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Annexe B - Bureaucracy from three dimensions; Hierarchy versus market; Grassroots organisations; Leadership in the development context

1) Bureaucracy from three dimensions, object, subject and medium of development

In this respect, Hirschmann (1999) claimed that bureaucracy might be thought of in three ways: as an object, as a subject, and as a medium of development and development management.

In the first instance, the public bureaucracy may explicitly be the object of the reforms, as is the case in the Couffo region in Benin. The drastic reductions in the extension personnel in the agriculture sector and the rectification of regional inequity in the distribution of health personnel are examples of these reforms aimed at achieving efficiency/effectiveness goals of both public bureaucracies. Because such reforms may lack the definition of appropriate rules and regulations and, more importantly, the enforcing mechanisms, it is unlikely that stated goals are achieved.

In the second instance, it is usual that the reforms hinge on the capability of the public bureaucracy, although these programmes ascribe a passive role to such organisations. The rationale is that no incentives and disincentives are planned for encouraging successes and discouraging failures. The literature suggests that public-sector bureaucrats are culturally bound to false reporting (Chambers 1992). It is then suspected that there is a gap between the formal reports and their own perception of the reforms. As a matter of fact, instances where bureaucratic organisations adapt to development programmes are rare. Conversely, instances where the public-sector bureaucracy influences the programmes are many (Mongbo 1994). For instance, failures or successes of the reforms in the distribution of the agricultural input services depend on the good will of the public bureaucrats. Similarly, the cost recovery scheme in the primary health service is influenced by the willingness of the health personnel to intensify cost-related activities at the expense of cost-free ones.

In the third instance, the public bureaucracy is considered as a medium of development. This has always been the case. More specifically, the crucial role of implementing the reforms in the two sectors under study has remained its responsibility. There have been unsatisfactory outcomes given substantial evidence of the precluding role achieved so far. With respect to the distribution of agricultural input and primary health services, the reforms face resistance from the public-sector bureaucrats in charge of the implementation. It follows that bureaucracy is a handicap to a workable public-sector organisation, because of its routines and its insensitivity to efficiency and effectiveness goals.

2) Hierarchy versus market

Although the SAP seemed to alleviate budget deficits and reduce strains on public finance through liberalisation, privatisation and devaluation, the programme has proven to carry high social costs (cf. Commander 1989, Cornia et al. 1987, Duncan and Howell 1992). As social costs escalated, the adjustment programmes have evolved, going from concerns with stabilisation to social dimensions of adjustment. Although there is some achievement to a certain extent, Pradhan and Swaroop (1993) and Jamal (1993), among others, found that the social dimension of adjustment is simply cosmetic. This is to substantiate that little improvement has been achieved through the formal organisations that host and implement the reforms. Therefore, the quest for alternatives to the large-scale government-sponsored agricultural and health organisations of the 1970s and 1980s, which hardly improved the plight of the great majority of rural people, then becomes urgent in the face of Africa's stagnation. Governments and donors become aware that markets, which were relatively successful in improving the social as well as economic conditions of Asian rural people, may not be transferable to the African context

(Chhibber and Leechor 1995). There are also some concerns about the appropriateness of encouraging the further use of approaches experimented with elsewhere, given the mounting evidence of country-wise and even region-wise peculiarities in sub-Saharan Africa. For an overview of pressures for change in the African agriculture sector, see Cromwell (1996). For the health sector, Flahault and Roemer (1986) offered a more general account on leadership enhancement based on case studies all around the World, while Heywood (1991) offers a more specific account based on the Benin case study.

3) Grassroots organisations

Two categories of grassroots organisations are observed in the Couffo region. The first one and commonly observed kind of organisation, is coined *labour party* or *self-help group*. The second commonly observed organisation, the rotating credit or *Saving-credit* group, is a more generalised type of co-operative arrangements. In the Couffo region, 'Egbɛ', 'Egbɛjɔjɔ' and 'Esɔ' are semantic variants of the first category, while 'Zokeke-gbɛ', 'Exɔcucu-gbɛ' and others are fundamentally distinct variants of the second category. In the latter category, there is a large range of co-operative arrangements, involving the provision of material resources such as house equipment, electric generators, musical sets and even house-building materials. More importantly, 'Ganyakpa-gbɛ' amongst the *Fon* or 'Kpaca-gbɛ' amongst the *Aja* is meant to tackle agricultural equipment issues, the provision of cutlasses for members, for instance. 'Eha-gbɛ' and 'Apa' are local misnomers of the rotating credit groups for they are vague on the nature of transacted resources. For instance, the first name is used to account for a more general co-operative objective whereby people get together, but it may be specifically chosen for villagers who raise pigs in groups.

Manifold are the self-help organisations geared at mediating either mandatory reciprocity or the like, or simply affection among members of the same social layers (religious groups, age- and gender-related groups, for instance). The mandatory reciprocal organisations entail, among other objectives, mutual interest in cash and in kind. The Kugbɛ group is one such an organisation that assists members for the funeral ceremonies of their parents-in-law. Kugbɛ is a local organisation, which later switched its institutional goals to include some tentative investment in human health. The belief that the funeral ceremonies of a beloved parent-in-law matter is taken advantage of and is, to some extent, diverted to investments in members' own health.

The sub-prefectures of Klouékanmè and Toviklin are more endowed with women members of Kugbɛ groups than the other three sub-prefectures. The results of the Kugbɛ membership in the sample of villages suggest the existence of networks operating beyond the administrative boundaries of the Couffo region, let alone a sub-prefecture. Vodouhê (1996) substantiated such networks in the Couffo region and claimed that the existing formal organisations inspire their management structure. Although this is true to the extent that the same local leaders manage both organisations, there is a great deal of innovative management skills put to use.

Kpanu-gbɛ may be considered as a local adaptation of this scheme at Lanta in the sub-prefecture of Klouékanmè. As a reciprocal scheme, both men and women participate in such groups.

The non-mandatory reciprocity or what could be called *affective self-help* takes place among members of religious or solidarity groups. This entails spontaneous help in kind or in cash dispensed to people unable to work in their field because of sickness or death of a family member. Examples of *affective self-help* are 'Habɔbɔ' and 'Egbɛbɔbɔ' in the Couffo region.

Given the improbability that such a dense field of potential anthropological research is likely to be exhausted in the present study, it should be added that the so-called local organisations cover a wide range of resource issues. Apart from some more general topics, including celebrations (weddings, births, rites, etc.) and funeral ceremonies, there are some rural development issues that they attempt to tackle within the limits of the existing social norms and organisations. Regarding their specificity, local organisations entail labour resource arrangements that have bearings on agricultural development. Their specificity is also based on their periodicity, some are either seasonal or annual, but others are perpetual. Following Lemarchand (1989) who pointed at their adaptability to market demand, the questions are: *Whether or not the adaptability feature of those organisations can be counted on in the intervention process? If yes, how best could their articulation with externally initiated organisations come about in the presence of latent social inertia?* The answers to these questions are discussed in the main text.

4) Leadership in the development context

The following section provides a contrasted view on leadership, drawing from the development intervention perspective and a pure sociological perspective.

The development intervention perspective of leadership in rural areas is given in Kaya (1989). The author stresses rural people's ability to act without external assistance if certain proper conditions to fulfil development goals are met. But more often than not, some of the necessary conditions are not present. This is, according to him, the reason why external help should be sought for, and what explains the need for Group Organisers (GOs) in village communities. He then discusses three different roles of GOs under an overall cover of *facilitator* in the People's Participation Programme (PPP) perspective. As will become clear below, the three roles considered are relevant to the resource-based approach and may even be coalesced into one, owing to the definition adopted for resource.

The first role occurs when people barely react to the worsening of their living situation. Under such circumstances, outside help is needed even if just to overcome this state of inertia. Therefore, a *catalyst* role is to initiate discussions and the necessary strategy to overcome the development issue. Since effective problem solving requires bridging the gap between needs and resources, the GO could be a link to bring the people into contact with the sources of the requisite resources.

The second role of GO is then derived accordingly as a *resource co-ordinator*.

The third role is there at all stages of the development process, when there is the need not only to ensure the horizontal information flows within and between village communities, but also to guarantee the vertical flows with higher and lower levels of society. If the information flows were functionally relevant to the development process, the GO may then take up the role of an *educator*. It should be pointed out that Kaya's distinction of those three roles stems from a narrow definition of resources, as comprising only technological, financial, or physical items. Although such a distinction may be useful for specialisation purpose, a general consideration of the role-sets is more likely to accommodate the rural development context.

From a sociological perspective, Bailey (1976) distinguished four different roles for leadership in the development context: kinsman, patron, broker, and mediator.

Firstly, kinsmen constitute the primary source of emotional and material sustenance to any other villager. According to the author, each individual is located in a known position vis-à-vis his/her kin and knows what to expect of them. Where a village is comprised almost exclusively

of kinsmen, the unambiguous role expectations associated with kinship serve to simplify problems of social control.

Secondly, the role of patron assumes control over, or at least access to, resources with which to attract *clients*. According to Bailey (1976), this suggests a broad view of resources, which may include materially rewarding contacts with a government elite (to be identified below as brokerage) as well as land and liquidity capital. It is then instructive to look carefully at the resource-sets, which provide the basis of the patron's role in the Couffo region. Suggestions made by the patron at a village meeting will find support among his followers; if the suggestion calls for their active involvement, this can be counted upon.

Thirdly, individuals able to articulate the goals and interests of different levels of society perform a broker's role. At the lower level are the widely dispersed farmers without apparently identifiable collective action. In the main text, it was argued that collective action is not perceptible because of the legitimacy denied to the existing indigenous organisations. District extension office, school and health services, at the upper level, are staffed by people many of whom are from non-rural backgrounds, and who are further separated from the village environment by their training and occupation. An individual able to bridge this gap is positioned at a crucial juncture, he or she being either from one side, or from the other side. The broker in the *Aja* region may involve himself/herself in material concerns such as the building of a school, a health facility, a warehouse, a road, etc. This aspect of brokerage has assumed increased importance since independence, as resources have become available for rural development. In the *Aja* region today, the performance of this role takes on added significance because of inhibitions restricting the extent of interactions between these levels. Daane and Mongbo (1991) give a good and historical account of the difficulties precluding a proper articulation between peasants' groups and the other actors in the rural development scene. Among other things, they stress the ambivalence of the local leadership. Most of the local leaders are civil servants, who play a dual role of civil society and urban based public bureaucrats. In helping to span this gap, the broker serves a communicative function recognised as vital by both parties. However, the question regarding the extent to which those two diffuse groups are antagonistic with respect to rural development, still remains to be answered.

On the grounds of indigenous categorisation and empirical evidence, however, it is clear that to identify the role of a broker with that of a patron would be to combine two analytically separable roles. The two roles are directed toward different goals: a broker acts to mediate in the relations between social strata (for instance, farmers and public bureaucracy), while the role of patron applies to a wealthy villager in his dealings with other villagers (where absentee landowners are an important factor in rural life, the patron may not be a villager). In the *Aja* region, however, absentee landowners are few, and they control little land (Biaou, 1996). This is not to assert that both roles cannot be combined or exercised by one and the same person. It seems that, in the rural areas, the entrepreneur-type of farmers are increasingly playing both roles.

Fourthly, the role of mediator elicits the same term as that for broker in most indigenous communities (see Bailey, 1976). The roles of broker and mediator are, however, as analytically separable as are those of patron and broker. As brokers operate on a vertical plane between social strata, mediators operate within a single stratum, typically involving local issues and disputes within the village sphere. In a sense, mediators constitute informal *governance* and typically are the primary discussants of local issues.