constructed, perfectly round stone enclosures. Adjoining the square was a courtyard devoted to business transactions and public speeches."⁴³

Colonialism came from Europe with a geometric tradition of urban design, and in particular an established habit of using the grid – sets of parallel streets crossing each other at right angles – for new towns on frontiers or in pioneering situations (see figure 7).⁴⁴ The church, the essential survival element for these European colonialists, was always placed at the centre of

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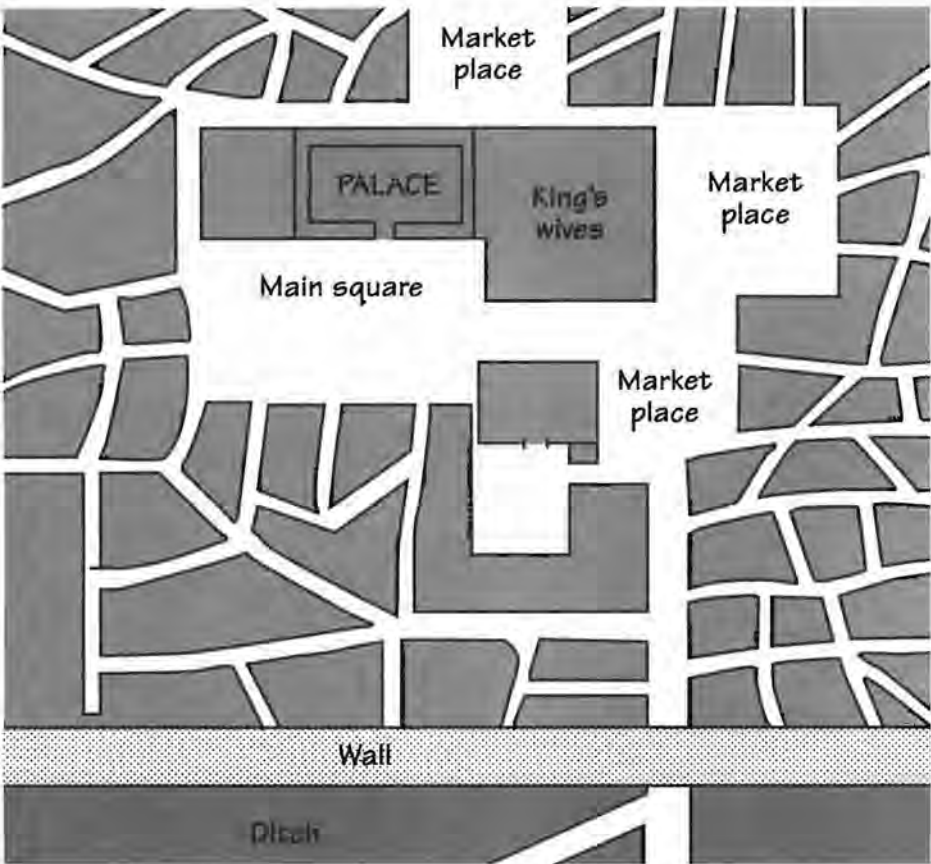


Figure 6: Plan of Abomey

almost all the colonial Voortrekker towns in South Africa, dominating the whole layout⁴⁵ (see figure 8).⁴⁶ In contrast, the vernacular cities in pre-colonial Africa always had the chief's palace situated at the centre of the city layout with all the other dwellings in concentric circles around it. The breakdown of African institutions, especially that of chieftainship, was, in a way, the greatest achievement of the settlers in what proved to be the erosion of traditional African planning principles

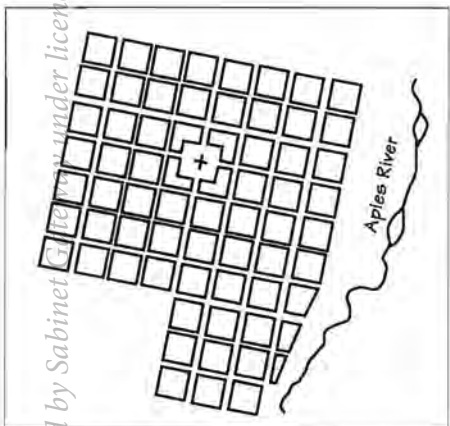


Figure 7: Plan of Pretoria (1863)

when it came to the creation of colonial and post-colonial cities.

There is a vast amount of information available on the artistic considerations which dictated the way or ways in which the elements of town planning were combined to arrive at the form and structure manifest in several pre-colonial African cities. While several particular facets of city planning come to mind, Aristotle's summary of all city planning rules – that a city must be so designed as to make its people at once secure and happy⁴⁷ – would appear to have been known to the designers of these pre-colonial settlements. To the traditional African city designer, city planning was not merely a technical matter but an artistic enterprise. For the purpose of illustrating those salient elements of the pre-colonial city which could still be used in planning our present day cities, several pre-colonial cities will be evaluated with special reference to their generic features and the rationale behind their layout.

The particular considerations borne in mind by the planners and designers

of these cities concerning African city plazas will next be considered. These considerations, as we will see, influenced plaza form in certain ways.

Plazas

The most important plaza in the pre-colonial African city was that in front of the King or Chief's palace.⁴⁸ It was an open place in the middle of the city and its significance was that of serving as the meeting place for the ruler and the ruled. Being the main plaza, it was of primary importance in the life of every city, because a great deal of public life took place in it. Today, not an open plaza but closed halls would be used for such purposes. On these plazas, Sitte has this to say: "(They) serve no other purposes than to allow for more air and light, or to bring about a certain interruption in the sea of houses or, at most, to provide freer view of a large building and thus to add to its architectural effect."⁴⁹

Centrally placed within most Yoruba towns was the palace of the Oba, the head of the city administration and the symbol of its urban status. So important was the palace that its grounds, in general, occupied an extensive area of land.⁵⁰ Opposite the palace was the city's most important market. This joint location of palace and market in the centre of Yoruba towns was, according to Johnson, "a

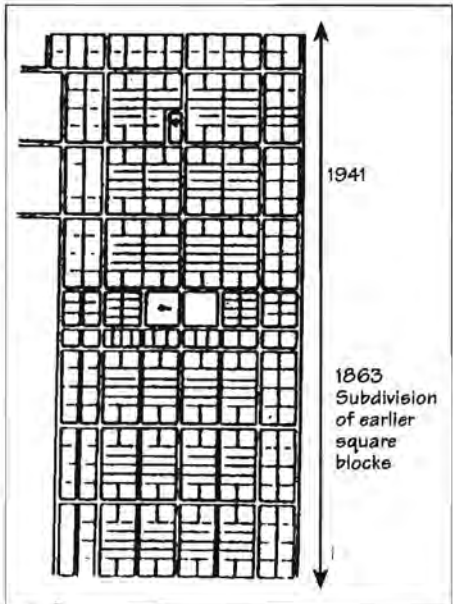


Figure 8: Plan of Potchefstroom (1863)

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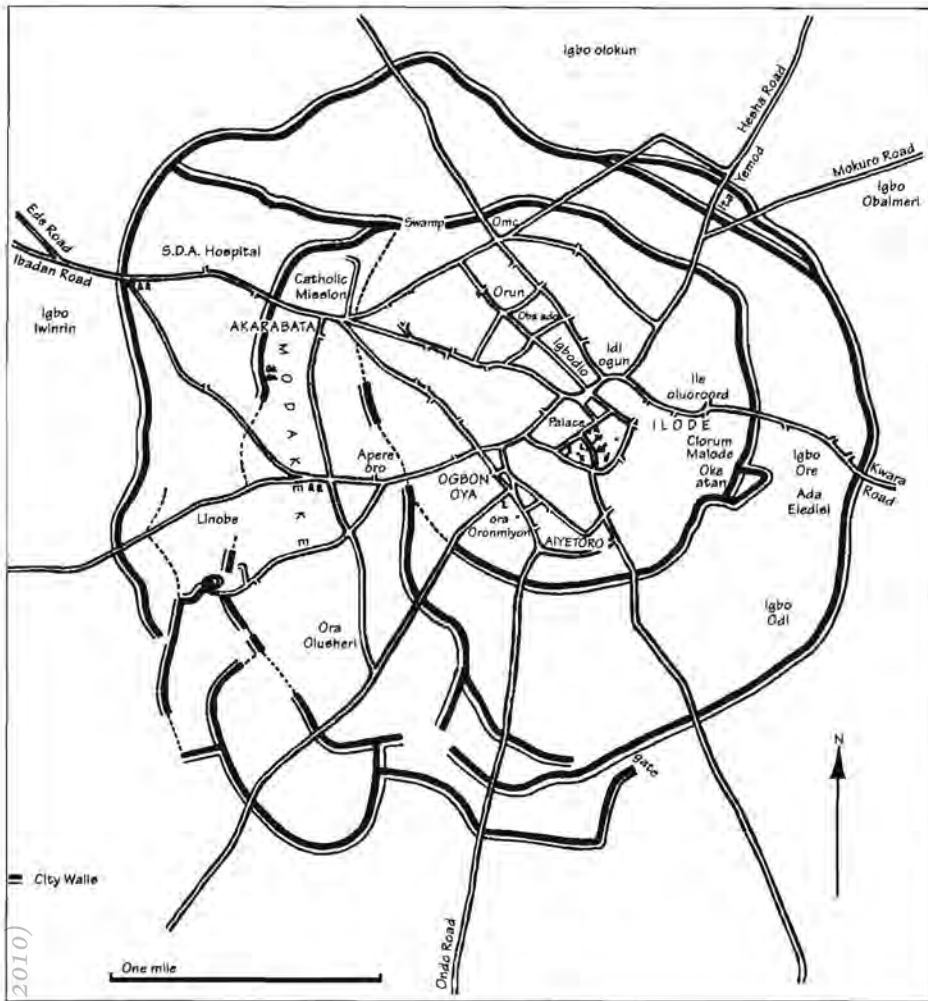


Figure 9: Yoruba city of Ife

rule without an exception and hence the term Oloja (one having a market) used as a generic term or title of all chief rulers of a town be he a King or Bale.⁵¹ Some impression of the magnitude of the palace grounds can be gleaned from the description given by nineteenth-century travellers. Of the palace grounds in old Oyo (Katunga), Clapperton in 1825 noted that it covered "about a square mile ... having two large parks, one in front and another facing the north"⁵² (see figure 9).⁵³ Other smaller marketplaces found elsewhere within the town were closely associated with the residences of minor chiefs. Close by the central market was to be found the fetish temple or the principal mosque of the town. From the palace, market and religious edifices in the centre, roads radiated to every part of the town and on to neighbouring towns.⁵⁴

In the plazas of these pre-colonial cities people trafficked, public cele-

brations took place, plays were put on, state proceedings were carried out, laws proclaimed and so forth. In most pre-colonial cities in Africa, for example Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti confederacy, only one such principal square served these various practical purposes;⁵⁵ thus the fact that no distinction was made between ecclesiastical and secular authority tended to find expression even in plazas. All these activities, sketchily outlined, witness to an active continuance of public life in these open places. Meanwhile, in our day, plazas are at best used as parking lots,⁵⁶ causing any living relationship between open space and buildings to vanish completely. What we miss in the city of our day is activity in those places where in antiquity it was most animated, that is around the great public buildings – respectful silence near our religious shrines and centres of education;⁵⁷ crowds of people and

all the business of market life near the chief's palace/town halls. Any and every activity that enhanced the useful life of public plazas in the pre-colonial African city has today quite gone.

The placing of fetish shrines in the open plazas of Africa's old cities was done in a very particular manner. These shrines constituted the embodiment of the religious beliefs held by traditional African people before the arrival of Christianity or Islam. The shrines represented little gods who, in the belief of their worshippers, could not be "uprooted" or moved around randomly without incurring their wrath.⁵⁸ They were positioned quite early on in the building of the city, at well chosen sites that would not be touched by traffic, and leaving the centre of the plaza free.⁵⁹ In placing these shrines, therefore, their worshippers avoided vehicular paths, the centre point of the plaza, the entire central axis, in fact, and the line of sight leading the eye to the main portal or to any other particularly decorative parts of notable buildings.⁶⁰ In today's cities this positioning principle is lost completely. In radical contrast to older custom, churches today are invariably located at the centre of plazas, whereas shrines in the olden days were not erected as freestanding edifices but were fused to other structures on one side or encased by them on two or three sides (see figure 10).⁶¹

The disadvantages of situating theatres, churches, town halls and similar buildings at the centre of their surrounding spaces arise from the delusion that everything about the building must be seen at once, and the consequent creation of an emptiness, or vacuum, of uniformly non-occupied space around the object. Such an arrangement is in itself extremely boring, the possibility of any diversity of effect having been effectively destroyed.⁶² Such an exposed building always appears like a cake on a serving-platter. This type of siting also commits developers to the considerable expense of finishing lengthy facades (both architecturally and ornamentally) all the way round the building. Has cost ceased to be an important consideration in the design, con-

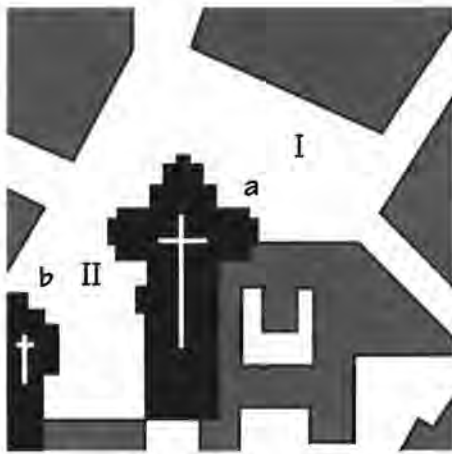


Figure 10: Positioning of shrines in the past

struction and maintenance of formal buildings? This seems to be a worldwide phenomenon. Sitte,⁶³ lamenting this fact, states that "In spite of the fact that this arrangement has proven itself universally bad, and in spite of the whole history of church building discrediting it, nevertheless everywhere the sad fact is that, in spite of all the disadvantages, everywhere in the world today new church buildings are, almost without exception, set alone in the middle of plazas".⁶⁴

Plazas were put to excellent use in days gone by. This does not suggest that every picturesque beauty in old town plans should be revived for modern situations, because in this area the saying "necessity breaks iron" applies. But by studying carefully all the features of ancient city planning, we can determine with certainty what might still be salvageable and retainable as a valuable heritage.

Although we can see clearly the tremendous difference that exists between the old plazas, still charming as they are, and the monotonous modern ones, we still unfortunately consider it self-evident that churches and monuments must stand in the centre of their plazas; that all streets must intersect at right angles and run wide all the way round a plaza; that buildings should not entirely close up a square; and that monumental structures should not form part of such a closure. We are all aware of the virtues of the old plaza; but how to produce it under modern conditions is not understood because we are no longer cognizant of the rela-

tionship between cause and effect in these matters.

Today nobody is concerned with city planning as an art – only as a technical problem. When, as a result, the artistic effect in no way lives up to our expectations, we are left bewildered and helpless. Nevertheless, in dealing with a next project, we treat it again wholly from the technical point of view, as if it were the layout of a railroad in which artistic questions were not involved.

Walls

Hull⁶⁵ contends: "Walling was a vitally important consideration in the development of African urban life. Walls gave definition to settlements and prevented uncontrollable urban sprawl. Walls also provided psychic and physical security. In unstable times they afforded protection against theft or destruction. In peacetime they controlled entry and exit."

Walls in pre-colonial Africa can therefore be said to have rendered a real service to the communities that built them. "Numerous gates along urban walls served as effective instruments of economic and population control."⁶⁶

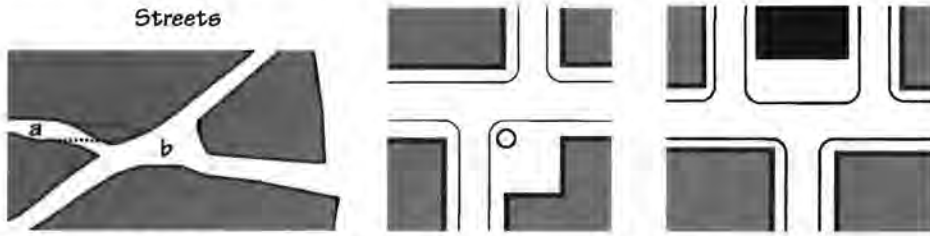
Within the spaces between the African city's walls, communities developed well-balanced relations where each was a keeper of the other. Outer city walls were people's (public) walls. Lying in concentric circles, the inhabitants' private walls filled up the intervening spaces to produce something not unlike the cellular labyrinth of a beehive.⁶⁷ Hull's descriptions do not exclude other uses to which walls were put. Several vivid illustrations of walling in Africa are provided by Logan⁶⁸ concerning the walled city of Kano in northern Nigeria; by Stanley and Neame⁶⁹ concerning the magnificence of the walled galleries and passageways of the Buganda's royal enclosure; by Davidson⁷⁰ of Benin City's long and decorated galleries and plazas beyond which lay the king's audience chamber. Hull⁷¹ reports a Portuguese mariner who visited the port city of Gwato in the Benin Kingdom and wrote in 1550 that "Benin City had no wall but was surrounded by a large moat, very wide and deep, which suffices for its defence". There

are many other similar reports elsewhere. Regarding the material used and the thickness of Yoruba walls, Mabogunje⁷² writes: "... The walls were usually over fifteen feet (about four metres) high and probably equally broad at the base. With a ditch equally as deep, the town wall provided a good defence against invaders. In general, the walls were built of clay dug from the trench. In stony districts to the north-west, some towns, notably Oke Omo and Ilesan, had their walls built of stones".

The city's priority today is no longer the need for defence previously manifested in its walls, and the technique by which it was to be built has been altogether lost. The defence-minded planners of Great Zimbabwe "created thirty-two-foot-high elliptical walls of carefully cut stone, which they laid in herringbone, chevron, cord, and checkerboard patterns. The outer wall of the Great Enclosure contains some 182 000 cubic feet of stonework and is over eight hundred feet long. The Great Enclosure is by far the largest single prehistoric structure in sub-Saharan Africa."⁷³

The techniques used at Great Zimbabwe have been well documented by Summers.⁷⁴ The most interesting point here being that, unlike most stone walling, the early walls at Great Zimbabwe were extensions of enormous natural boulders. Wilson⁷⁵ alludes to the contention that the Sotho peoples (unlike their neighbours who lived in large settlements) had excellent stone-building techniques which spread widely in Southern Africa before the advent of colonialism. The point being made here is the fact that African peoples traditionally used well-thought-out procedures and techniques in the harnessing of locally available materials to build their cities and had no need to bring in any materials from elsewhere. The artisans whose talents were enabled to grow and flourish ensured that there was always the innovative spirit to solve a huge array of problems – particularly in the use of walls for defence (Ife), aesthetic purposes (Great Zimbabwe), control of the entry of visitors (Buganda), and for other purposes.

African city walls were not built purely for the ends they serve today – the exclusion of people from the city.



Figures 11, 12 & 13: Conceptual diagrams in street laying

The most important functional reasoning behind their construction was control of urban sprawl and encouragement of the need to share, communally, shelter, grazing facilities, water resources and rites of passage (birth, puberty, marriage and death). Traditionally, a good bit of class mixing occurred in the course of communal land use. Advanced conservation considerations were built into the communal usage of facilities, and the environment was thereby less exposed to stresses and strains.⁷⁶ Such experience, and the attendant lessons in cooperation and group effort, have undoubtedly helped to keep many African tribes going till today.

Passageways, streets and roads

Dwellings were built exceedingly close to each other, but blocks of buildings were separated by "avenue alleys". Towns built on a concentric circles plan – especially Kumasi (Ashanti) – had avenues with alleyways opening on to these broad thoroughfares which were broken by pleasant community plazas.⁷⁷ Benin City's broad ceremonial avenues astounded an European visitor who wrote: "The town has thirty very straight and broad streets, every one of them about one hundred and twenty feet wide. ..."⁷⁸

Roads in the kingdom of Buganda, as described by Stanley who visited Buganda's capital, comprised "very broad avenues, imperial enough in width ... each avenue was fenced with tall matete (water cane) neatly set very close together in uniform rows";⁷⁹ and further that the passageways leading from one avenue to another were narrow and far from straight. Roscoe⁸⁰ reports that each sub-chief in the Baganda Kingdom had to maintain in good order a road some forty yards wide from the capital to his county seat.

True "arteries", wide highways exclusively for vehicular uses as we know them today, were not the same in functional terms as the wide thoroughfares of the old pre-colonial African cities. They were narrow at best, not for vehicles but only for pedestrians – for communication and social interaction. The narrowness and limited number of side streets prevented the larger roads' continuity from being interrupted too often. Moreover, the winding character of Africa's ancient streets repeatedly sealed off perspectives for the pedestrian while offering the eye a new aspect at each succeeding turn. These meandering ways which have been wiped out in our day at great expense to our enjoyment, were not, according to Sitte⁸¹ "the result of caprice on the part of the worthy inhabitants – who were still thinking in terms of beauty, nor of ignorance on the part of the engineers of that day – who were not as expert as our own in the art of tracing straight lines; they often came about for very practical, reasons – curve the line of a street and have it meet (another) at a spot where no other road opened". Following modern thinking, one would lay out streets in the direction indicated by the dotted line (figure 11),⁸² interrupt an infinite perspective vista by displacing the axis (figure 12)⁸³ or by breaking it (figure 13).⁸⁴

Rather than a few standard widths, one ought, especially in large cities, to introduce and observe many gradations in breadth – from the exceptionally broad traffic arteries to an occasional pedestrian walk. If needed, there should be provided special bicycle paths (for health and environmental considerations), bridle paths, streets for commercial traffic, special roads shaded by trees for workers in an industrial town, streets with bench-

es for resting, with broader sections for waiting, sound absorbing pavements, fountains here and there, out of line movement, plantings of shrub-beries and trees, and many more variations. We should consider the most appropriate design for street intersections and the layout of curved and counter-curved streets, facilities for promenading and the better access of window-shoppers to vitrines without interrupting traffic.

Tomorrow's city: Assimilating historical elements

Several attempts have been made, the historical record tells us, to copy (as it were) elements taken from structures of earlier times. In recent times, such experiments have been fraught with confusion: sometimes we have witnessed unhappily conceived attempts at absorption that have led to results far from what had been envisaged. Sitte,⁸⁵ observing this phenomenon in the cities of continental Europe deplores: ... "How in recent time the history of the out-of-city building has failed to synchronize with the history of architecture and with that of the other creative arts is indeed very astonishing. City planning stubbornly goes its own way, unconcerned with what transpires around it." Attempts at reinventing the wheel and attracting portions of the old city structure into the present, in Europe and elsewhere, have witnessed actual copies of old structures erected in monumental and costly fashion without answering any real need or practical purpose, merely out of enthusiasm for the splendour of ancient art. Early Christian basilicas have been erected in new European cities; cathedrals have been built in an attempt to incarnate a certain ancient edifice or other; but what became of the plazas that belonged with them? Agora, forum, market place, acropolis – nobody remembered them ...

We need to be wary of any such mistakes in the future when we attempt to revisit the past and the history of town planning in Africa. Our attempt ought to be well orchestrated, handled by culturally and historically sensitive planners who should be able to consult widely with all the

stakeholders and interested “communities” before yet another imposition, before yet another inappropriate design is forced down the throats of future generations. The main concerns should be functional need, aesthetic considerations, cost, environmental enhancement and, above all, the devising of a construction that will prove a heritage of value for future generations to emulate.

Conclusion

This article has pointed out that the beauties of the past can be equalled in our modern cities. It is not true that modern traffic, for example, forces us to forego the environmentally sympathetic and artistically impressive town-plans of our pre-colonial settlements, nor that the requirements of plumbing and hygiene make creative design impossible. We do not have to condemn modern city dwellers to pass their lives in formless mass housing with only the depressing sight of eternally similar apartment house blocks and unbroken frontage lines to gaze upon.

We must break radically with the “traditional” stereotype of geometric street layouts, and in so doing allow the greatest possible flexibility in the detail of our road design network. “One ought not only to accept curvature in streets, but also diverse widths and asymmetrical cross-sections, as well as occasional irregularities in building-frontage lines and in the width of sidewalks, wherever there is a legitimate need for them.”⁸⁶ Narrow streets in pre-colonial African cities brought special benefits in social interaction, spatial intimacy, in a feeling of cohesiveness, in the group control of local spaces, in the education and training of young people, and in noise reduction – especially among low, single-family dwellings in quiet residential areas.

These should be, again, a proper massing of groups of buildings to allow us to break away from the similarity of exteriors that impose a corresponding monotony of effect along our “street-walls”. “The zoning regulations which are regarded by some as a ‘cure-all’ for all building speculation, for any profiteering in apartment

houses or rents, so that they demand (their) extension, (have) others condemn (them) as an incentive to land speculation and the formation of building syndicates.”⁸⁷ It will be best if this (zoning regulation) and the popular checkerboard pattern of blocks in city expansion were cast aside once and for all, along with other such expedients. The forgotten pre-colonial African city, well studied, will prove to be the true provider of clues to help us to move beyond the present impasse in planning Africa’s sustainable cities and towns of tomorrow.

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Water and sanitation in sub-Saharan Africa

Serving the rural poor

Dr Denis Fair, Fellow of the Africa Institute of South Africa, looks at factors surrounding the provision of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation in rural sub-Saharan Africa. Both are basic needs essential to health and development generally and integral to rural programmes. Progress in water supply provision in Southern and Eastern Africa is reviewed.

SUB-SAHARAN Africa (SSA) faces two challenges involving water – drought-induced famine without an overdependence on food aid; and how to supply its growing population with clean drinking water. The latter is essential not only to health but also to those, mainly women, who “devote inordinate amounts of time to collecting water” often from distant sources.¹ Their time could be more profitably spent in more satisfying activities such as child care, crop cultivation, food preparation and education. In Lesotho 30% of families spend more than two-and-a-half hours each day collecting water while in eastern Nigeria it can take up to five hours a day. The World Health Organization (WHO) considers a supply point within a 200-metre radius of home as nearer the ideal.

Access to safe water and adequate sanitation are not only basic needs that are every human being's right but they are also essential ingredients in primary health care delivery, which stresses prevention rather than cure. Yet by the early 1990s about 1 000 million people in the developing world still lacked a safe water supply and about 1 700 million suffered inadequate sanitation facilities.² In sub-Saharan Africa two-thirds of the rural population, ie nearly 200 million people, were without access to safe drink-

ing water. This is one of the clearest manifestations of Africa's poverty, states O'Connor.³ In Nigeria only 22% of the rural population were fortunate enough to have the necessary access; only 17% in Mozambique and as few as 4% in Mali. Some other countries are better off – Côte d'Ivoire 80%, Malawi 49% and Lesotho 45%.⁴

The IDWSSD

The United Nations Assembly declared 1981–1990 as the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) with the ambitious target of providing “clean water for all by 1990” and supporting the WHO goal of “health for all by the year 2000”. (The target was subsequently reduced to 90 and 50% respectively.) Between 1980 and 1990 when the population of the developing countries increased by 754 million (from 3 320 million to 4 074 million), an additional 1 600 million people were given access to drinking water of reasonable quality. But the quantity of water used per capita remains low, eg, 15–30 litres per day if families have to go any distance to fetch it. Water for personal hygiene increases only when availability rises to about 50 litres per person per day along with greater ease of access.⁵ By 1990 in 14 SSA countries more than 40% of

the rural population had access to a safe supply but the average for the region is nearer 33%. The problem is that the improvements barely keep up with population growth.

Vaa⁶ claims that the main achievement of the IDWSSD is that it raised the awareness of the international community of the need for greater health and hygiene in developing countries. It also motivated governments in those countries, and donors, to give water supply a higher priority in their national plans for infrastructure and health. Research reports and pilot projects on these topics escalated and some new and unconventional technologies that were affordable to the poor were uncovered. A Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, formed in 1991, is attempting to find ways of carrying forward the momentum of the water decade.

On the debit side, however, some major donors continued to tie their aid to their own products and services although it had been clearly demonstrated that the most successful solutions for water supply and sanitation were those developed or adapted within the country of use. Then, too, planning projects were often top-down, centralized administrations failing not only to consult and use the local beneficiaries but also to install adequate maintenance systems.

Water-related diseases

Clean water, adequate sanitation, hygiene and health are links in the same chain. "Water supply, sanitation and solid wastes are the most important of all environmental problems" to people in developing countries.⁷ Water-related diseases are classified according to the transmission route or pathway by which each kind of infection is passed along.⁸ Water-borne diseases arising from contaminated drinking water are typhoid, cholera and "a range of infections that are responsible for the endemic diarrhoeas of children in poor communities".⁹ The last was responsible for half of the deaths per year among infants in Africa.

Water-washed transmission is responsible for eye and skin infections, trachoma (causing blindness), etc. There is evidence from rural Africa that the diarrhoeas of poor communities are also water-washed, ie, "they may also be transmitted by routes of infection which allow faeces to be ingested, eg, with contaminated food or due to bad hygiene".¹⁰ Thus, as the World Bank points out, not only is it important to deliver safe water for drinking but also sufficient water to permit good personal hygiene.¹¹ Water-based diseases, resulting from infection by parasitic worms, are schistosomiasis (bilharzia) and guinea worm. The water-related group, such as trypanosomiasis and malaria, arise from the insect vector transmission of tsetse flies and mosquitoes.

The direct relationship between clean water and improved health is not always clear since other factors may be at work such as better sanitation and hygiene.¹² Thus, although improved water supply may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for better health, a wide-ranging study by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has clearly shown that improvements in the quality or availability of water and adequate sanitation results in very large reductions in illness and death from water-related diseases.¹³

Contamination

Where people are dependent upon their water supply from ponds, springs and rivers, the most serious

contamination comes from disease-bearing human wastes.¹⁴ Inadequate latrines and "free-ranging" sanitation, common among rural people, permits the flow of waste by groundwater seepage or surface wash, especially during rainy seasons, into heavily used water sources. Climatic seasonality, among other environmental factors, thus plays a part in the incidence of morbidity and mortality among different communities. The development of more efficient and affordable pit-latrines has been a major research effort in recent years. The improved ventilated latrine, for example, developed by the Blair Laboratory in Zimbabwe has proved to be odourless, fly-free, cheap to construct and has a life of about 15 years.

Contamination can arise, too, from long periods and inappropriate methods of water storage and from insufficient personal hygiene, especially if hands with faecal contamination come in contact with the stored water.¹⁵ The further people are from the source, the longer they tend to store water and the greater is the pollution.

For rural people piped water supplies, except in special circumstances (see later), are too expensive. Instead, protected hand-dug wells and machine-drilled boreholes are the common sources of improved water supply over most of SSA; boreholes particularly in areas of scarce or markedly seasonal rainfall. A bucket and windlass provides the simplest means of drawing water from wells but the research that has gone into developing an appropriate handpump for wells and boreholes has been impressive. It was a major objective of the IDWSSD. Intensive tests on numerous models, requiring them to be cheap, robust and efficient, have been carried out in a number of African countries and have considerably reduced the cost of providing safe water. Some are giving good service, among them locally designed Zimbabwean and Malawian pumps. But essential to the research was the demand that they be capable of being locally operated and maintained at village level. The lastmentioned factor is particularly important for at one time 60% of handpumps in many African countries were inoperative within a few months after installation.¹⁶

In SSA donors contribute substantially to capital costs of water supply and sanitation facilities. The cost of maintenance and usage may be met by government and/or consumers. The World Bank sees the "increasing-block tariff" as one way of meeting the limited resources of the rural poor, viz, charging a low "lifeline" rate for the first consumption block (eg, 25–50 litres per person per day) and higher rates thereafter.¹⁷ This system, it maintains, is more efficient than, and preferable to, a general subsidy.

Community participation

Although technological innovation and donor assistance have reduced the cost of SSA's rural water supply infrastructure, "money, manpower and materials do not themselves constitute a programme".¹⁸ There are three other vital ingredients – political will on the part of governments; an understanding of the cultural background of the communities involved, a felt need and the active support on their part for the facilities offered; and their education, training and participation in the whole operation. The World Bank¹⁹ comments that "wherever communities are involved in the design, construction, installation and maintenance of water supplies, water projects are more efficient, cost effective and hence sustainable" than would be the case with more centralized decision-making. "Women, in particular," the Bank emphasizes, "have the incentive to make water programmes work since they are generally the most affected by poor access to water." Moreover, the people themselves must organize the running of a waterpoint as a collective and self-reliant operation. Good work in all these aspects is being done by organizations such as Agetip (Agences d'Exécution des Travaux d'Intérêt Public) in Africa which help develop local capacity, prepare projects and monitor execution and operation.²⁰

A further lesson that has been learnt is that water supply, sanitation and hygiene must be integrated as cohesive and coordinated elements in rural development programmes.²¹ A synergy of water supplies and im-

proved health services produces an ultimate result that is better than would have been achieved had the two operations not been combined.²²

The remainder of this article deals with progress made in the provision of drinking water in some of the countries of Southern and Eastern Africa. Emphasis is placed on certain aspects peculiar to these countries. Malawi and Ethiopia, to begin with, provide some interesting contrasts.

Provision of drinking water

Malawi

Malawi's rural water supply programme has been supported by generous and indispensable donor funding, strong government commitment and effective community participation. By 1985, 47% of the rural population (3.3 million out of 7 million) had access to water of acceptable quality from boreholes, dug wells, self-help gravity systems fed by mountain streams, and other sources. More than 80% of the rural population also had access to adequate sanitation.

In its *Statement of Development Policies* and its *National Water Master Plan*, the government aimed at the provision of potable water to 74% of the rural population by 1996.²³ An associated goal was the reduction of water-borne disease, which was responsible for 50% of all illness in the country. A target was set of 27 litres per person per day of clean but untreated water within a maximum reach of 500 metres. Considerable progress has been made towards achieving these goals. The gravity systems have increased from 45 in 1985 to 56 in 1994; boreholes from 5 000 to 9 700, and dug wells from some 2 000 to 5 670, although of the last up to 50% are inoperative at any one time.²⁴

The gravity-fed system has attracted considerable attention. Construction is undertaken by the villagers who dig the trenches and lay the pipes. Government supplies the hardware, transport and supervision, and maintenance costs are shared by government and villagers. The most recent scheme is in the lower Shire Valley and is funded by the United States Agency for International De-

velopment (USAID) under the Health Intervention for Child Survival Project. A reduction in diarrhoea and dysentery, very common in the area, is anticipated.²⁵

Overall, the water-supply programme is well organized and local communities are fully involved in planning, operation and maintenance.²⁶ For the gravity-fed systems there is a well-trained repair team; a tap committee which raises funds from users to cover the cost of tap replacement; paid water monitoring assistants who oversee 200 taps and provide technical support to the repair team if necessary; and a supervisory main committee that organizes fund-raising for project maintenance and people for self-help labour when required.

Similarly, for each borehole there are two trained pump attendants, one of whom must be a woman. A village water committee oversees every 5–10 boreholes. Where repairs are beyond the abilities of the pump attendants, an operator (for every 100 boreholes) is called in from the maintenance office of the groundwater section of the Water Department. Area action committees, controlled by the district development committee (the district commissioner, representatives from government ministries and chiefs) are responsible for organizing the operation and maintenance of boreholes and for resolving social, economic and technical problems should they arise. The value of this local commitment is such that maintenance of boreholes by villagers is considerably cheaper than if left to government. Costs have also been reduced by the use of light drills to exploit shallow aquifers and the use of the local easy-to-maintain PVC Afridev handpump. In earlier days some 4 000 boreholes, more than 45 metres deep, were drilled with heavy machines and expensive handpumps were installed.

Expansion of the rural water supply system will have to depend primarily upon the extension of the borehole network since the full potential of the gravity-fed system is limited. But the cost, including the rehabilitation of existing boreholes, will be substantial so that meeting unrealistic targets will be challenging, if not impossible.

The rewards from projects thus far completed have been great. The rural population clearly regards the provision of a clean water supply as by far the most important contribution to an enhanced quality of life.

Ethiopia

Kloos and Zein's assessment of water supply and sanitation in Ethiopia's rural areas is that it is inadequate and contributes significantly to the high incidence of many communicable diseases.²⁷ Forty-five per cent of deaths among children under five years of age is caused by diarrhoea. The Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, responsible for implementing the objectives of the IDWSSD, reported that in 1983/84 only 5.6% (2.1 million out of 38 million) of the rural population enjoyed clean water. By 1986 this had risen to 7.2% and by 1990 to 11% (4.6 million out of 41.7 million). In a *Ten-Year Perspective Plan*, the proportion aimed at was 35% by 1994. Civil war and drought seriously retarded any advance towards this goal.

Sanitation in both urban and rural areas is described as among the worst in the world. In 1986 about 7% of people in rural villages and less than 1% of those in dispersed settlements had adequate sanitation facilities. The rural population rarely use the pit latrines available and prefer to defecate in the open fields. The rural sanitation component of the ten-year plan set a target of 6 million pit latrines (600 000 per year) serving 80% of the rural population. Implementation is to be based mainly on community self-help with technical guidance from the Ministry of Health. Over the period some 230 000 latrines of various types were constructed in rural areas but many have either collapsed or been abandoned, leaving an increase of only 100 000 or one-sixth the number planned.

Both the quality and quantity of water consumed generally do not conform to acceptable standards. "The concentration of faecal coliform organisms in the water," according to Kloos and Zein, "is generally much higher than the standard recommended by the WHO."²⁸ Water consumption rates, too, are far below internationally desirable levels.

Because of the high cost of water and maintenance problems, as well as a cultural factor in some areas, many households prefer to use streams and other contaminated sources, even to piped supplies. In rural areas, too, only low-cost sanitation systems are feasible and the Blair latrine is unaffordable by most households. "After more than two decades the public health programmes and excreta disposal systems in rural areas failed to show significant improvements commensurable with the duration of service."²⁹ The conclusion is that to counter the present poor organization and training in health programmes, institutions and inter-sectoral collaboration need to be strengthened so as to achieve greater acceptance, affordability and use of systems among the population.

The Dodota water supply project in the Arsi region in the highlands of central Ethiopia is one project where positive results can be reported. Supported by the Swedish International Development Authority (Sida) the project is a piped gravity-fed system from two springs to communal taps.³⁰ It covers 300 km² and the demands of some 70 000 people. It is essentially a "women's project". They operate and administer the scheme following a training stint. The water is clean and inexpensive, the health of children has improved, personnel are well motivated and capable of maintaining the system, and no serious cultural or social restraints in adopting the system have been encountered. Sida does warn, however, that unless the project personnel are taught the basics about budgeting, there could be failure once the donor leaves.

Zimbabwe

Water supply and sanitation in Zimbabwe, it is claimed, is better planned and administered than in many other SSA countries because of its relatively strong economy, small population (9.4 million in 1990) and functioning administration.³¹ Yet, in the mainly subsistence-based communal areas (as opposed to the large-scale commercial farming areas), which carry over 60% of the national population, only 33% of their population in the wet season, when contamination

from poor sanitation is high, and 39% in the dry season had access to safe sources of water in 1985. Only 14.8% of their population had access to adequate sanitation and 75% had no facilities at all and used "bush latrines". These conditions were responsible for the deaths of 25 000 children each year from diarrhoeal diseases. This represents "a very disturbing picture of deprivation".³²

Aimed at rectifying the situation, the *First Five-Year National Development Plan 1986–1990* placed a priority on improving the water needs of communal area inhabitants. Water supply schemes completed were extended into the *Second Plan 1991–1995* with special emphasis on training people in the repair and maintenance of equipment and their active involvement in the operation of the system.³³

A longer term vision was contained in a *National Master Plan* for rural water supply and sanitation drawn up in 1985.³⁴ By the year 2005 it was estimated that 576 new piped water supplies to selected service centres in the communal areas would be necessary to serve a population of about 300 000. For the remaining 8.6 million inhabitants of these areas, 36 000 primary water sources (wells and boreholes) would be required. Adequate sanitation would demand the construction of 1.4 million latrines. The total cost for both water and sanitation over the 20-year period was estimated at Z\$836 million (at 1985 prices).

Although reaching these targets may be difficult, there are some positive aspects. Zimbabwe has abundant and accessible groundwater resources. It has opted for appropriate technology, wells and boreholes rather than piped supplies, and has made valuable contributions in developing water supply and sanitation equipment at its Blair Laboratory. Moreover, the rural people are willing to participate in the schemes and place a high priority on them. By 1990 the World Bank estimate of the proportion of rural inhabitants with access to safe drinking water was 80% but its estimate regarding adequate sanitation was only 22%; and these figures cover both the better-off commercial farming areas and the communal areas.³⁵

Botswana

Apart from its northern corner, Botswana's sub-humid to arid climate makes water a vital resource but a scarce and costly one to develop. Surface water is found only in the thinly populated Okavango delta region. In the east there are a number of ephemeral rivers in the sandbeds of which water is stored providing a source for rural users and livestock. Evaporation is very high and 80% of the country is covered by the sands of the Kgalagadi desert. Below these sands groundwater can be found only at great depths and yields are low. Elsewhere groundwater yields are also low and the water is of poor quality in many areas. Nevertheless, 60% of the country's total water demands are met from this source. There are only two major dams in operation (at Gaborone and near Francistown) but there are 14 000 registered boreholes.

Because of the scarcity of surface water, tropical diseases such as malaria, schistosomiasis and trypanosomiasis are not the major causes of morbidity and mortality in Botswana but it is, among others, a lack of clean water that is a cause of ill-health. Although there is a relatively low fatality rate among children under five years of age, the incidence of diarrhoea has remained high and may reflect relatively slow improvements in hygiene and the quality of life at the household level. Inspection has revealed that most of the water contamination is due to poor protection at the source, reticulation failures and poor sanitation practices by consumers. According to the *National Development Plan 1991–1997* coordination between government departments will be improved in order to promote personal hygiene, environmental sanitation and better water supply and protection.

In the face of recurrent drought and the environmental limitations, the government's efforts to meet the country's water demands have been commendable. In 1990 a National Water Master Plan was adopted.

After meeting the demands of agriculture, livestock, the main urban centres and large villages (many now

assuming the status of towns), 9% of total water consumption is taken up by over 400 small villages, lands areas and minor settlements which together account for more than 50% of the country's total population of 1,3 million. Consumption in the rural villages is about 34 litres per person per day, all from standpipes, whereas in the lands areas and minor settlements it is less than 20 litres, coming from pans, sand rivers, hand-dug wells and some boreholes. Fifty-six per cent of the rural population has access to safe water and 18% to adequate sanitation. Compare this with the four main urban centres in which 99% of households enjoy a piped supply and 75% a flush toilet or pit latrine.

In terms of the Rural Village Water Supply Programme (RVWSP) about 300 of the targeted 340 villages had been provided with reliable water supplies by 1990. By the end of that year also, at least two successful boreholes had been established in each of 82 villages most heavily hit by drought. However, almost half of existing water schemes, most constructed before 1981, were in need of rehabilitation. Water from standpipes is free to rural users ("no one should be denied access to water necessary to meet basic needs for lack of ability to pay") but a "block" system (see earlier) operates for water delivered through private connections.

In the national plan, government hoped to clear the waiting list for small village schemes by 1993/94. But with the number of settlements gaining village status all the time and larger rural villages growing rapidly, water supply systems can no longer cope with increased demand. This will necessitate major rehabilitation and/or expansion of existing works over the plan period.

A further problem is that 35% of Botswana's population lives in scattered rural settlements too small to be included in the RVWSP. Their population is likely to increase to 518 000 by the year 2000. The Lands Area Water Supply Study will attempt to define the appropriate role for government in this area. It will involve promoting the development of appropriate technologies, eg, solar-powered and hand pumps, and the provision of exten-

sion services to disseminate the information.

Kenya

In 1974 the government drew up a master plan aimed at providing every household with potable water to within 4 km by the year 2000. Thirteen years later in 1987, 377 projects (boreholes, dams, pipes and furrows) were operational, 350 were being implemented and 200 planned. But the number of people served was still only 26% (4,9 million) of the total rural population. Thus, in its *National Development Plan 1989-1993*, the government wanted to increase this proportion to 50% (11,1 million).³⁷ But to realize its original goal by the year 2000, when the rural population would be 25 million, would necessitate increasing the water supply at least fivefold over the 13-year period, an almost unattainable goal.

Kenya and Tanzania are good examples of the problems arising from inappropriate policies and projects on the part of donors, however well meaning their efforts may be. Sweden, through Sida, among 30 other donors, has been a major contributor to Kenya's development aid.³⁸ In the late 1960s it was instrumental in launching a rural water supply programme. By 1980 construction, particularly of diesel-run piped supplies, had consumed 75% of the contributions in areas of high agricultural potential and above-average income levels. Numerous disagreements with the government's Ministry of Water – among them that the ministry never allocated enough funds for operation and maintenance and that the poor were largely excluded – led to Sida's redirecting its efforts in 1980. New facilities were sharply reduced and funds went to preventing further deterioration of the system.

Overall, however, half of the projects established continued to operate poorly. Much of the water was lost or unaccounted for; only a small proportion of the population covered by the rural schemes actually had access to water at communal points; the system itself deteriorated since the technology was beyond the capacity of local personnel and Kenya's financial means; and it was mainly the better-

off that benefited. In 1986 a further redirection of Sida's activities saw it turn from a nationwide programme to geographically focused activities and to experiments in local community participation.

Finland commenced the support of a water supply programme in western Kenya in 1975.³⁹ The area is wholly rural and the people (1 million in the late 1980s) are predominantly farmers. The goal, by 2005, is to supply a water-point (protected springs, hand-pump wells and boreholes) within 1 km for every 200 persons and their livestock. The objectives include the establishment of a village-level maintenance system using low-cost hand-pumps, the provision of simple health education and the promotion of local self-reliance and community involvement. Traditionally, since they are the managers of water systems in the area, women have been trained as pump attendants and take charge of maintenance at the water-points. Compared with Sida's earlier efforts, this project, based on a simpler technology, community participation and affordability has proved to be a more viable one.

Tanzania

Sida's experience in Tanzania has been much the same as in Kenya.⁴⁰ Its rural water supply programme, commenced in 1965 and assisted by other donors, was expected to provide the entire rural population with free piped water by 1991, largely in association with the ujamaa villagization policy of Nyerere. Clearly, the plan was unrealistic and by 1984 less than 12% of the rural population had access to safe drinking water. This proportion it is believed had declined by the end of the 1980s.

The diesel-run piped facilities were inappropriate technically and economically. Training to manage the system proved inadequate and diesel fuel was expensive. Sida insisted that the supply of water to consumers should be free but this was beyond the means of the government. The position was reversed in 1980 when Sida appreciated that the financial support of consumers was essential. Health benefits from the scheme have not been what was anticipated and,

as in Kenya, it has been mainly the better-off farmers, traders and civil servants who profited.

In 1984 Sida shifted its emphasis to rehabilitating existing installations, establishing shallow wells and hand-pumps, encouraging local participation and health-related projects, and to keeping recurrent costs at a level affordable to consumers and local authorities.

South Africa

For all its wealth South Africa's record, with some exceptions, in providing its poorer rural population with safe water and sanitation has not been particularly meritorious. Only 53% of the 16,5 million people living in rural areas in 1990 had access to clean water and only 14% to adequate sanitation.⁴¹ It is estimated that 30 000 children died from illnesses resulting from these inadequacies in 1993.⁴² South Africa's new government of national unity through its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) aims, among other objectives, to spend up to R13 billion towards redressing these inadequacies over the next few years. About 12 million people, urban and rural, are still in need of these facilities.

The cost of piped supplies to poor communities, especially in scattered localities, is unaffordable. The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) therefore "has shifted its emphasis in these areas to small water schemes, such as spring protection, boreholes and small dams for villages where community participation and 'ownership' of the project is ensured through the democratic processes managed by village water committees".⁴³

A contrasting example is the Umgeni Water Board, one of a number of similar authorities in South Africa and the largest catchment-based water undertaking in Southern Africa.⁴⁴ From a string of large dams, reservoirs and purification works it supplies piped water in bulk to the metropolitan areas of Durban and Pietermaritzburg and to other organizations as well as distributing piped water to communal standpipes and to some institutions in the heavily populated rural periphery. In 1994 the Board's area of responsibility was enlarged from 7 000 km² to

24 000 km². Over 90% (3,5 million) of people in the added area live in rural communities.

A Water Plan 2025 embodies a Rural Areas Water and Sanitation Plan aimed at supplying safe water and sanitation to all living in established areas within its sphere of jurisdiction by 2005. In all, some 200 000 people are served by current rural schemes and an additional 200 000 recently received drought relief from groundwater resources.

As in other countries contamination of water from animal and human faeces is a perennial problem. Provision of sanitation in rural areas is more difficult than supplying water but good progress is being made on certain pilot and schools projects, particularly in educating communities about the relationship between contamination of water sources and water-borne diseases. A high priority of the Board's policy is "community liaison, empowerment and effective management" of its projects. Funds for development are raised from the Board's own resources and on the capital market while operating costs are recovered from the urban and rural communities served.

Conclusion

The provision of clean water and adequate sanitation in the countries of Southern and Eastern Africa has seen both success and failure. Malawi's gravity-fed piped system is an example of the former and Tanzania's diesel-powered system an example of the latter. National action committees, set up as part of the UN's IDWSSD, and an enhanced role on the part of donors encouraged the expansion of the facilities during the 1980s. But the available funds were never enough to meet the demand coming off a very low base and from a rapidly growing population. Moreover, widespread drought in the 1980s and early 1990s and political instability in certain countries saw funds diverted to famine relief and to the military sector. Nevertheless, some countries, learning from experience, have found the right ingredients for successful water and sanitation provision and are moving forward steadily, if slowly, towards a

more satisfying and healthier quality of life for their rural populations.

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Prospects of increasing regional cooperation

A South African perspective

Dr Erich Leistner, Resident Research Fellow at the Africa Institute of South Africa, considers the prospects of growing cooperation in the region.*

THE government of President Nelson Mandela is committed to close economic and other ties with neighbouring countries on the basis of equity, mutual benefit and non-domination. Informed public opinion in South Africa generally supports this approach which clearly is in the Republic's own interest.

South African attitudes towards closer regional ties

Apart from an underlying sense of solidarity, the government feels morally obliged towards those countries that have supported the South African liberation movements in their struggle against the apartheid dispensation.¹ Enlightened self-interest, too, indicates that South Africa needs economically and politically stable neighbours because:

- Africa generally and Southern Africa in particular, are important markets for its exports of manufactured products;
- favourable business conditions in neighbouring countries benefit South Africa in that many foreign commercial interests use the country as bridgehead for their activities in the region;
- the support that South Africa can expect to receive from organizations such as the European Union

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and the World Bank is influenced by its willingness to cooperate with neighbouring countries;

- South Africa will increasingly have to rely on neighbouring countries to supplement its water resources and power supplies;
- unsettled conditions in nearby countries directly affect South Africa through streams of refugees, the spreading of diseases, the smuggling of arms and narcotics; and
- the outside world tends to assess South Africa's future prospects in the light of trends and events elsewhere in the region.

Domestic issues naturally occupy pride of place for the South African government, and it loses no opportunity to emphasize that implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is its uppermost concern. The RDP is the blueprint for the transformation of South African society and the socioeconomic upliftment of the disadvantaged groups of the population.

For the mass of recently enfranchised South Africans, regional issues tend to be remote, though there are signs that the massive inflow of – mainly unskilled – workseekers from other African countries is increasingly resented.

Organized labour in South Africa is concerned about the possibility that the country's high labour costs may induce manufacturers to relocate to low-wage neighbouring countries. This

appears to lie behind the idea of a Southern African Labour Charter propagated by Cosatu (the Confederation of South African Trade Unions).²

Whereas, basically, South African attitudes towards closer economic links with neighbouring countries are favourable, serious public debate about actual measures has hardly begun. Political considerations no doubt played an important role in the country's decision to join SADC.

An effort to initiate public debate concerning appropriate forms of regional economic interaction will soon be made, based on the African Development Bank's three-volume study on economic integration in Southern Africa.

Practical considerations bearing on South African regional policy

Apart from the constraints mentioned above, South Africa has to reckon with certain practical considerations bearing on its striving for closer regional ties.

- The country's economic wellbeing depends primarily on its ability to compete on world markets, and it would harm itself if regional obligations were to weaken its position in the rest of the world. (Its exports to African countries – approximately 90% to Southern Africa – represent about one-fifth of exports worldwide.)
- The Southern African region – including South Africa itself – is still

unsettled economically and politically and, at the present stage, economic integration might entail undue risks for the Republic.

- The appreciable disparities in income levels between South Africa and most of its neighbours will unavoidably make it difficult to agree on common objectives. Linked to that is the other countries' concern that South Africa could dominate regional arrangements; disregard their interests; and, on top of that, attract foreign investment and aid at their expense.
- Whereas the other ten members of SADC are highly dependent on financial and technical aid from overseas donors, South Africa wants to avoid financial dependence, especially on the Bretton Woods institutions, at all costs.
- South Africa must carefully nurture its manpower and financial resources if it is to have any chance to implement its RDP; it will be unable to devote a substantial portion of these resources to regional cooperation.
- Under present conditions, South Africa could not agree to the free movement of labour in terms of integration arrangements because even now, illegal immigration from other African countries is causing it considerable problems.
- South Africa has not yet succeeded in formulating a long-term strategy for its own economic development, and hence cannot, at this stage, commit itself to far-reaching structural changes in pursuance of regional integration.
- Negotiations on the restructuring of the Customs Union between South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland have just begun and may require quite some time to conclude. South Africa is also engaged in trade negotiations with other countries in the region. Until these negotiations reach some finality, more comprehensive trade integration schemes will be difficult to envisage.

Some of the foregoing points will be taken further below.

Delimitation of geographical area of cooperation

From a South African viewpoint, it seems appropriate to regard the eleven member countries of SADC as the basic focus of cooperation, but the concept of "the region" must be flexible and pragmatic. For South Africa this is particularly important –

- because its commercial interests extend well beyond SADC and include numerous other African countries as well as the Indian Ocean islands of Mauritius, Madagascar, the Comoros, the Seychelles and Réunion; and
- because it is widely held that under present-day conditions functional cooperation is more appropriate for Southern Africa than market integration, and that a flexible geographical pattern of "variable geometry" is to be preferred to a rigid definition of the region.

Strategic considerations

General considerations

A document entitled "A vision for economic integration and cooperation in Southern Africa" was issued by the RSA Department of Trade and Industry in March 1994. It postulates³ that economic relations between the various countries of Southern Africa should be such that the links –

- are mutually beneficial (a "positive-sum game" for all);
- promote economic development in all countries;
- do not aggravate the economic dominance of any country or countries;
- promote interdependence;
- facilitate intra-regional trade and investment flows; and
- strengthen the competitiveness of individual countries and the region as a whole in the global economy.

The document stresses that the mechanisms for cooperation should be based on what is practically achievable; that all participants should be better off inside a grouping than outside; that incremental, step-by-step progress is preferable to grand de-

signs; and that some countries might be able to move ahead more quickly together than with the region as a whole (that is, a "variable geometry" approach). The following is quoted from the document:⁴

South Africa realises the fears of other countries in the region that they might be swamped by its larger economy, but it has neither the desire to portray itself as the engine of growth nor the capacity to act as the engine of growth for the region because of major domestic economic challenges which it will have to meet.

Sector coordination or market integration?

In the light of what the African Development Bank (ADB) calls Africa's "dismal experience with integration",⁵ it is remarkable that SADC in August 1992 formally committed itself to that very objective.

While, obviously, the South African government is broadly supportive of SADC's objectives, the following considerations let it appear unlikely that the government will readily embark on a course of comprehensive market integration.

South African experience with *market integration* is confined to the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). With antecedents going back into the last century, SACU has proved a viable undertaking. Despite complaints about its functioning and its impact on their economies, the smaller members clearly see more benefit in staying in than in leaving. As mentioned above, the CU agreement is currently being renegotiated in an attempt to overcome the difficulties experienced both by South Africa and its partners.

For South Africa, the BLNS countries are in effect a captive market. In 1992, for example, its exports to the BLNS countries amounted to R12,93 billion, a figure more than double that for exports to the rest of Africa (R5,98 bn) and equal to about 15% of total South African exports (R82,13 bn). About a quarter (by value) of South African manufactured exports are estimated to go to SACU member countries.

It is a matter of debate whether South Africa would lose a significant

share of this market to competitors if SACU were to be terminated or merged into a more comprehensive free-trade area. The South African government has not yet taken a firm stand on these issues but one can reasonably assume that it will seek to maintain SACU while ironing out its problems as far as possible. The reason for saying this is, firstly, that South Africa will not readily sacrifice this important market on the altar of broader regional integration, and, secondly, because Customs Union revenue is vitally important to the BLNS countries.

Detailed study is needed to establish the trade benefits that South Africa could expect from participation in market integration as envisaged by SADC (or PTA/Comesa). It may be borne in mind that even without the advantage of preferential conditions and despite the OAU injunction against trade with South Africa, exports from SACU – effectively the RSA – to the rest of Africa rose more than four-fold between 1987 and 1993 (from R1,62 bn to R6,83 bn).

While it is widely assumed that in an integrated market, South African exports would ruin many producers in its partner countries, there are also South African producers of clothing and textiles, footwear, furniture, leather goods, fruit juices, sugar, etc who need protection against products from other African countries.

Experience in the region and worldwide shows how difficult it is for a group of countries to make across-the-board tariff reductions and to dismantle non-tariff barriers to trade.

All this explains why South Africans approach market integration with circumspection. Prevailing opinion in the RSA favours an incremental, pragmatic approach to integration, beginning with sectoral coordination and proceeding to closer links only once a solid basis of cooperation and trust has been established.

In the meantime, trade relations between South Africa and countries in the region are to a large extent governed by bilateral agreements. There is a school of thought in the RSA which feels that this approach complicates trade relations and that arrangements should rather be made

on a uniform regional basis. However, having regard to existing trade patterns, this approach would probably create considerable problems.

SADC in particular has laid a basis on which *sector cooperation and coordination* can be further expanded and intensified, provided there is the political will. South Africa is already cooperating with countries in the region in respect of transport, telecommunications, power, water supplies, river basin management, veterinary services, geological services, human health, and so forth. In these and other fields, the country will certainly strive to be a helpful partner.

Sectoral cooperation is seen as holding greater promise of success than market integration, mainly because it impinges less on national sovereignty, is less likely to harm private business interests, and tends to prove beneficial to all participants from an early stage. This is in line with the view of the ADB:

Progress in coordination and cooperation in all these areas can proceed almost immediately. It is not contingent upon, nor should it await, progress being made on a more intensive agenda of regional market integration.⁶

South Africans also agree with the Bank that coordination in each sector should proceed as fast as circumstances within that sector allow without attempting to regulate or control the pace of progress depending on what happens in other sectors.⁷ This is referred to as “multispeed coordination” across different sectors.

To sum up. While the South African government has not yet spelled out in detail its policy with respect to regional cooperation and integration, prevailing opinion favours a two-track approach to closer intra-regional economic ties: that is, sectoral cooperation and coordination as the immediate objective, and market integration as the more distant objective.

South African views concerning cooperation in specific sectors

Having dealt with broad issues so far, it may be useful to examine, from a

South African perspective, the benefits and problems associated with closer regional interaction in some of the more important sectors. Naturally, each sector requires a much more detailed analysis than is possible in the present context.⁸

Agriculture

Even though South Africa's agricultural potential is less favourable than that of countries such as Zambia or Zimbabwe, it shares many physical features with the rest of the region, not least among them the recurrent droughts. Regional cooperation would be beneficial for all in respect of food security, with surpluses and deficits being evened out on a regional basis.

Cooperation would also be beneficial for all in respect of technical and developmental matters such as research, combating pests and diseases affecting animals and plants, seed control, breeding methods, exchange of experience or training. South Africa can learn from the experience with rural development elsewhere. Closer cooperation would probably lead to further growth in its regional market for tractors, agricultural implements, tools and chemicals.

Mining

Mining operations in the region are largely in the hand of private companies, many of them huge international enterprises. Even so, a regional approach would make it easier for mining companies to assess and exploit the regional potential in a more rational manner. While the development of a regional framework for mining has to be seen as a long-term proposition, certain measures towards that end can be taken at once.

All countries can benefit by exchanging information concerning changes in mining legislation, investment codes, depletion policies, mineral taxes and royalties, on new technologies and financing arrangements for expanding exploration and production. Information on exploration and mining activities can be more widely disseminated.

Manufacturing

African, and particularly Southern African, markets absorb approximate-

ly one-third of South Africa's total exports of manufactured goods. Preferential trade arrangements extending the market for South African goods, would naturally be welcomed by exporters. A larger market would entail longer production-runs and lower unit costs. At the same time, as indicated above, there are those South African manufacturers whose survival depends on protection against imports from the region. Furthermore, there may also be those who, given the opportunity, would relocate their factories to neighbouring countries with less militant trade unions and lower wage levels.

Construction

Some of the major South African construction companies are already active in Southern African countries and stand to obtain more business under regional integration. Not only they, but also their counterparts in the region, would benefit from standardization of building and construction specifications, building materials, and the qualifications of technicians and engineers. Construction firms from neighbouring countries seem unlikely to pose a significant threat to South African firms on the latter's home ground.

Tourism, ecology and wildlife

Appreciable benefits can be expected to accrue to South Africa, no less than the rest of the region, from close cooperation in respect of tourism, ecology and wildlife. While South Africa attracts larger numbers of tourists and has the more developed tourist infrastructure, other countries in the region offer more spectacular natural features and a more "African" ambience. Many existing restraints would be eliminated and all countries would gain if one regional tourist organization were to be established and the region marketed as a package.

The attractiveness of the region can be enhanced by forming huge gameparks and nature reserves that straddle the borders of two or more countries. Again, this will benefit all involved.

Trade

The balance of advantage in regional trade in manufactured goods clearly

lies with South Africa. While the country's exports would grow under an integration arrangement, it could expect mounting pressure from regional trading partners to reduce its export surplus. However, South Africa itself produces many of the raw materials and virtually all the manufactured goods supplied by countries in the region. It will therefore have to reduce the surplus mainly by importing energy, water and certain agricultural products from the region.

Complex issues are inevitably raised by efforts at market integration. Beyond that, many problems associated with South African and BLNS membership of both SACU and SADC have still to be resolved. It is therefore unlikely that these countries will soon become full members in an expanded trade integration scheme.

Finance

In the absence of currency convertibility, measures to facilitate intra-regional payments would contribute towards increasing South African exports. South African commercial banks and insurance companies are already active in the region, but market integration would presumably expand considerably their scope and that of other South African financial institutions.

Transport and communications⁹

South Africa can expect considerable mutual benefits from increased cooperation in transport and communications. Its competitive advantage in supplying goods to the region lies in low delivered costs because of short delivery times and transport cost advantages over more distant overseas suppliers. This advantage would be enhanced if regional transport were to be improved through closer cooperation.

All countries would gain if there was better coordination between road and rail transport, and the two modes were able to compete effectively on the basis of full-cost recovery from users. Investment in roads could be reduced in all countries if the volume of heavy-vehicle traffic across borders could be reduced and the traffic instead be diverted to railways. This would require the establishment of a

regional railway authority to coordinate traffic, rolling stock and freight tariffs (as proposed by Spoornet some time ago).

The establishment of a regional airline would enable greater economics of scale to be achieved and more frequent services to be offered at the appropriate scale for each particular route. This would promote intra-regional business travel, and would certainly benefit the South African business sector. The lack of political will to give up loss-making national airlines is well known. (Some time ago, the secretary-general of the African Airlines Association, Mohammed Ahmed, suggested that joint buying of tyres, fuel, etc by several airlines may be a useful step on the route towards an ultimate merger.)¹⁰

Business in the region would be greatly facilitated by improved telephone and fax systems in South Africa's neighbouring countries, and the Republic can only gain from the closest possible cooperation in this regard.

Electric power¹¹

Most of South Africa's electric power – 88% – is generated by coal-fired thermal stations. The country's present power generating capacity is sufficient to meet projected increases in domestic demand up to the end of the century. Beyond that, South Africa may need to secure 1 000 to 1 500 MW of additional power generating capacity each year. It could continue to build its own power stations, either coal-fired or nuclear-powered, but this would have environmental implications and involve heavy capital outlays.

Neighbouring countries, however, have the potential to supply South Africa's future requirements at lower cost and with less environmental hazard. Most countries in the region could eventually become involved in power exports to the RSA. In addition, grid interconnection offers technical advantages – such as having to maintain lower reserve requirements for any given level of reliability – which should allow a reduction in the costs of electricity supplies.

Integration may be of benefit to South Africa's Eskom, which presum-

ably would play a leading role in extending the grid within the region, as well as to South African producers of relevant equipment. However, both Eskom and these manufacturers already seem to be in a reasonably strong position anyway.

Water

South Africa must increasingly look to neighbouring states to supplement its own limited water supplies. A beginning is being made by tapping Lesotho's rivers but serious thought is already being given to the Zambezi, the Kavango and other northern rivers.

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), the largest water development project ever undertaken in Southern Africa and one of the largest of its kind in the world, was launched in October 1986 by the governments of Lesotho and South Africa. It involves the harnessing of the water resources of the upper reaches of the Orange/Senqu River and transferring them to the Vaal Dam which is the principal source of water for southern Gauteng, South Africa's industrial heartland and foremost population concentration. When completed by the year 2020, the project will supply 70 cu m/sec – about half the 4 000 million cubic metres of water needed annually by the cities, factories, mines and farms drawing from the Vaal Dam. The project involves the building of five dams; the excavation of 225 km of tunnels; the construction of a hydro-electric power station; the construction or upgrading of 615 km of access roads; and the construction of bridges in difficult mountain terrain reaching to more than 2 500 m above sea level.

When the scheme is completed, Lesotho will earn a net income of some R202 million per year from the sale of water to South Africa; it will supply all the electric power Lesotho needs and which currently it has to buy from South Africa. Thousands of Basotho have found wage-earning employment during the construction phase. The new roads will make the highlands more accessible to their inhabitants and will encourage tourism to this scenically beautiful area by offering facilities for winter as well as water sports and other forms of recreation.

Earnings from the sale of water and electric power to South Africa will enable neighbouring countries to reduce their adverse balances of trade with the RSA.

Labour issues

Whereas the SADC countries have earlier this year signed a protocol in support of the free movement of labour, South Africa cannot contemplate labour market integration except perhaps in the SACU area. The integration of labour markets presumably would aggravate South Africa's serious unemployment situation even more than the current massive illegal inflow of unskilled workers.

In recent years, South Africa has gained by attracting skilled and trained people from other African countries, numbers of whom have taken professional posts at universities, hospitals, in the public service and business. However, intra-regional relations stand to suffer if South Africa continues to gain at the expense of countries that can ill afford to lose their high-level man- and womanpower.

Health, education and training

It is in South Africa's interest to cooperate closely with neighbouring countries in combating diseases that are endemic elsewhere in Africa, such as malaria, bilharzia, Aids, yellow fever or cholera, in order to prevent these diseases or their carriers from spreading into South Africa (where the country itself has to bear the full cost of dealing with them, as distinct from assisting campaigns in, and presumably paid by, neighbouring countries). Overseas tourists tend to avoid a country where serious health risks are known to exist.

Regional cooperation will enable South Africa to learn from the experience of neighbouring countries in respect of primary health care delivery, especially in rural areas.

In health as well as in education and training, economics of scale can be expected from cooperation in training, research and delivery of services.

Regional institutions

As is well known, Southern Africa is marked by a multiplicity of institutional

arrangements for regional cooperation and market integration. Clearly, it is counterproductive if countries belong to two or even three different regional organizations – SACU, SADC and PTA/Comesa – that practice, respectively aim at, market integration. Hence, according to the ADB, it is desirable to have one comprehensive regional framework embracing the various institutions.¹²

It remains to be seen what will emerge from efforts to harmonize the activities of SADC and PTA/Comesa. However, even if success is achieved, SADC's decentralized organizational structure will remain in place. In the ADB's view, SADC's "ineffective decentralization" should be replaced by centralized control over sectoral functions.¹³ Renegotiation of the SACU arrangement has begun only recently and quite some time may be needed to clarify future relations between SACU and SADC.

By joining SADC but not PTA/Comesa, the South African government has signalled that, apart from SACU, it accepts SADC as the principal organization for regional cooperation and market integration.

There is merit in the ADB's proposal that SADC's capacity be strengthened by means of a "regional macro-economic and policy coordination directorate – an 'economic think-tank' – to analyse and develop options for regional integration".¹⁴ Modelled on the Paris-based OECD (the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), this proposal should help to promote a more pragmatic approach to regional integration.

From a South African perspective, there is also merit in the ADB suggestion that the new SADC structure should be regarded as an integral part of the PTA/Comesa framework, though with its own distinct identity and selective institutional autonomy; and that PTA/Comesa "...should continue as the agenda-setting authority on trade liberalisation and the evolution of a common market".¹⁵

At present, SACU is the region's only fully operational integration arrangement. As indicated above, this arrangement is of considerable importance to all participants and cannot be lightly abandoned. According to the

background document issued by the South African Department of Trade and Industry earlier this year, SACU could form the base around which there could simultaneously be:

- an economic union between South Africa and Lesotho;
- a common market between that economic union, Swaziland and Namibia;
- a free-trade area between SACU and Zimbabwe;
- a preferential trade area between the free-trade area and the rest of the region.¹⁶

Whatever institutional framework emerges, it is important, firstly, that it allows speedy implementation of at least some measures that will benefit all participating countries; and, secondly, that regional interaction is based on equity, mutual benefit and non-domination.

Conclusion

It is generally appreciated that South Africa's own daunting socioeconomic backlogs do not allow it to directly assist neighbouring countries on a major scale. However, to the extent that the Republic succeeds in revitalizing its own economy, the economies of neighbouring countries will automatically benefit too because the business and investment climate through-

out the region is affected by the state of affairs in South Africa.

A flourishing South African economy would mean growing markets for the products of its neighbours. It would also mean more South African tourists visiting the region; South African business becoming more inclined to invest in neighbouring countries; and the whole region becoming more interesting for overseas business and investors.

The London *Economist* has pointed out that the East-Asian "tigers" were helped by the proximity of Japan when they broke through from poverty to relative wealth and that, similarly, the rest of Africa could be helped to make a fresh start if post-apartheid South Africa emerges as a regional leader.¹⁷

There is no guarantee that South Africa will be equally successful in reactivating its economy as it was in changing to a new political order. However, President Mandela's government is determined to follow economic policies that will make South Africa a winning nation. If that is achieved, the country's national interest will see to it that the rest of the region flourishes with it.

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Rapid population growth

Effects on the social infrastructures of Southern Africa

Prof Johan D Smith, visiting Research Fellow at the Africa Institute of South Africa, considers some of the implications of rapid population growth in the Southern African region.

POPULATION is about people – their numbers, circumstances and wellbeing. We are therefore approaching a global issue that greatly affects the social, economic and cultural development of every nation on earth.

FOR hundreds of thousands of years, the earth's *homo sapiens* population grew at a snail's pace. Far over a million years passed before it reached 1 billion; that was at the beginning of the last century. But then the pace quickened. The second billion was added in the next 130 years, the third in the following 30, and the fourth in a mere 15 years. The current total stands of some 5,4 billion persons. Although population growth rates are declining in some countries, they are still extraordinarily high worldwide: during this present decade about 100 million people will be added to our planet's human population each year. Over 90% of this growth is taking place in the developing world – in those countries least equipped to sustain the increasing demands for food, clean water, health care, housing, education and other necessities of life.¹ The costs of rapid population growth are, moreover, cumulative. The large number of births, now, make the task of slowing population growth later more difficult, as today's children become tomorrow's new parents.

It is clear to many authorities that steeply rising population growth and "development" make poor bedfellows.

According to the World Bank,² there are three reasons why rapid population growth *slows* development. First, it complicates the awkward choice between higher consumption now, immediately, and the long-term investment needed to make possible a more generous and sustainable consumption in the future. Economic growth depends on investment. But if consumption is already low, the resources available for investment will be limited. Second, increases in population threaten what is already a precarious balance between natural resources and people. Third, rapid increases in population make it hard to manage the adjustments that accompany and promote economic and social change. The rapid growth of cities and a rapid population growth in rural areas, too, pose serious management problems and threaten permanent environmental damage.

We may note at this point that rapid population growth exerts a significant and direct impact on economic development – the size of the labour force, high unemployment and low per capita income. The aim of this article, however, is to look at the effects of rapid population growth, as seen in Southern Africa, on social infrastructure. And it is to this that I now turn.

Africa and Southern Africa

Between 1980 and 1991, Africa's population grew by 3,1%, while its GDP

grew by 2,1%. Africa holds a number of unenviable records: the world's highest fertility rate; the world's highest mortality rate; and the greatest total number of persons caught in the Aids epidemic. The demographic factor in Africa's development is a crucial one, not only because of the problem of pressure on resources and the untoward effects upon the environment, but because people are the most important agents of development: it is their health, education and overall wellbeing that are at stake; and it is only they who, in the last resort, can remedy matters – an unhealthy person with inappropriate or inadequate education cannot, it is plain, work for socioeconomic transformation.³

Africa shows the fastest rate of population growth yet recorded for any part of the world, and it is the only continent whose rate of population growth, it is projected, will continue to rise well into the next century. Out of an estimated 600 to 650 million people in Africa, about 200 million people are classified as the poorest in the world. By the year 2000, this figure is expected to rise to 265 million. In the light of Africa's scarce and limited resources,⁴ it will be almost impossible to feed, to house, or to educate such a rapidly growing population, or, plainly, to assure them good health of any acceptable standard.

In Southern Africa, about 50 million people suffer extreme poverty. And in many countries the implementation of

structural adjustment programmes has led to cutbacks in social spending which have worsened the position of the poor. The population growth of this subregion is among the highest in the world, and more than 40% of the population are under the age of 14 years. Unmet basic needs are spreading fast and dependency ratios are very high. The region is also characterized by very high rates of urbanization and migration – urbanization generally ranging between 6 and 9% – and cross-border migration brought about largely by economic decline, guerrilla wars and political turmoil. The region is further plagued by high unemployment, low per capita incomes, high illiteracy rates and school drop-out rates, and by serious threats to health.⁵

Population growth rates in Southern Africa

From table 1 it can be seen that the countries of Southern Africa generally have very high annual population growth rates. The world annual population growth rate for the period 1960–1991 and the estimated one for 1991–2000 are 1,9 and 1,6%. The corresponding figures for all developing countries are 2,3 and 1,9%.

Not unexpectedly, the fertility rates of the countries in Southern Africa are significantly higher than the 3,8 figure for all developing countries and the 3,4 world figure. The contraceptive use rates of these countries are lower than the 49% for all developing countries and the 52% world figure.

Urbanization rates, too, for Southern African countries are very high. World urbanization rates for the period 1960–1991 and 1991–2000 (estimated) are 2,9 and 2,8%. The figures for the world's developing countries are 4% for both periods. It is from such statistics that the serious population problem haunting the countries of Southern Africa can be better understood.

Population growth and education

Population growth has a direct bearing on the development of a nation's education. Large increases in the

Table 1: Population profiles of selected Southern African countries

	Botswana	Malawi	Namibia	Zimbabwe	
Estimated population (million)					
1960	0,5	3,5	0,6	3,8	
1992	1,4	9,1	1,5	10,4	
2000	1,7	12,6	2,0	13,2	
Annual population growth rate					
1960–1991 (%)	3,1	3,4	2,8	3,2	
1991–2000 (%)	2,9	2,6	3,1	2,8	
Population doubling rate					
	2015	2012	2013	2014	
Fertility rate					
1991		5,2	7,6	6,0	5,5
Birth rate (per 1 000 of the population)					
1991		38,7	55,6	46	40,3
Death rate (per 1 000 of the population)					
1991		11,4	19,3	10	9,2
Population density (per square km)					
1991		2	84	2	26
Contraceptive prevalence rate					
1990 (%)		33	7	26	43
Urban population annual growth rate					
1960–1991 (%)		13,5	6,5	–	5,9
1991–2000 (%)		7,9	6,5	5,4	5,4

Sources: 6, 7 and 8

school-age population, reinforced by the demand for universal and free education, have led to a situation in which, in absolute terms, the number of children finding themselves outside any educational system is growing rapidly. At the same time, the high rates of population growth are resulting in high dependency ratios and a relatively small labour force having to provide for those of school-going age. Thus it is that high population growth rates leave little room for improving the real quality of education provided, since extra resources must perforce be used to accommodate the annually increasing pupil intake. Quite apart from the problem of having to provide for the steadily increasing number of pupils, there is also concern about the adequacy of existing educational systems to match up to the task of preparing pupils of both sexes for the life they are most likely to lead.

Expanding school intake figures also have implications for the provision of teachers, classrooms and educational

materials. Higher enrolment figures in themselves of course raise the number of additional teachers needed, while the countries of Southern Africa would like to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio and improve their teachers' subject qualifications and teaching skills. Before briefly surveying, country by country, some of the difficulties encountered in Southern Africa, it might be useful to glance at strategies and statistics recorded elsewhere.

Singapore is a success story from which the countries of Southern Africa may learn. Towards the end of the 1950s, fertility in Singapore began a rapid decline. This led to a decrease in primary school entrants, and by the end of the 1960s it became possible to concentrate on improving access to secondary and higher education. In addition, expenditure per pupil rose considerably as equipment and buildings, as well as teacher training standards, were improved. The money made available for education now went into raising the *quality* of the system rather than expanding it.⁹ It is

relevant for both the Singapore and South African experience that the declining fertility in Korea is reflected in pupil enrolments, which declined by 13,1% after 10 years, 36,6% after 20 years and 76,5% after 30 years. The advantages, in terms of expenditure, are somewhat smaller.¹⁰

The costs of raising educational and health standards thus depend heavily on population growth. The faster the population grows, the more is the mere maintenance of existing standards likely to cost. One study finds that population growth is likely to contribute between 30 and 50% to the total increase in educational costs in most developing countries over the decades that lie ahead.¹¹

As I write, the education system in Malawi is in a state of crisis. Rapid population growth has resulted in more children than ever seeking places in schools already hard pressed by the financial constraints arising from the structural adjustment programme. Furthermore, the quality of education has fallen as classrooms have become overcrowded and teaching materials scarce. Drop-out and repetition rates have also increased over time. Not only are there real shortages of desks, furnishings and textbooks, but the training of teachers has simply not kept pace with increasing enrolment figures: the teacher-pupil ratio is currently about 1:68. In certain areas the ratio is 1:88, peaking in urban areas at 1:120. There is also limited access to secondary education. Conclusion: Malawi's rapid population growth ensures that the goal of universal primary education will remain unattainable for the foreseeable future. Merely to maintain the current enrolment ratio would mean that the present number of places at the country's schools will need to increase by 52%. It was calculated in 1992 that for every young Malawian child to be in primary school by the year 2000 would require the number of school places to be increased by almost 200%, or by 8,5% annually.¹²

In 1984, Zambia's primary education system was experiencing a shortfall of 21 000 places. In 1988 the deficit still stood at 15 000. The shortage was acutely felt in the larger centres, Lusaka, Ndola and Kitwe, where

places were only sufficient for 66% of seven-year-olds. In some areas double and triple sessions were introduced. Large classes of 60 and even 90 pupils impinged on the quality of education. Rapid population growth and the consequent pressures on enrolment reached a point at which a significant number of pupils finishing grade 4 were not able to proceed to grade 5 owing to a lack of facilities. This failure to secure admittance worsened as the young Zambian child moved up the school into the higher grades. Only about a fifth of Zambia's children in grade seven manage to obtain places in secondary schools. And the progression rate from grades 10 to 11, up to 1984, stood at no less than 49%. Here also pupils face over-enrolment, a lack of chemicals, textbooks and teaching aids, and inadequate staffing.¹³

In Botswana, the position is less acute. Nevertheless, rapid population growth has meant that education facilities do lag behind, and it is sometimes difficult to find school places. Some schools have instituted double sessions – and some classes are simply held out of doors. To accommodate increased enrolment between 1991 and 1997 about 2 500 new classrooms will be needed. Botswana's backlog in classrooms will thus remain high; and may indeed worsen after 1997 when a much more numerous generation of children will have to be accommodated.

In Namibia, there was a shortage of 3 000 classrooms in 1987 and schools are still woefully short of facilities such as libraries, laboratories and sports equipment. In Swaziland the high population growth rate and the relatively youthful population profile lay heavy burdens on the country's resources. In Zimbabwe, the rapid increase in schools and pupils has led to critical problems. There has been a severe shortage of textbooks and other essential educational materials, and difficulties have been encountered in staffing the country's emergent school network with qualified teachers.

What is the situation in South Africa? Reliable estimates suggest that to achieve an average pupil:classroom ratio of 40:1 at primary and 35:1 at

secondary level, an additional 50 000 classrooms would have to be built to serve the existing school-going population. Many more would be needed to absorb the estimated 850 000 school-age children currently altogether outside the system.¹⁴

The implication of this is that upgrading a country's human resources through education can be achieved more quickly and at less cost if the birth rate is lowered. *Per contra*, an increasing population, without the means to acquire a decent, relevant education, sets the nation on the slippery downward slope to underdevelopment.

Population growth and health

An African mother's chances of sickness or death during pregnancy and childbirth are high; but they are lower if she has had fewer than five births and is aged between 20 and 35. A child's chances of being born healthy and of surviving the first few years of life are lower in Africa than elsewhere; but they are significantly increased if children in the family are born at least two years apart and if the mother is between 20 and 35 years old. A better spacing and timing of births, and a reduction in the number of births, would reduce infant and child mortality.¹⁵

The under-five mortality rate in Mozambique and Lesotho is significantly higher than the 104 for all developing countries. The daily kilojoule supply in all four countries is significantly lower than the 107% for all developing countries. The population per doctor average for all developing countries is 5 080 and for the world it is 4 090; while figures for the countries of Southern Africa are significantly higher than these benchmarks. Especially concerning access to safe water and sanitation, Southern Africa figures are significantly lower than the 68% and 55% averages for the world's developing countries.

Looking at the broad picture, the rapid population growth in the countries of Southern Africa is leading and will lead to millions of people not having access to health services, safe water and sanitation. Furthermore, there is a disparity in the distribution

Table 2: Selected health variables in four Southern African countries

	Botswana	Lesotho	Mozambique	Zimbabwe
Infant mortality (per 1 000 live births)				
1992	35	79	147	47
Under five mortality rate (per 1 000 live births)				
1990	85	129	297	87
Daily kilojoule supply (as % of requirements)				
1990	97	93	77	94
Population per doctor				
1992	5 556	18 610	37 970	7 180
Population with access to:				
Health services (1990)	86%	80%	30%	71%
Safe water (1990)	56%	46%	22%	36%
Sanitation (1990)	38%	22%	19%	42%

Sources: 16 and 17

of health facilities between rural and urban areas. And whether we make allowance for their uneven distribution or not, the quality of the services rendered is unsatisfactory.

In Malawi there are shortages of essential drugs, much overcrowding in most hospitals, and an acute need for more trained doctors, registered nurses and medical assistants. The utilization of health facilities is high. Immunization coverage is said to be close to 80%; children under five visit some or other point in the health system not less than four times a year; and 85% of pregnant women have at least one ante-natal examination. The government's National Health Plan for the years 1987–1996 outlines the basic minimum staff requirements for 1995. These indicate a need for the following percentage increases: doctors (27); laboratory technicians (60); clinical staff (74); nursing staff (95); dental staff (139); and pharmacists (370). Considering the rate of population growth, these projections will need to be seriously revised if improvements in the quality of services provided are to be realized.¹⁸

Population growth, urbanization and housing

In most countries of Southern Africa rapid urban growth has undoubtedly

caused serious administrative difficulties. Urban life requires a complicated network of services – housing, water, traffic, sewerage disposal and so forth – that cannot quickly be scaled up to keep abreast of a rapidly growing population. The results are familiar: unemployment, substandard housing, deteriorating public services, congestion, pollution and crime.

Housing the rapidly growing populations of the countries of Southern Africa will be increasingly difficult in the decades to come. Both urban and rural areas already suffer from a serious shortage of adequate housing. In most of these countries large percentages of the population live in rural areas; yet governments usually give lower development priority to these rural areas. In spite of its relatively favourable treatment, however, housing in urban areas fares no better. Houses are certainly being put up at a greater rate than it is in rural areas; but against this welcome provision of housing in urban centres must be set the fact that it is precisely in these places that the population is increasing more rapidly than elsewhere as a result of migration.

In Namibia, the housing backlog in 1991 was 40 000 units. The World Bank¹⁹ estimated the total housing need for 1990–1995 at 65 000. In Zimbabwe, the Harare City Council have

86 000 families on their waiting list for accommodation. And the list is reportedly growing at the rate of 2 000 per month. In the country as a whole, 660 000 dwellings – more than 100 000 a year – are required (so ran a 1994 report) to house all the country's homeless.²⁰

It is important to bear in mind that we can never expect the major impact of any favourable change in population trends upon the resources devoted to housing to make itself felt in the immediate future. On the contrary. Housing needs are largely a function of family formation and family formation rates cannot be much affected by fertility reduction until about 20 years after the latter's onset.²¹ Nothing stresses the urgency of securing reduced fertility in these countries as does this sobering 20-year-delay figure.

Population growth and the role of women

Early programmes of population control in the Third World tended to assume that poverty could be reduced by limiting societal fertility through the wide dissemination of contraceptive technology and knowledge. The recognition that many of these programmes did not work led to research into the factors underlying fertility behaviour. Rural poverty, old-age security and the economic role of children then emerged as major causes of high fertility rates. Only in the middle 1970s did there come a recognition of the need to move away from narrow family planning programmes to strategies that located these programmes within a broader perspective of improving health and education. It has also recently been argued that poverty and female literacy are prime breeders of high fertility.²²

Now, it is precisely in many developing countries that women remain (legally and socially) most completely dependent upon husbands and parents. And their work is extremely heavy. Women are responsible for subsistence agriculture, child care, cooking, cleaning, food processing, water and fuel supplies and food production. Under the terms of customary marriage agreements, a man buys

from his bride's family the labour of his bride and that of the couple's future offspring. Children, therefore, affirm a woman's place within her marriage and ensure her access to land: in summary, her social standing rises with the number of children she bears.²³

At present, almost twice as many women as men are illiterate; and the differential is growing. An estimated 65% of the world's illiterates are women. Women and girls are less likely to enter school in the first place, and more likely to drop out as a result of social and economic pressures.²⁴ Illiterate girls tend to marry young and produce many offspring. Here lie some of the reasons behind the maternal and infant mortality figures that leave so much to be desired in most of Southern Africa. It is highly relevant that in the formulation and implementation of development plans, women play scarcely any role at all.

From table 3 it can be seen that fertility rates seem to rise among women with one to three years of education. Furthermore, these children born to women with at least a basic education enjoy higher survival rates owing to better nutrition and sanitation, thus pushing up fertility rate figures in the short term. From table 3, however, it can plainly be seen that birthrates fall among all groups in the long term as general levels of education rise.

The World Bank²⁶ suggests that where women are excluded from secondary education, the average woman

has seven children; but that if 40% of women go to a secondary school, the average drops to three. Bringing up children, like most human activities, has an opportunity cost – and most of it falls on mothers. So, educating women makes a greater difference in reducing fertility than does educating men. Further, educated mothers, by having fewer and healthier babies, quickly reduce health expenditure. Due²⁷ stresses that women as mothers are the first teachers of young children, thus passing on their education (with appropriate encouragement) to the next generation.

Any country, we must conclude, that is serious about slowing population growth must acknowledge that improving woman's status within its borders is a crucial step in its development. The following points must be looked into to achieve this goal:

- Governments must promote the participation of women in decision-making during the planning and implementation of development; and must make gender equity a central focus in development.
- Legislation must be passed to ensure women equal rights with men and equal access to information, technical and economic resources and opportunities and social amenities. No form of discrimination whatsoever against women can be acceptable or, indeed, tolerated. Legislation must protect women against current unacceptable attitudes.

- Governments must guarantee women certain rights of inheritance, marriage, divorce, litigation, and property.
- Almost continuous pregnancy and frequently repeated childbirth are exhausting, and ultimately debilitating and dangerous, for the vast majority of women. The demand for good, safe, cheap and readily available methods of contraception is, for them, clearly a major priority.
- Job opportunities and higher wages for women outside the home must also be a priority. The availability of income-earning opportunities can persuade young women to delay marriage by enabling them to become economically self-sufficient. Pushing women, however, into low-level, impermanent jobs will not exert a noticeable effect on either their status in society or their fertility.
- Public health programmes must be expanded to ensure a better level of nutrition for both parent and child. This will lead to a reduction in infant mortality and possibly lower fertility (because parents are confident of the survival of a greater number of children).
- More education for women is one of the strongest proven elements in reducing fertility. The education of today's young girls is likely to lower future fertility as it expands women's opportunities in all directions. It can also help to delay marriage.
- Their lack of information is one of the main things trapping women in disempowered positions. The desirable flow of information must begin with educated women – at universities, for example. Centres for women's studies play an important role in both providing information and mobilizing well-informed and educated women who can in turn help others. The process must be that of "women helping women".
- Property and inheritance laws that deny women security of tenure are likely to increase women's perceived need for early marriage and children. Such laws and other legislation must be abandoned.

Table 3: Total fertility rate by female education level

Country	Years of education			
	0	1-3	4-6	7+
	(Average number of children per woman)			
Costa Rica	5.0	5.0	3.6	2.7
Ecuador	7.8	7.2	5.3	2.7
Pakistan	6.5	5.4	6.1	3.1
Mexico	8.1	7.5	5.8	3.3
Peru	7.3	6.8	5.1	3.3
Sudan	6.5	5.6	5.0	3.4
Philippines	5.4	7.0	6.2	3.8
Morocco	6.4	5.2	4.4	4.2
Bangladesh	6.1	6.4	6.7	5.0
Kenya	8.3	9.2	8.4	7.3

Source: 25

- Women's organizations must be encouraged and strengthened. These organizations usually expand women's opportunities and provide outlets for women to assert some control of their environment.
- Lastly, my most important recommendation: an urgent implementation of the above points. There has been a great deal of talk; but the countries of the developing world, and especially of Southern Africa, must now move from discussion to persuasion, legislation and practice. Population growth has already taken on disastrous proportions. Immediate action is needed.

Conclusion

Population growth is a major obstacle to efforts to alleviate poverty, sustain socioeconomic development and improve the status of women.

Curtailing population growth must therefore be a major priority in the developing world, and especially in Southern Africa. What is needed is a subtle mix of education, economic development, land reform and other improvements in the lot of Southern Africa's women. If the countries of the region do not succeed in carrying out a programme or programmes on these lines, an even bleaker future than today's awaits them.

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Conference report

“Avoiding Marginalization: Can South and Southern Africa become globally competitive economies?” Golden Jubilee Conference, Economic Research Unit, University of Natal, Durban, 5–6 December 1994.

AT a time when large question marks still hang over the future of the South African economy, the theme of the conference clearly was topical. Since the prospects for the whole of Southern Africa cannot be separated from those of South Africa, and more particularly the state of its economy, it was clearly appropriate to deal with South Africa together with its neighbours.

An impressive array of speakers from South and Southern Africa as well as North and South America, Asia and Europe highlighted pertinent issues under broad headings such as: the problem of marginalization; global trade and regional blocs; marginalization within regional integration; overview of marginalization (in South Africa and Namibia); how to un-marginalize the poor without marginalizing South and Southern Africa; and making markets work better.

No attempt was made to assess the likelihood of South and Southern Africa either vanishing into a black hole or experiencing economic revival and boom. But whereas the conference theme implies at least the possibility of South Africa being marginalized, participants generally seemed to regard this as unlikely because of the country's relatively strong and diversified economy and its significance for the region and much of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Addresses and discussions basically revolved around descriptions of marginalization in actual situations and policies to avoid, and overcome, it.

A brief overview cannot do justice to the wealth of analysis and factual

detail presented at the conference. However, the organizers of the conference plan soon to publish the proceedings, and only a few points are noted below.

Whereas sound macroeconomic policies (such as responsible fiscal and monetary policy, market-determined prices and only moderate, if any, protection for producers), are widely assumed to ensure economic growth, it was emphasized that they constitute a necessary but not a sufficient condition for growth. SSA's search for appropriate macroeconomic policies to bring about recovery and restore growth was shown to be increasingly bedeviled by disputes over the respective roles of economic efficiency and social equity – an issue with potentially serious consequences if the wrong choice is made. There was also implicit criticism that South Africa's RDP treats macroeconomic policy as an add-on to a policy framed in terms of social equity and needs rather than considerations of economic efficiency.

Strong protests were raised against the contention that in the early stages of development, a country's competitiveness will be more effectively enhanced by concentrating resources on the education and training of technical and other elites rather than by focusing on universal primary education (as propagated by the World Bank). A related point, also of interest in the South African context, concerned the OECD countries' crisis over the funding and purpose of their welfare systems: the solutions they are moving towards is to focus more

on making people more employable rather than providing benefits for those without work.

Whereas sanguine expectations tend to prevail concerning the beneficial impact on growth of regional economic integration, speakers at the conference were rather sceptical. According to Professor Peter Robson of the University of St Andrews, the principal justification for regional integration is its ability to encourage direct investment inflows from outside the region. He pointed out that integration between less-developed countries had rarely succeeded in attracting significant amounts of such investment, partly because of self-imposed obstacles against it, and partly because they lacked credibility. Professor Maasdorp, head of the Economic Research Unit at the University of Natal, stressed that integration is no panacea to promote economic growth, and that the decisive factor in a country's economic success is its overall economic and social environment.

There was no unanimity with regard to the question whether the weaker members in an integration scheme are likely to be harmed by polarization, that is, the tendency for investment and other resources to congregate around existing growth poles at the expense of the less advantaged areas. Attention was drawn to the fact that countries in the southern belt of the European Union do in fact attract investments from the more highly developed countries – a phenomenon apparently to be explained by confidence in the EU's institutional arrangements. This situation was contrasted

with the virtual absence of manufacturing ventures in the smaller member countries of the Southern African Customs Union (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland).

Addressing the common misconception that investors are attracted by cheap labour, tax holidays and special concessions, it was emphasized that investors seek above all a stable and predictable legal and regulatory regime and an environment where they are treated on the same basis as domestic investors.

As regards future prospects, an American speaker stated that US investors “are coming and they are coming quietly but continually”, mainly because the United States see South Africa as a Big Emerging Market. He went on to predict that over the next 12 to 18 months, the kind of investment South and Southern Africa is

looking for “will begin to take place at a level, depth and quality that will allay any misgivings that South Africans might currently hold.” Roger Ridell from the respected London-based Overseas Development Institute was less optimistic about Africa’s prospects:

... if the record of the past 15 years is any guide to the future, the failure to adapt, the failure to absorb and make use of ... new technologies, and the concomitant failure to expand (and diversify) international trade are likely not only to leave African countries as a whole more marginalised – or totally excluded – from developments taking place in most other regions of the globe, it will ensure that for another generation there will be a

growing number of poor people within African countries increasingly marginalised from the development process.

The conference underlined the fundamental proposition that African economies can only hope to regain their earlier levels of development and resume growth if they make significant efforts to improve overall productivity and strive to become an active participant in global commercial exchange. Yet the conference also heard echoes of the view, widely held in South and sub-Saharan Africa, that Africa needs to devise its own path to development, a path unfettered by the unreasonable demands and other constraints of the capitalist international trading and payments system.

Erich Leistner

Book reviews

Ending Mozambique's war: The role of mediation and good offices

by Cameron Hume, Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994. xv + 168 pp.

THE Community of Sant'Egidio is a voluntary charitable organization set up by a group of Catholic students in Rome in 1968. Organized along lines similar to those of the lay confraternities of Renaissance Italy, Sant'Egidio concentrates particularly upon dialogue with adherents of other religions, and on work with the poor. Since its foundation, the Community has been led by Andrea Riccardi, a professor in ecclesiastical history at Sapienza University in Rome. The Vatican and the Italian government have furnished the Community's headquarters, a modernized sixteenth-century convent in Rome. From here it communicates with over 10 000 members across the world, and with 300 local groups in Italy, Europe, Latin America and Africa. Sant'Egidio's members staff schools and clinics in poor countries, and are the principal providers of assistance to Rome's homeless.

The Community has not shrunk from involvement in tricky political issues. In 1982, for instance, it facilitated the signing of an agreement to halt the fighting between Christian and Druze militias in Lebanon. Towards the end of last year Sant'Egidio was again in the news when it organized a dialogue between most of Algeria's major political parties – to the intense displeasure of the Algerian government, which rejected this initiative as foreign interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state.

It is too early to tell whether Sant'Egidio will be either able or allowed to play a seminal role in ending Algeria's bloody civil war; there can be no doubt, however, that its part

in achieving the Mozambican peace agreement of 1992 was crucial. This, in itself, might give the authorities in Algiers pause for thought, and certainly it would do them no harm to read Cameron Hume's *Ending Mozambique's war*, which details the negotiations leading to the Mozambican accord, and the part of Sant'Egidio in mediating that agreement.

Cameron Hume is an American diplomat, who, as sometime deputy chief of the US mission to the Vatican, observed at first hand many of the Mozambican peace negotiations in Rome. His book provides a dispassionate account of the process of dialogue, from the efforts of the mediators to bring the Mozambican government's representatives face to face with Renamo's delegates in 1989, to the final signature of the accord in 1992.

Apart from providing an outline of the problems and developments along this tortuous diplomatic path, Hume dissects the different functions that may be fulfilled by third parties in such matters. He draws useful distinctions between good offices, facilitation, mediation and arbitration, and on mediation, in particular, has much excellent practical advice to offer. It is for this, I feel, and for the well-deserved attention Hume focuses upon Sant'Egidio, that the book merits its greatest praise. Those interested in Mozambique's recent history will also find it essential, if not compelling, reading, and those attempting to reconstruct the peace process in its entirety will find in it a useful skeleton. And, certainly, a fuller account demands to be written, for this work makes no pretence to being a rounded history. One senses, in any case, that the author's diplomatic career, or perhaps his personal instincts, prevented him from depicting the full human drama he witnessed. In his hands the protagonists remain two-

dimensional, their personalities, ambitions, weaknesses and abilities virtually omitted from the account. This is a pity, for a book that brought all this into the equation – along the lines, say, of Beschloss and Talbott's *At the highest levels* (London: Warner, 1994) – would probably add even more to our respect for those who make possible the resolution of intractable conflicts, besides making for a more enjoyable read.

Richard Cornwell

Focus on fisheries and research, Namibia Brief no 18

by C Blatt (ed). Windhoek: Namibia Foundation, June 1994.

"It is surprising that there were any fish left in the sea in 1990, and it makes the recovery since then even more astounding."¹ The Namibia Foundation's excellent report on the country's fishing industry tells the heart-warming story, related by people directly involved, of that recovery after years of pillage by foreign fleets.

Coastal states had obtained exclusive responsibility to manage the fishing resources within their own 200-mile zones following agreement in 1982 at the third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea (Unclos 111). Namibia, however, was unable to enforce recognition of this Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) until independence in 1990.

The new government then passed the Territorial Sea and Exclusive Economic Zone of Namibia Act. It created a 12-nautical mile territorial sea, a 24-nautical mile contiguous zone, a 200-mile EEZ and a continental shelf as defined in Unclos 111.² The Act obliges all vessels operating within the EEZ to land their catch in a Namibian harbour for verification of

weight and species caught. Foreign interests are still well established but are now welcome and are important to the economy.

With its greater command over marine resources and through its newly established Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and a vibrant private sector, a vigorous process of economic development, employment creation and export diversification within the industry has been set in train. Armed with an effective legal and administrative framework, the Ministry's main task is to ensure the efficient management of the industry and its sustainable long-term development.³

Growth

Since independence the total landed value of fish has already exceeded the N\$1 000 million originally expected only at the end of the decade. The value of exports has grown rapidly to more than N\$900 million per year, accounting for 27,7% of total merchandise exports in 1994 (5,3% in 1989). The contribution to GDP has almost doubled from 3,9% in 1991 to 7,6% in 1994. Employment in the industry has doubled from 6 000 at independence to some 12 000 in 1994 and is expected to increase to more than 15 000 in the next 5 to 8 years.⁴

The value of investment in the sector by Namibian companies is estimated at N\$600 million in the three years 1992–94.⁵ Future investment opportunities exist in increasing Total Allowable Catches (TAC) resulting from the recovery of fish stocks and in the expansion and modernization of onshore processing and support activities. But the extent of this expansion as well as future labour increases will depend largely on what the government sets over the next few years as a maximum sustainable yield of the fish resources.⁶

The marine ecosystem

Namibia's 1 500 km coastline is endowed with one of the most productive marine environments in the world. Within the 504 000 km² of the EEZ, prevailing northwesterly winds cause an upwelling of water within the cold Benguela current, bringing rich

nutrients to the surface including microscopic marine plants (phytoplankton) and animals (zooplankton).⁷ This marine ecosystem is characterized by a large biomass of relatively few species, several of which are commercially valuable and efficiently harvested.⁴

The industry comprises three branches – pelagic fish, which occur in the shallower inshore waters, such as pilchard, anchovy and juvenile horse mackerel; demersal fish, found in deeper water, include hake, kingklip, monk, sole and snoek; and crustaceans such as rock lobster, deep sea crab and squid. Guano and seaweed are other marine resources. In addition, 70% of the Cape fur seal population found between Port Elizabeth and the Angola border occurs along the Namibian coast.⁸ Feeding on a range of prey, including fish, these predators are the subject of heated debate in the fishing community, on the one hand, and in the conservation lobby, on the other. The task of the Marine Mammal Section of the MFMR is to provide scientific advice for the sustainable exploitation of the seal population.

The Minister of MFMR has described the recovery of the fish stock as impressive, especially between 1990 and 1992. "In hake we are one-third away from our potential sustainable level. In pilchards we are still halfway, in horse mackerel we have reached our maximum sustainable yield, in lobster we are very far off, crab is poor and other minor fisheries are in between."⁹

Pelagic fish

In the late 1960s 1,5 to 2,0 million tons of pelagic fish was taken by factory ships and shore factories. By 1978, following this plunder and some poor environmental years, the pilchard catch fell to 45 200 tons and had to be restricted to 10 200 tons in 1980.¹ In 1994 the TAC for pilchard was set at 125 000 tons and there is now confidence in the continuing growth of the stock. A long-term goal is set at 300 000 to 500 000 tons.³ The full pilchard quota is used for canning, cannery yields being now 2½ times as high as in the 1960s–1970s owing to more efficient storage of fish on board and processing. The South African market takes 90% of the

production, which is growing at 6% per year, the balance going to the United Kingdom and Mauritius. New markets in the Middle East and the United States are being explored.¹⁰

Anchovy and juvenile horse mackerel are processed into fish meal, current production being about 50 000 tons, and another 18 000 tons into fish oil, the bulk going to the South African market.¹⁰

Pelagic fish are caught by purse-seines (a purse-like net which is released around the shoal). A fleet of 38 vessels operates from Walvis Bay and the season extends from February to August. The fish landed is valued at about N\$400 million per year and the industry employs over 3 000 workers.⁷

Horse mackerel

After 2 to 3 years the adult horse mackerel migrates to deeper waters.⁷ The TAC for this species was set at 500 000 tons for the 1994 season: 90 000 tons are allocated to the purse-seine fleet and 410 000 tons to the midwater trawler fleet, making the horse mackerel the largest of the Namibian catches. The midwater catch is sold mainly to African countries. The fleet of 45 vessels is still foreign-owned and operated but the establishment of a Namibian fleet commenced in 1994 although even partial replacement of the foreign fleet is a highly expensive process.¹⁰ The horse mackerel stock appears to be in a healthy and relatively stable state.¹¹

Demersal (or white) fish

A fleet of some 70 vessels, including large factory trawlers, target mainly hake, a bottom-shoaling fish. Spain, other European countries and South Africa are the main markets to which the fish is exported frozen in refrigerated vessels (reefers) and even some by air. Hake, too, suffered the pirating of earlier years. Had it not been for the timely arrival of independence, the hake stock might have been "decimated beyond recovery".¹ In 1972 the catch totalled over 800 000 tons, falling dramatically to 150 000 tons in 1980 and, after a small rise, to less than 50 000 tons in 1990.²⁰ Since then and after Namibian intervention the recovery is such that the TAC for 1994

was set at 150 000 tons, an increasing proportion (60%) to be processed onshore.¹⁰

High retail prices and product substitution has built up some market resistance to the fish. Producers have been obliged to sell at depressed prices such that exports hardly cover the costs of catching and processing.¹

Other branches

Recreational angling which attracts thousands of fishermen locally and from South Africa, and inland fisheries are also important.^{12,13} Of the latter the major sources are the floodplain systems of the Cuvelai, Okavango, Zambezi and Kwando rivers in the north and northeast. The fish are of great value to the people living in these areas as a source of food and protein.

Investment

The current level of investment is a good reflection of the burgeoning fishing industry. In 1992 and 1993 N\$200 million was invested in factories and related shore facilities at Walvis Bay and Lüderitz, and another N\$100 to 200 million in vessels.⁴ The size of the industry could generally double over the next five years as landings increase and returns improve from higher value added processing and higher quality products.⁵ For example, in 1993 in the white fish industry local processors brought only a fraction of the TAC to retail. Most was exported frozen. Although substantial investment will be necessary to process up to 60% of future TACs, the outlook for the industry, especially hake, is regarded as exciting.¹⁴

Promising fields for expanded investment are industries related to fish processing. These include the manufacture of paste, flavouring, pallets, labels, clothes, packaging and cans. Other avenues are services such as insurance, finance and marketing along with ship repair and servicing, in all of which Walvis Bay, ceded by South Africa to Namibia in March 1994, is emerging as one of the world's largest fish-processing centres.⁵ Envisaged also is the establishment of a new fishing town at Möwe Bay in the remote north.⁶

A concern of the MFMR, however, is that should overcapitalization occur the capacity of plants established could exceed the available harvests.⁵

Management

In a recent survey of the global mismanagement of fishery resources, the *Economist* mentioned Namibia, by contrast, as an example of wise and effective management.¹⁵ This the government has succeeded in achieving in four years, foreign involvement now being one of assistance instead of exploitation. The first major steps were the enforcement of the EEZ in 1990 and the publication of a White Paper in 1991, setting out policy and strategy. Out of it came a Sea Fisheries Act which was brought into force with accompanying regulations in late 1992.^{2,4}

Resource management and conservation has been achieved through three measures:¹⁵ prevention of illegal fishing by foreign fleets and licensing of fishing vessels, strict setting and control of quotas, and establishment of conservative TACs. The industry has been promoted by the provision of long-term rights and the encouragement of shore (as opposed to offshore) processing activities. Wider social and economic benefits have been achieved by bringing in new indigenous local fishing companies and using carrot-and-stick approaches to increase the employment and promotion of Namibian nationals. Differentiated levy charges, for example, between foreign-owned and Namibian-owned vessels are aimed at encouraging foreign shareholders to be open to Namibians.⁹ This promotion of a policy of Namibianization is supported by a massive effort to provide professional, educational and training facilities.¹⁶

Protection

This is the concern of the Directorate of Operations of the MFMR.¹⁷ In total 300 inspectors are involved in control and surveillance. Of these, 200 go to sea to monitor all fishing activities. A further 70 are shore-based and monitor landings. Some 50 surveillance inspectors staff three vessels, a fixed-

wing aircraft and a helicopter which regularly patrol the EEZ.

There has been some conflict between the onshore and offshore mining interests and the fishing companies, notably over the collapse of the rock lobster resource in 1989–90. But both industries, important as they are to the economy, need to be managed optimally with the least possible damage to the environment and the living marine resource.¹⁸

Research

The Directorate of Resource Management of the MFMR conducts research in a wide variety of fields aimed at advising the Ministry on the optimal and responsible utilization of resources on a long-term sustainable basis.¹⁹ In 1993 a National Marine Information and Research Centre was built at Swakopmund and a regional fisheries institute is located at Lüderitz. A new research vessel, the *Welwitschia*, was received in 1994 as a grant from Japan and supplements two older vessels. Over the past four years a Norwegian vessel has been assisting with research into the distribution, composition and abundance of hake shoals.²⁰

On the international level Namibia is now coordinator for the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) marine fisheries sector charged with the task of providing leadership and guidance on the formulation, implementation and management of SADC sector-specific policies, strategies, programmes and projects.²¹ Then, too, agreement, over a Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, between the nations concerned and sponsored by the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), aims at achieving management and conservation measures for vessels fishing on the high seas.²²

The future

There is little doubt that Namibia's fishing industry has a bright future. It is growing fast and encouragingly much of this growth is coming from a switch to more local processing, thus creating more jobs, investment, tax and income. A building and employment boom in Walvis Bay and to a

lesser extent in Lüderitz is evidence of this.^{6,23} However, warns the Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources, investors tend to come looking less for opportunities in infrastructure development than for quota and fishing rights. "This area is practically exhausted", he points out. "There is no more room for expansion because our current capacity in terms of fish processing and catching is enough for all the additional potential we have for the next 5 years";⁹ a statement which is good testimony to the government's determination to ensure the long-term sustainable development of Namibia's fishing industry. Encouragingly, and in pursuance of its goal, the government is receiving valuable technical and financial assistance from at least 15 governments and agencies in the international community.²⁴

Contributing authors

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- 6 T Minney, "Fishing: The cash goes into building", p 100–101.
- 7 D Boyer, "Research provides information for management", p 75–77.
- 8 J-P Roux, "Research on seals", p 86.
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- 11 E Klingelhoeffer, "Emphasis on distribution and abundance", p 79–81.
- 12 F Botes, "Extensive research on angling fish resources", p 82–84.
- 13 B van Zyl and C Hay, "Inland fisheries resources", p 87–91.
- 14 D Steinman, "Value adding of secondary market", p 39–41.
- 15 D Thomson, "Namibia scores on effective management", p 42–43.
- 16 "Defining training needs" (not authored), p 29–31.
- 17 P Maré, "Protection of resources", p 50–51.

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- 19 J Jurgens, "Namibia's fisheries research responsibility", p 68–71.
- 20 H Hamukuaya, "Research to determine biomass of hake", p 73–74.
- 21 O V Einarsson, "Marine fisheries in regional context", p 61–67.
- 22 J L Rua, "Sustainable development and responsible fishing", p 46–49.
- 23 A Tordesillas, "Namibianisation misunderstood by many", p 53–54.
- 24 M Stuttaford, "Assistance by the international community", p 94.

Denis Fair

Fishing for development: Small-scale fisheries in Africa

by Inge Tvedten and Bjorn Hersoug (eds). Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1992 ISBN

The editors admit that artisanal fishery in Africa has been a neglected sector among Nordic social scientists compared with other systems of primary production. In fact, the sector seems to be fairly unknown to many social scientists and others interested in African affairs. This volume is a collection of eleven papers by Nordic authors. Part 1 deals with socio-economic aspects of the sector and Part 2 with development aspects.

Labour-intensive "small-scale fisheries" is the short but inadequate definition of the sector but it is distinguishable from the large-scale, capital intensive, commercially-oriented, foreign and domestic "industrial fishing". The relationship between the two is sometimes conflicting and sometimes compatible. A classical definition offered is:

Artisanal fisheries are normally carried out by small-scale fishing units, often consisting of kin groups using small, occasionally powered, boats or none at all. The fishing activity is often part-time and household income may be supplemented by other non-fishing activities. Payment to fishermen is often on a share basis and vessels and gear are usually

owner operated ... investment levels are relatively low, with capital often borrowed from those who market the catch. The catch most often does not enter larger markets but is sold at dispersed points of landing. And part or all of the catch is operator or family consumed.

It is, however, probably impossible to arrive at a commonly agreed upon terminology since the sector is far from homogeneous. It varies both in terms of species, catching devices, fleet composition, production methods, markets and institutional arrangements. Some fishermen are part-timers, using low-cost craft and simple gear. Others are full-time professionals deriving most of their income from, and spending most of their working time in, fishing activities.

The role of intermediaries raises very significantly the total number of people associated with the sector. Their importance arises out of the need to distribute the fish rapidly for marketing, processing (salting, drying, smoking, etc) and consumption, activities in which women (eg, the fishwives of West Africa) play a prominent part. In addition, they provide inputs such as bait, salt and provisions, and mend equipment (nets, traps and hooks).

Artisanal fisheries are most important in the western and southern part of the continent. Seventy per cent of the fish landed from Mauritania to Zaire are caught by these fishermen and their share is increasing, while inland catches come mainly from lakes in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Malawi. The importance of the sector to the peoples of Africa is substantial. It accounts for about 65% of the continent's domestic catch, both marine and inland, and for more than 90% of the total number of fishermen employed. In many countries it is a relatively cheap source of food and of animal protein.

An interesting question is why, in West Africa for instance, some ethnic groups, such as the Wolof, Temne and Fante, have adapted so successfully to fishing and have modernized their techniques and organization while others, who may even have consider-

able maritime experience, never get beyond simple hand-lining from a one-man canoe, despite government incentives and other assistance. In some groups a dependency upon the social structures of their traditional societies continues to dominate them while in others this dependency has been broken. Various reasons are offered, among them population pressure and scarcity of land in the original home areas which, in turn, has induced migration and greater freedom from traditional social controls.

The inland fisheries of Zambia (Lakes Tanganyika and Mweru) provide an interesting example of the implications for development planning. Fisheries in the national economy rank third after mining and agriculture and artisanal fisheries are responsible for most of the catch. Change agents tend to place heavy emphasis on technical interventions and complex techniques in order to increase productivity. But the consequences of this "over-eager desire for rapid results" are visible along the shores of major fishing waters all over Africa – defunct processing units, closed-down workshops, wrecked boats, etc. Fishermen, like farmers, are cautious when it comes to adopting new beliefs and practices. Many innovations are rejected because they are economically unprofitable or they are culturally or socially incompatible, breaking with existing patterns or dominant group interests. In short, innovations are adopted *only* if they match the (felt) need of the adopter. Fishing on Lakes Tanganyika and Mweru has had its share of inadequate and inappropriate aid. The reports of at least six donor agencies ignored the social and economic conditions of the target group whose lives were to be "developed". Yet, recommendations on how the modernization process should advance were numerous.

Nevertheless, the need for fish is increasing all over Africa as is the pressure on the fisheries sector. The efficient management of artisanal fisheries is as desirable as the management of the fish resources themselves, especially when problems of over-fishing arise. New ways that are locally applicable have to be found. "Adaptive manage-

ment" is one approach but others also deserve attention, including self-management by fishermen's organizations themselves.

Regarding resource management (and an interesting example comes from the introduction of the Nile perch to Lake Victoria) the difficulty is that European means through external agents have failed in most cases by not being in accord with community practices. The best way, it is suggested, is to assist in creating an environment which sets out by recognizing that artisanal fishermen do have a good feel for the condition and the dynamics of the resources they are dependent on and that they can be innovative and adaptive both technologically and managerially. They may, however, need some assistance when they are up against external forces such as competitive fleets, floodplain regulations, rapid integration in a market economy, etc.

The editors pose a number of questions for research and conclude that the most important contribution that their volume makes is to underline the opinion that artisanal fisheries are not remnants doomed to extinction at the hands of the industrial fishing sector. Rather, small-scale fishing has survived, expanded and prospered in spite of the challenge. The key problem is to communicate the experiences of the artisanal fishing industry as a necessary element in planning its future development.

Denis Fair

Stabilization and structural adjustment: Macroeconomic frameworks for analysing the crisis in sub-Saharan Africa

by Finn Tarp. London and New York: Routledge, 1993, 212 pp. ISBN 0-415-08179-3.

Sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) catastrophic economic decline in the 1970s and especially the 1980s has obliged a growing number of countries to turn to the World Bank and the International Fund (IMF) for help. The

Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) virtually imposed by the Bretton Woods institutions are increasingly criticized as being driven by capitalist ideology, being devoid of insight into African realities and needs, and, above all, for worsening the plight of most of the population while failing in their basic objective of placing African economies back on a growth course.

Many professional economists point out that the assumptions and economic models on which SAPs are based are inappropriate in that they are derived from conditions in highly developed economies and cannot capture the realities of a given poor, underdeveloped African country. And a remedy that is prescribed on the basis of a faulty analysis of the factors causing the economic decline, is apt to do more harm than good.

While most writings on SAPs are descriptive and orientated around case studies, Tarp's study seeks to clarify the economic theory underlying the solutions proposed for SSA. Writing competently and lucidly, Tarp avoids dogmatism and polemics, and emphasizes that the complexity of the issues dealt with allows as yet only tentative conclusions. His study should be welcomed by all concerned with programmes to revive economic growth in SSA.

Chapter 1 outlines the dimensions of SSA's economic decline and concludes that while both domestic and external factors were responsible, external factors played a decisive role in the African crisis during the 1980s. Growth had been driven largely by external factors, and "import starvation" (that is, impaired capacity to import) critically affected all productive activities. "Exogenous shocks related to trade, aid and debt flows, coupled with domestic economic imbalances, have resulted in widespread human suffering and increased national as well as household vulnerability to further shocks" (p 25).

Chapter 2 deals with macroeconomic consistency and its bearing on adjustment policies. It shows that a macroeconomic accounting framework, based on the concepts of production, income and expenditure, can check whether desirable or projected scenarios are feasible and show how

past imbalances were in fact closed. However, an accounting framework cannot show how the economy actually functions, and one must be sceptical about sweeping generalizations about the efficacy of macroeconomic policy measures based on it.

Chapters 3 to 6 discuss the foremost analytical tools currently being used to explain the functioning of less-developed economies in particular and to identify the strategic variables on which policy measures need to be focused.

Chapter 3 is concerned with the IMF's approach known as "financial programming". Whereas the IMF was set up to help countries to correct short-term imbalances in their balance of payments, it has increasingly been constrained to assist African countries with medium- to long-term finance in the form of "special facilities". This means that the Fund no longer confines itself to short-term monetary adjustments but gets involved with structural issues that were hitherto considered the domain of the World Bank. In terms of its financial programming, the IMF usually identifies excessive expansion of money supplies as the key factor in economic imbalance and, accordingly, prescribes measures to shrink demand – whereas the situation would more likely call for steps to expand demand.

Chapter 4 deals with the World Bank's approach, predominantly the Revised Minimum Standard Model (RMSM) which relates investment, imports and savings with output or disposable income, and emphasizes growth and supply-side issues. Tarp discusses its strengths and weaknesses, and points out that the political and social consequences of Bank-supported adjustment programmes cannot be analysed within the framework of the RMSM, while – like the IMF model – it cannot analyse the crucial issues of income distribution.

Chapter 5 discusses the possibility of combining the respective models of the IMF and the World Bank. In view of the convergence of the two institutions' functions in SSA, a synthesis of the two models would be important. Tarp, however, finds attempts in that direction unconvincing and considers that the two models separately are

more useful, and "... if used flexibly, and with the necessary care, the two models can at least draw attention to a few important macroeconomic links and possible trade-offs, which policy-makers have to face" (p 118).

Chapter 6 considers alternative approaches and perspectives that try to remedy the shortcomings of the IMF and World Bank models. Particular attention is focused on Unicef's "development with a human face" approach; on structuralist-inspired views and models; and on the African Alternative Framework on the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Unicef regards the exclusive focusing on economic policy and fabric as far too narrow and as actually endangering the potential for future growth and development. It endorses the need for growth, but it must be growth of production and incomes among the lower-income groups. The structuralist approach seeks to identify and understand the specific conditions in respect of which less-developed economies differ from the highly developed ones on which neo-classical economic theory is based. It pays attention not only to economic features but also to political and social aspects. However, no consolidated body of theory and policy advice has as yet emerged from structuralist thought.

The African Alternative Framework for socioeconomic recovery and transformation (AAF-SAP) is a variant of the structuralist approach. While acknowledging the need for adjustment, it rejects the IMF/Bank approach as rigidly orthodox and short-term in focus, and claims that SAPs in terms of that approach are not only inadequate but have in fact made matters worse. The alternative approach proposed by the ECA is not a universal model or blueprint but rather is intended as a broad and flexible framework which governments can use in designing their individual programmes.

The concluding chapter pulls the threads of the foregoing argument together. While stating that the views of the IMF and the World Bank on the adjustment crisis in SSA have acquired "a very concentrated ideological flavour" (p 150), Tarp finds that their models have the advantage that they "require very little data to

run" and can serve a useful purpose in helping to put order to the little information available, and as such point to key gaps in the database (p 155). After dealing with certain features of their models, Tarp writes:

... it is remarkable that the IMF and the World Bank were so self-confident in the early years of the 1980s. The conclusion that a sizeable measure of faith and ideology must have outweighed the calls for a more phased and considered approach seems inevitable (p 156).

He adds that, more recently, these calls appear to have had an impact on both institutions. (Thus at the IMF/World Bank 50th anniversary conference in 1994, a deputy managing director of the IMF set out a new approach to economic reform that stresses pluralist democracy, protection for spending on education, health, and essential infrastructure, and curbs on military and luxury budgets. Cf *Africa Analysis*, 14.10.94, p 3.)

Acknowledging that there are perfectly valid reasons for disagreeing with the approaches of the Bretton Woods institutions, Tarp indirectly criticizes the ECA view by stating that,

... it is much too simplistic, and not very effective, to view these agencies as Draconian instruments for continued exploitation and as a kind of scapegoat for all existing economic problems. For this, the World Bank and the IMF are much too complex and diverse establishments (p 162).

He stresses that adjustment programmes must thoroughly reckon with the distributional effects and their potentially explosive political and social impact. "Analysis of 'who gains' and 'who loses' are important" (p 164). Whereas economists tend to assume that governments behave in a rational fashion, trying to correct market imperfections and promote long-term development, Tarp emphasizes the need to take into account factors such as personal rule as well as ethnic and regional interests.

Erich Leistner



BOOKSHELF

Inducing food insecurity: Perspectives on food policies in Eastern and Southern Africa by M A Mohamed Salih (ed). Upsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1995. 233 pp. ISBN 91 7106 359 5

The scope and context of food security is complex, and it involves macro- and micro-policy perspectives ranging from pricing, distribution, infrastructure and technology to consumption patterns and food habits. This publication delineates interdisciplinary policy perspectives within a wider host of policy parameters and socio-cultural traits. It revisits the factors which contributed to the decline of food production in Eastern and Southern Africa and traces them to the food policies of a given country or countries. The book also includes chapters dealing with the dynamics of rural or urban food systems, pastoral production, indigenous knowledge and the consequences of technological intervention.

The bold experiment: South Africa's new democracy by Herman Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer (eds). Midrand: Southern Book Publishers, 1994. 202 pp. ISBN 1 86812 556 4

In this volume the authors attempt to identify and open to debate the complexities of success in the process of consolidating democracy. Burning issues effecting the democratization process in a South Africa in transition are addressed, including:

- The possibility of practising a true democracy and the form such a democracy will take;
- how to go about building a culture of democracy among the people of the country;
- the economic consequences of the different routes to social reconstruction.

The authors base their approach not only on empirical evidence from South Africa itself, but also refer to international lessons. Contributors to the volume include the well-known international authorities Samuel Huntington of Harvard University, Francisco Weffort of the University of Sao Paulo and Larry Diamond of the Hoover Institute, together with several local experts.

Conflict, war and public health by D W FitzSimons and A W Whiteside. Conflict Studies Series no 26. London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1994. 37 pp. ISBN ISSN 0069-8792

The world is currently ravaged by hundreds of conflicts whose consequences can be desperate in terms of the health and populations in the countries involved. Apart from its obvious results, war can lead to long-term suffering through famine, malnutrition, exposure, environmental contamination, injury, trauma, rape,

sexually transmitted diseases and epidemics, the latest of which is the outbreak of pneumonic plague in India.

In this sequel to their Conflict Study 251 on the Aids epidemic, David FitzSimons and Alan Whiteside consider the world's health problems in terms of war and conflict. They chart the world's trouble spots and describe the major diseases that may be triggered by conflict and civil disruptions. Their analysis covers the short-, medium- and long-term implications for health in areas of conflict and deals with economic and social conditions as well as the threat to resources for health promotion and disease intervention.

In their conclusion, the authors argue that conflicts destroy the human capital of nations in a variety of ways, many of which have not yet been fully addressed. They propose a research agenda to analyse the public health and development costs of conflict as an international attempt to prevent this appalling legacy of war.

The land of the Elephant Bird: Voices of South Africa by Flemming Rogilds. Aldershot: Avebury, 1994. 165 pp. ISBN 1 85628 892 7

In the land of the Elephant Bird: Voices of South Africa describes everyday life during the apartheid regime in South Africa at the end of the 1980s. The book comprises a compilation of interviews with ordinary South Africans and esteemed writers such as Andre Brink, Nadine Gordimer and Achmat Dangor.

The author focuses on the debate which centres on the question of how to shape a nation as embryonic as South Africa, and how the road to freedom is paved by creating artistic and cultural means of expression that are abreast with the developments, that is an art and culture that are able to transcend the traumas and rigidity that apartheid's violence has fostered.

African art in transit by Christopher B Steiner. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 240pp. ISBN 0 521 43447 5

This is the first book about the international trade in African art. Based on extensive research in West Africa, the author presents a detailed description of the economic networks that transfer art objects from their site of use and production in Africa to their point of consumption in art galleries and shops throughout Europe and America. In the course of this transcultural journey, African art acquires different meanings. It means one thing to the rural villagers who create and still use it in ritual and performance, another to Muslim traders who barter and resell it in order to earn a living, and something else to the buyers and collectors in the West who purchase it for investment and display in their homes.

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4. BOTSWANA

Republic of —

Independence: 30 September 1966. Former British Protectorate of Bechuanaland.

National Day: 30 September (Independence Day)

Leader: Sir Ketumile Masire, b 1925, President since 1980.

Capital: Gaborone (pop 18 000)

Area: 581 730 km² Population: 1,5 mn (1995).

Religions: Christianity (about 50% of population) and tribal beliefs.

Languages: English and Tswana (both official)

Life expectancy at birth: 68 years.

Foreign trade: Imports: \$1 438 mn; Exports: \$1 606 mn (1993).

Principal exports: Diamonds (87%), copper-nikkel, beef.

GNP: \$3 797 mn (1992), **GNP/capita:** \$2 790 (1992).

Currency: \$1 = Pula (P) 2,7 (Oct 1994).

Background: Traditionally based on cattle ranching, the economy has grown rapidly since the 1970's as a result of large-scale diamond mining. Diamond sales account for the bulk of foreign earnings and, together with copper and nickel production, for about 40% of GNP. Botswana also has large coal reserves. The economy has recorded the highest sustained real growth in Africa over two decades and per capita GNP is among the highest in the continent. Expansion of the mining sector has stimulated the rest of the economy, especially manufacturing, but not to the extent that enough jobs are being created for the growing labour force. Unemployment and alleged corruption have never prevented the ruling Democratic Party (DP) from scoring landslide victories in the elections that have been held regularly since independence. However, in the National Assembly election, held in October 1994, the National Front of Dr Kenneth Koma won about one-third of the elective seats.



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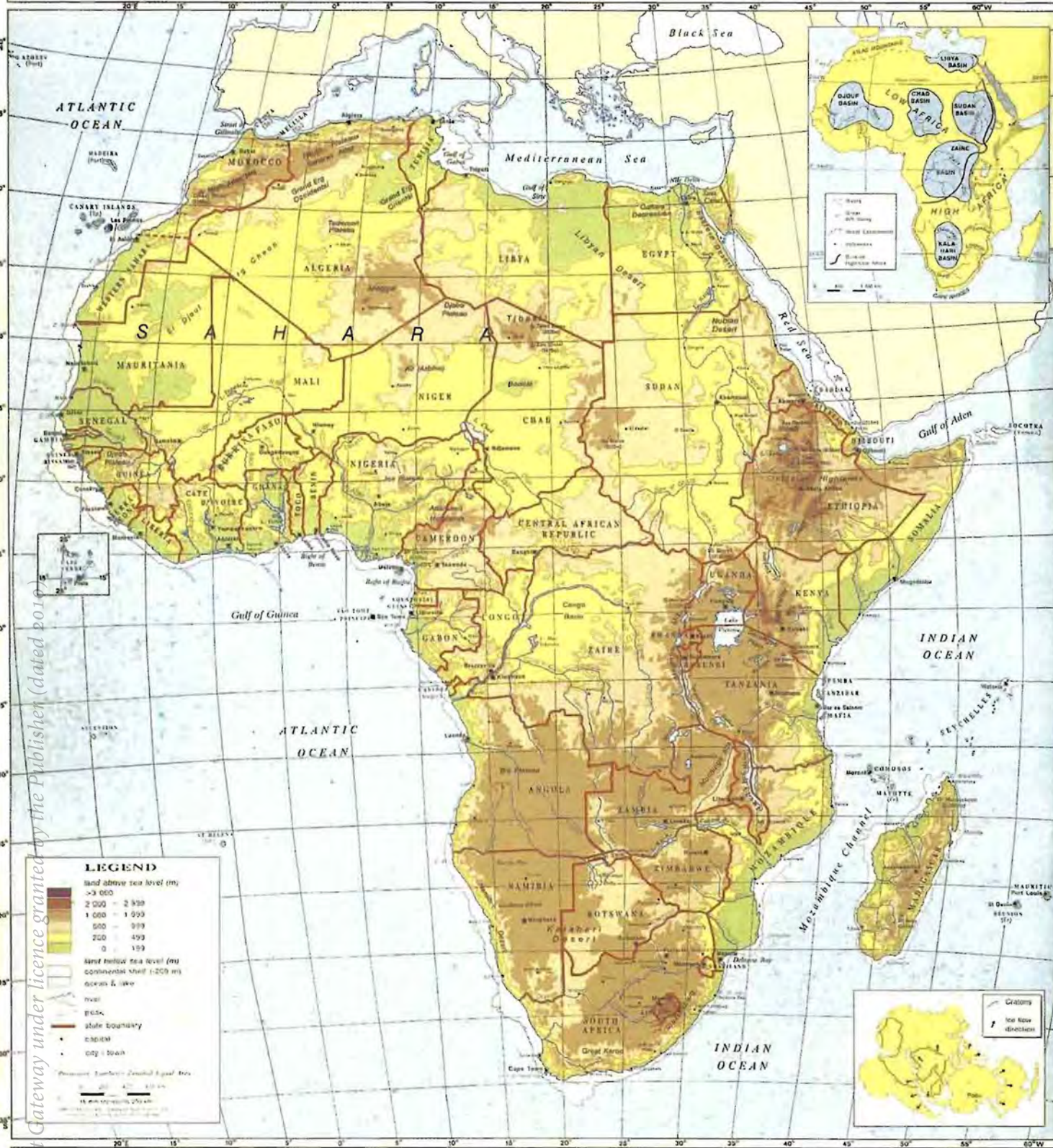
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