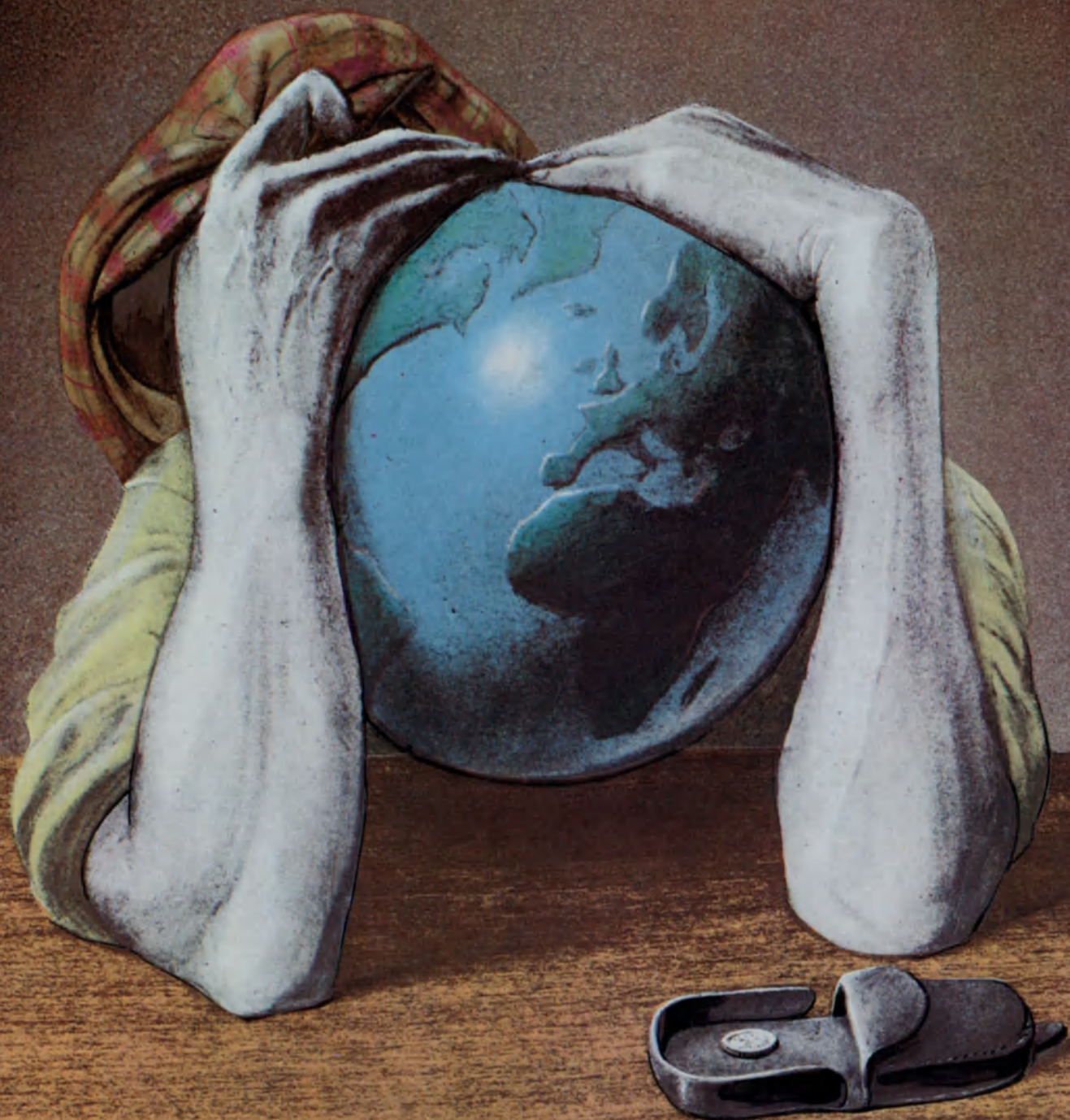


The Unesco Courier

OCTOBER 1981 - 4.50 French francs



The Disinherited

THE PLIGHT OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

**TREASURES
OF
WORLD ART**

166

Panama

Rattle with a human face

This ceramic ball inscribed with the features of a human face is a rattle (diameter 4.2 cm). Discovered near Tonosí in the Los Santos province of Panama, it was fashioned sometime between 200 and 500 AD during what is known as the El Indio period. It is now preserved in the Musée de l'Homme, Paris.

Photo D. Destalle © Musée de l'Homme, Paris



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Cover design © Gal, Brussels

The plight of the 275 million people living in the world's poorest and economically weakest countries is the theme of this issue of the *Unesco Courier*. It was also the subject of a United Nations Conference held at Unesco's Paris headquarters from 1 to 14 September, 1981. Addressing the Conference, United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim declared: "In the current world economic crisis, it is the least developed countries which are particularly vulnerable... For the accelerated growth of the developing countries and particularly the least developed amongst them, a much stronger political will and a sense of shared responsibility on the part of the entire international community is a prime necessity... Given determination, political vision and international co-operation, it is certainly possible to render significant assistance to these countries in finding solutions to their economic problems. They must be given the means to break out of the vicious trap of poverty and deprivation."

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The poverty trap

The plight of the Least Developed Countries

by **Henri Lopès**
and
Huynh Cao Tri

THE concept of LDCs (Least Developed Countries) is relatively new. Long regarded with suspicion by the other developing countries, it originated among the industrialized nations who supported a selective system of preferences graduated according to product and country, in opposition to the Third World's proposal to set up a single system of trade preferences.

Three criteria were finally adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in November 1971 for defining the LDCs:

- a very low level of *per capita* income—barely \$200 per person and per year in 1979—as against an average of \$700 in the developing countries taken as a whole and \$8,000 in market economy industrialized countries;
- a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in which the industrial sector's contribution is 10 % or less—against 19 % in the developing countries as a whole;
- a literacy rate of 20 % or less.

There were originally 25 LDCs, but the official list now includes the following 31 States: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haïti, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Samoa, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Yemen Arab Republic, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

The largest number (twenty-one) of these countries are on the African continent; eight belong to the Asian region and one each to the Caribbean (Haïti) and to Oceania (Samoa). Their combined population is 275 million or about 13 % of the total population of the developing countries (China not included).

Though the LDCs differ widely in size of population, political regime and geographic

situation, they all share a number of common features:

- a high percentage of their population depend for their livelihood on agriculture, usually carried out at subsistence level, and, at best, integrated to only a slight degree into the modern monetary system. They all have poor communications systems;
- industrial production in the LDCs is usually very small both in absolute terms and in percentage. Most of them have such a tiny economic growth rate that their per capita income often tends to decrease instead of rising;
- for various reasons the LDCs generally have been unable to create an export sector which would enable them to finance their import needs. And where exports do exist they are usually limited to two or three basic products;
- natural resources vary from country to country, but in most cases even where mineral resources have been discovered they are not yet being exploited. Many LDCs in fact do have large mineral and hydroelectric resources but their development calls for concerted and combined efforts. In others, these resources are scarce or non-existent and the situation can only be improved by making better use of the country's human resources;
- all these countries, however, are very short of trained personnel capable of planning, organizing and administering the development process, as is shown by their very low literacy rates and figures of school and university enrolments;

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▶ • the people of the LDCs suffer from malnutrition; they lack clean drinking water, as well as basic health and education services. The world's highest birth and death rates are to be found in these countries. As the president of the World Bank put it, "their populations live in a state of absolute poverty";

• domestic savings in the LDCs are negligible and there is a very low level of investment;

• most of them rely largely on international aid, which covers a considerable part of their imports. Worse still, the gap between these countries and the rest of the developing world is growing, as is the gap between the latter and the industrialized world.

This dire situation, which has been called "the scandal of the century", has often promoted generous gestures: in very critical circumstances or in times of natural disaster rescue operations organized by the international community have saved human lives. While such efforts should not be minimized, it must be stressed that what the LDCs need is not a temporary remedy for their ills, but a cure, or, better still, the means to cure themselves.

For they hold the key to their own salvation and should be prepared to mobilize their peoples resolutely in a long-term effort, using strategies inspired by the lessons of the first two United Nations Development Decades.

The first decade sought to achieve social progress through improved living conditions and a greater degree of freedom. But social progress was seen merely as a fall-out from economic growth, estimated at 5 % of Gross National Product (GNP), and was to be achieved by increasing industrial and agricultural production.

The second development decade corrected the initial strategy by giving greater importance to social aims. It stressed the need for reforms in domestic structures and recommended limiting the privileges of the elite in poor countries, in particular through a more equitable distribution of national income.

In each case, development was based on existing (liberal or planned economy) models, but in order to use these models effectively the developing countries, especially the LDCs, first had to make up for years of backwardness. It is clear today that gross inequalities are hidden behind the apparently satisfactory global results of the seventies. The 38 low-income countries classified by the World Bank as "low-income developing countries" achieved an annual economic growth of only 3.9 % during the sixties, and of 3.6 % during the 1970-1978 period. During the latter period there was even a decrease in gross domestic product in some of these countries. Over the whole period 1960-1978, GNP growth in the low-income group averaged 1.6 % annually, and it fell in seven countries.

In the past few years it has become clear to the international community that

development cannot be equated with reproducing systematically the dominant foreign production and consumer models, or even with fulfilling economic objectives when these have no cultural content. The concept of "endogenous development" with its three components—the cultural dimension, autonomy and popular participation in development—is now universally recognized. This strategy aims at substituting a new international economic order based on equity and solidarity for interdependence based on inequality.

This kind of development satisfies several fundamental needs including: harmonious social relations, brought about within the community through justice and social concord and between nations by greater equity in the distribution of benefits; a balance between man and nature in the environment and habitat; and more democratic and humane methods of development achieved through broader participation of groups and individuals at all stages of the planning process. (Participation is seen not only as a means of achieving development but also as responding to a basic human need, a form of self-education in civic and social matters and a fundamental human right.) The aim, in other words, is to achieve global, multidimensional and integrated development. And this unified approach involves not only active participation of all citizens both as agents and beneficiaries of development, but the use of multidisciplinary methods of analysis.

Meeting the economic and cultural demands of an endogenous, man-based development strategy should enable each country to acquire optimum control over all development operations at national level.

But experience also proves that a State can meet all the social, human and political preconditions of endogenous development, it can work out a carefully prepared plan and still not achieve adequate progress in development or even economic growth. Inevitably there comes a time when the problem of financing development arises and it then becomes clear that this problem cannot be solved simply by distributing existing capital in a more equitable way. What is even more serious is that there seems to be no prospect of drawing on national savings in the LDCs, at least so long as they keep their present structures.

The investment needs of these countries are considerable and always exceed a tolerable percentage of their gross national product. According to the World Health Organization, even if the LDCs were to increase their health spending by 10 % annually, their investments in this sector in the year 2000 would amount to only about 5 % of the sums now being spent in most industrialized countries. Third World industry, according to another study, will require \$25 to \$35 billion per year in foreign capital during the coming decade; it is now receiving less than \$10 billion annually.

Despite the many resolutions passed unanimously both by the United Nations

Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and by the U.N. General Assembly, the industrialized countries are still a long way from the target of allotting 0.70 % of their GNP to official development aid. In the member States of OECD (the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), the average rate is only 0.08 %; and it is 0.01 % in planned economy industrialized countries, which do not consider themselves responsible for the plight of the developing world. OPEC member countries, on the other hand, are already devoting 0.20 % of their GNP to official development aid. As to China, which is a developing country and has recently been classified as a group on its own, it has stressed that its aid "cannot be compared to that of the developed countries", but must be considered as a form of economic and technical co-operation between developing nations.

During the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held in Paris from 1 to 14 September 1981, many delegations emphasized that what they expected from the industrialized nations should not be seen as an act of charity but rather as a gesture of solidarity and even as enlightened mutual interest. They stressed that the plight of the developing countries in general and of the LDCs in particular was not due to fate or to any intrinsic incapacity, but was the consequence of an historical relationship of domination and exploitation based on force.

It is true that aid received from the industrialized world enables the developing countries to increase their exports. But their needs are such that they inevitably use any additional income that this brings in to buy essential goods from the developed countries. The latter therefore stand to gain from any increase in the poor countries' resources produced by an expansion in their exports.

The prolonged recession of the mid-seventies has highlighted the important role played by Third World markets in compensating for the fall in demand in the industrialized countries and in limiting unemployment in these countries. Between 1950 and 1980, overall exports to the developing world from OECD member states made it possible to create thirty million jobs in the industrialized world.

While the developing countries showed their solidarity with the LDCs during the Paris conference and supported all their claims, they also stressed that the plight of the LDCs is only one aspect of the problems facing the developing world as a whole and that commitments made to help these countries should not be used as an excuse for reducing official aid to the rest of the Third World or allowing it to stagnate at its present level. This was by no means a superfluous precaution, for some of the industrialized countries are inclined to use the present world recession as an excuse for evading their duty of international solidarity.

It is extremely important that the international community should realize that the



only true and lasting form of development is global, planetary development. The aim of the Paris conference was to urge the donor countries to go beyond declarations of intent and make firm, concrete commitments leading to a new programme of action for the 1980s.

In spite of the lessons of the first two development decades, the discussions tended to be dominated by short-term economic problems at the expense of vital cultural and social issues. And here Unesco's representatives drew attention to the part the

Organization could play in the war against poverty and injustice.

Unesco is prepared to put its experience in education and literacy training at the disposal of any country that asks for it. Education and literacy can provide the peoples of the LDCs with the tools they need for the task of national construction. Both can play a decisive role in improving nutrition and health. This calls for a restructuring of educational systems, curricula and methods so as to take proper account of the fundamental objectives of development and the national culture. Too many schemes

have failed because they neglected the cultural identity of the societies involved.

Unesco also has a great deal of experience in communication, another field vital for development; it provides the means of transmitting technical knowledge, influencing attitudes and behaviour and making the public aware of the many and varied kinds of effort that national development involves.

Unesco's Social Sciences sector can help to find solutions to many grave problems facing the developing countries. The phenomenon of poverty, for example, is linked to a variety of factors—economic,

THREE POINTERS TO POVERTY



Photo © Giraudon, Paris. Bibliothèque Nationale

Of all the developing countries, the LDCs (Least Developed Countries) are the poorest, the weakest economically and the most hampered by structural difficulties. According to the United Nations, the expression "least developed countries" means the weakest in terms of three main economic and social criteria: *low income*—per capita Gross Domestic Product of \$200 or less (in 1979 the annual per capita GDP in these countries averaged \$183 as compared with \$674 for all developing countries and \$8,217 for market economy countries); *low literacy rate*—20 per cent or less; and *low share of manufacturing in total output*—10 per cent or less (often it is less than 4 or 5 per cent). These three criteria are symbolized by: above, a coin from ancient Lucania, right, a school in Nepal, and, opposite page, a baseball factory at Port au Prince, Haïti.



Photo Claude Sauvageot, taken from *Enfants du Monde* © Editions Jeune Afrique and Claude Sauvageot, Paris

social, cultural and human. Analysis of the interaction between production factors and social relations, and between technical progress and cultural values, the study of the socio-cultural conditions in which the transfer of science and technology takes place, and of the way in which the different sectors of development (production, exchange, distribution and socio-cultural activities) function and influence one another—all this offers the social sciences a vast field for research and reflection.

Over and above the international community's concern for the immediate plight of

the Least Developed Countries, what is really at stake is how to achieve human solidarity on a global scale in an increasingly interdependent world. As Unesco's Director General, Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, has put it: "Never has the world been so closely knit; but never has its diversity been so striking...; the world emerges as a whole all of whose parts are interrelated." This idea should serve as a basis for the new international economic order and later perhaps for a new and more humane world order which we hope to build.

■ Henri Lopès and Huynh Cao Tri



Photo Alex Webb © Magnum, Paris

1. The poorest countries of an oil-rich region

by Mohamed Said al-Attar



DESPITE the prosperity brought about by the recent increase in oil prices, the income of most people living in States that are members of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) is not much higher than the average income in developing countries taken as a whole. In fact, about half the population of the Western Asian region lives in countries that are not oil producers. The two least developed countries—The Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic—which account for 15 per cent of the region's population and form a geographically homogeneous sub-region, are among the poorest in the world.

The extent of poverty and underdevelopment in these two countries cannot be fully gauged from their *per capita* Gross National Product, which is only one of several criteria used to identify the Least Developed Countries. Other indicators in fact show a far worse situation. Life expectancy in the two

Yemens is among the lowest in the world, even for that part of the population with an adequate calorie intake and access to clean water supplies. The literacy rate and the number of doctors are also among the lowest in the world, while, not unnaturally, the number of cases of illness is among the highest. As for the social services and means of transport, they are below acceptable standards.

The economic structure of both countries is decrepit. Agriculture, their chief activity, is crippled by lack of investment, shortage

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Women at the well. Left, Aden, the People's Democratic Republic of the Yemen; right, Sudah, the Yemen Arab Republic.



Photos © Pascal Maréchaux, taken from *Villages d'Arabie Heureuse*, Editions Chêne-Hachette, Paris

of water, the deterioration of the environment and the emigration of workers.

Industry is almost non-existent and the amount of income and number of jobs it provides are insignificant. Efforts to promote industrialization are hampered by lack of capital and skills, as well as by the high cost of raw materials, the absence of infrastructures and appropriate technologies and a very restricted market. The two countries therefore depend to a great extent on imports, particularly of food and other essential goods. Exports, which barely exist, cover only 5 per cent of imports.

The Least Developed Countries of the ECWA region are also poor in natural resources. Clearly, this is a grave handicap to development, especially in view of the overall rise in the price of raw materials, particularly oil. But the two Yemens are in desperate need of energy resources to compensate for the shortage of qualified manpower. This is now more acute than ever because of the number of skilled workers who have emigrated over the last few years.

One of the gravest obstacles to the development of the poorest countries in the ECWA region is geographical, for the nature of the terrain—desert or sparsely cultivated areas with a scattered population—makes the provision of infrastructures a highly costly operation.

Despite these handicaps, the two least privileged countries of ECWA have made laudable efforts to develop their economies. Though they have chosen different paths to development, they share common aims: economic growth, a fairer distribution of wealth and a higher standard of living. To achieve these aims both have embarked on ambitious development schemes which should help to accelerate the low GNP *per capita* growth rate of the 1960s and 1970s.

Neither of the two countries has sufficient resources of its own to finance the increased expenditure required by development. The Arab Republic of Yemen's Second Five-Year Plan for the period 1982-1986 envisages an expenditure of 10 to 15 billion dollars. It is calculated, however, that only 2.9 billion can be expected from national resources and outside contributions. In the Democratic Republic of Yemen, the investment needed in the 1980s is estimated at 3.77 billion dollars. Despite increased efforts to muster national savings, a large part of the invest-

ment needed—nearly one-third—will have to be financed by outside aid. This foreign aid has been estimated at a billion dollars for the present five-year plan, rising to 1.27 billion during the second half of the decade.

The gap between expenditure and national resources would be even greater if the prosperity of the neighbouring Gulf States did not spill over to some extent into the two Yemens through the funds sent home by emigrant Yemeni workers. Since 1973, the beginning of an era of rapid growth for the oil-producing countries of the region, these transfers, which amount at present to 2 billion dollars for the Yemen sub-region, have provided considerable finance both for imports and for development expenditure.

Such transfers, however, are not likely to continue at the same rate as in the past, for the Yemeni workers are gradually being replaced by more highly-qualified and better-organized workers from South-East Asia. The socio-economic costs of exporting labour must also be taken into account, as, for example, the impact on the home labour market. In the Arab Republic of Yemen, about 20 per cent of the labour force is reported to be working abroad. Since many of these workers come from rural areas, agricultural production and productivity is considerably affected, and this adds to the uncertainty concerning food supplies. Moreover, by draining skilled and semi-skilled workers away from the country continuous emigration has created staffing and training problems for the national development schemes.

Using funds sent home by emigrant workers to expand national production, which is a way of putting this money to the most profitable use and even of creating jobs for the workers themselves should they later wish to return home, is a difficult problem of economic management that few developing countries have succeeded in solving satisfactorily. The LDCs, especially, lack adequate savings schemes that would enable the State to borrow and use for development funds sent home from abroad. The result is that the money, instead of being saved, is spent on consumer products and this, in turn, creates inflationary pressure and discourages investment.

Clearly, the lack of resources in the Least Developed Countries of the ECWA area must be made good by outside aid. Hitherto

the amount of financial assistance received by these countries has fallen short of the requirements of possible development programmes. Most of the earlier aid schemes were designed to support the budget and the balance of payments, as well as contributing to defence expenditure. The productive sectors received insufficient aid and most of this was used to maintain consumption of essential goods such as foodstuffs, pharmaceutical products and fuels and to build schools, hospitals and roads.

The oil-producing countries of the ECWA region have been in the front rank of suppliers of aid to the poorest countries of the area, as well as the Third World as a whole. Their assistance has either been given direct, under bilateral agreements, or channelled through multilateral operations. Over the period 1973-1978, the OPEC countries of the region devoted on average 5 per cent of their GNP to the developing countries, out of a total of 6 per cent of their GNP spent on foreign aid. It should also be noted that 5 per cent of the aid received by the least privileged countries of ECWA comes from the oil-producing States of the region.

Quite apart from the amount of aid received, the form it takes and the way it is financed are of vital importance to the LDCs. They cannot be expected to bear the high interest costs of loans made to assist development. The aid they receive should be essentially in the form of gifts. Another difficulty arises for the receiving countries when the donor wishes to finance only part of a project, leaving the recipient to search for a co-financier. Even if one is found, the execution of the project still presents serious problems of co-ordination. The LDCs also need increased aid in the form of food supplies to enable them to meet minimum needs and build up essential reserves.

The poorest countries of the ECWA region, like those of the other regions, also require effective technical assistance programmes, particularly in connexion with the training of executives and skilled workers, the development of energy resources, the establishment of technical components of infrastructures and the identification and selection of projects. Providing technical assistance is an ideal way for the more technically advanced developing countries to prove their solidarity with the Least Developed Countries.

■ Mohamed Said al-Attar



Photo © Christophe Nageon, Paris

CASE STUDIES

2. Tropic islands in search of a future

Interview with José Brito,
Cape Verde's Secretary of State for Development

Courier — *The group of "Least Developed Countries" seems to be a very varied assortment. Is there any common denominator for these thirty-one States?*

Brito — Yes, they are indeed very diverse and, at first sight, it is difficult to see what the little islands of my country, Cape Verde, with a total population of 300,000, can have in common with, for example, Bangladesh, which has a hundred million inhabitants. Obviously the priorities are not the same. But there is a common denominator, and probably only one: the fundamental problems faced by the developing world—education, health and employment—are more serious in these countries than elsewhere and the governments find it even more difficult to solve them.

This is true even when a country is rich in natural resources. Guinea, for example, has large mineral deposits, while Cape Verde has none; but Guinea is not yet in a position to develop as it would wish and lacks the means to exploit these resources itself. In other words, the Least Developed Countries face obstacles they cannot overcome without considerable support from the international community. ►

► **Courier** — *What specific problems does Cape Verde face and could you explain why you lack the means to resolve them?*

Brito — I can answer you in two words: *infrastructure and personnel*. As far as the economic infrastructure is concerned we inherited practically nothing from the colonial system. The country had been living on direct aid from the suzerain power and when it became independent it was not even able to feed its own population. As an agricultural country in a semi-arid zone—it is part of the Sahelian climatic system—Cape Verde depends almost entirely on rainfall agriculture; very few areas are irrigated and droughts have had disastrous effects. There are still food shortages even today. Though it is an archipelago consisting of ten islands and five islets, its ports are insufficient to allow the free flow of people and goods. At the time of independence industry was non-existent.

In a situation like this what can be done to provide employment and prevent emigration? There are 300,000 Cape Verdeans living in the islands and probably as many if not more living abroad. In fact, there is a positive aspect to this emigration at present since it enables us to correct our trade deficit, for our imports vastly exceed our exports. Nevertheless, emigration also has its dangers since it is usually the most qualified people who emigrate and as a result we are in the paradoxical position of having a very high rate of unemployment and an enormous lack of executive level personnel. This is characteristic of most of the Least Developed Countries: they lack qualified staff to run the economy and the civil service.

Courier — *Isn't a high rate of illiteracy another characteristic of the Least Developed Countries?*

Brito — It certainly is a qualification for membership of the group. Yet it is clear that if these countries are to acquire the techniques needed for development, they must have a high literacy rate. Illiterate peasants don't take easily to innovation; they stick to traditional methods which, often, do not allow them to rise above a subsistence economy. In Cape Verde, however, this problem is less acute than elsewhere. There are still too many illiterate adults, but more than ninety-five per cent of children of school age are now receiving primary education. What is much more serious is that we do not have the qualified personnel or the resources to increase our production and so reduce our dependence on other countries. This is another characteristic of the Least Developed Countries and the developing countries in general: often they can see a way of solving their problems but haven't the means of doing so.

Courier — *When you speak of the problems of manpower, or human resources, are you thinking in terms of the problems of vocational and technical training?*

Brito — Yes, that is a concrete example of the type of problem we are facing. We have to educate workers and set up vocational training centres, and this training must continue within industry. But we haven't the money to open such centres, to establish technical colleges and maintain them, nor have we the staff to man them—at least, not Cape Verdeans.

Courier — *Yet there are plenty of qualified and competent Cape Verdeans.*

Brito — Yes, but they are abroad. One can't really talk about a brain drain. We have been independent now for six years—about the time it takes to train a first batch of professionals. These young people should soon be coming back from the foreign universities where they have been studying, but we know that many won't. This is nothing new. It happened long before independence. Many Cape Verdeans have become nationals of other countries and hold positions of responsibility. Among the highly qualified people only a small number come back to work in Cape Verde. It is true that the terms we offer are not very attractive; salaries are low and there is an acute housing shortage, but the development of our country calls for sacrifices.

Courier — *All the developing countries face these problems.*

Brito — Yes, but they are more acute in Cape Verde because of the emigration I mentioned earlier which is a tradition with us. Cape Ver-

deans don't emigrate just anywhere. They know where to go and find it easy to adapt. I mentioned the economic advantages and disadvantages of emigration, but there are also cultural ones. Foreign contacts and exchanges can have some very salutary effects. As a people we have no inhibitions with regard to other cultures and find it easy to integrate elements from them into our own. This open-mindedness, which is the hallmark of our culture, enables us to adopt any useful innovations. But there is one "cultural danger" that has a direct effect on the economy and that is the importation of consumption patterns completely unsuited to our resources and which lead to public demand for goods that local production cannot provide.

Courier — *Will the government go on giving priority to agriculture?*

Brito — Yes, we must concentrate on fighting the desert and the problems connected with drought. This means reallocation of the land, reforestation, soil conservation, as well as increasing water resources and supplies and extending the areas under irrigation. A programme of this kind calls for large-scale investment. In Cape Verde the cost of developing one hectare of land—clearing it of stones, improving the soil and protecting it against erosion—is extremely high.

Fortunately, the people understand the need for this work and are able to take part in it. These schemes for soil protection and irrigation create jobs and therefore help in the fight against unemployment. Moreover, the agricultural sector is likely to attract investment and loans, so we hope to solve the problem of finance without too much difficulty. This is practically the only area in which national production can be increased.

The organization of these various activities calls for a series of ancillary measures such as agrarian reform, the creation of credit facilities and agricultural extension services. We know full well, however, that the possibilities of agriculture are limited by factors such as climate, demographic pressure and the amount of land available. A time will come when increased productivity will no longer generate development. So we must prepare for the next phase—industrialization. We intend to concentrate on processing industries, canneries and enterprises producing building materials. We are also thinking of establishing industries linked to Cape Verde's geographic and economic position as an international staging post. These would include merchant shipping as well as fuelling and transit facilities, warehouses, etc.

But, once again, to reach this phase we need trained personnel. If we don't want to lose control of our economy we must train Cape Verdeans and organize them into peasant and worker production co-operatives. Furthermore, we must adapt the public services to cater for this co-operative system and set up institutions capable of directing public enterprises—in other words, establish a coherent system to control production.

In my view, one of the great mistakes made by developing countries in the past has been to start by setting up production structures and then, at a later stage, trying to solve their manpower problems. We must go about it the other way round and start with the human problem, not forgetting that basic to this is the provision of health services and food supplies.

Courier — *A programme of this kind calls for considerable finance. Where do you see the aid coming from in the present international situation?*

Brito — We have developed co-operative links with as many countries as possible. We believe that the more dependent a country is economically, the more independent it should try to be at the ethical and political level, and that therefore it should avoid ranging itself with one group rather than another. That is why non-alignment seems to us to be the only path open to the developing countries if they want to avoid becoming satellites. In fact, non-alignment could become an international force capable of reducing conflict and tension and of increasing the world's concern for the problems of development. ■

The Disinherited

A dossier on the thirty-one

Least Developed Countries

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held at Unesco's Paris headquarters from 1 to 14 September, 1981, reflected the will of the international community to give unique attention and support to overcoming the basic development problems of the poorest, weakest countries in the world—the least developed countries. It should be seen as part of efforts to alleviate poverty generally in all developing countries, and as part of the broader efforts to establish the New International Economic Order.

The group of least developed countries now comprises a population of approximately 275 million or about one-eighth of the population of all developing countries (excluding China). According to recommendations by the United Nations Committee for Development Planning, the expression "least developed countries" means the weakest in terms of certain economic and social criteria: low income, low literacy rate and low share of manufacturing in total output.

What are the reasons for the very low level of most of the economic and social indicators for the least developed countries as well as for the weak, and sometimes even deteriorating, performance over time of many of them?

Although quite diverse in a number of structural characteristics, they have in common: a high percentage of population dependent on agriculture; extremely limited manufacturing activity; very low rates of economic growth; exports limited to a few primary products; natural resources either unexploited, limited or non-existent; often subject to severe geographic, climatic or topographical handicaps; extremely limited resources of skilled personnel; widespread malnutrition; lack of safe drinking water; limited health services and education systems; low levels of investment; heavy dependence on foreign aid; lack of foreign exchange to command imports needed for development.

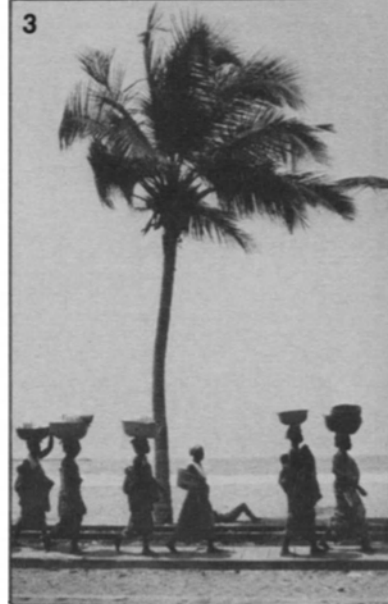
On the following pages the *Unesco Courier* presents a dossier on the appalling problems facing the Least Developed Countries. The necessarily brief reports are based on summaries prepared by the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries on the basis of presentations made by the countries concerned. In the case of Guinea the summary was prepared by the country itself. In the case of Chad, no country presentation was made and the figures quoted in this dossier are taken from a variety of United Nations sources.

A deliberate choice was made to present the current situation of each country and to exclude the detailed development plans drawn up by countries themselves. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the Least Developed Countries, without exception, are themselves making tremendous efforts against virtually impossible odds to remedy a situation which dishonours the entire world.

Selected economic and social indicators for least developed countries

Country	Population			Labour force in agriculture (%)	GDP/cap.		Average daily calorie intake as % of requirement
	Total (mil.)	Growth rate (%) p.a.	Density (Pop./km ²)		Level in \$	Growth rate % p.a.	
	1979	1970-1979	1979	1978	1978	1970-1979	1977
Afghanistan	15.5	2.5	24	79	241	0.1	110
Bangladesh	86.6	2.7	602	84	118	0.9	78
Benin	3.5	2.7	31	47	224	-1.1	98
Bhutan	1.3	2.1	27	94	103	..	88
Botswana	0.8	2.0	1	82	632	9.5	94(iv)
Burundi	4.4	2.1	157	84	146	1.2	97
Cape Verde	0.3	1.9	79	57	160(ii)	-2.3	..
Central African Republic	2.0	2.2	3	88	248	-1.2	99
Chad	4.4	2.2	3	85	188	-1.0	74
Comoros	0.3	2.3	152	64	248	-2.1	81(iv)
Democratic Yemen	1.8	2.6	6	60	316	3.5	81
Ethiopia	30.4	2.4	25	80	143	0.4	75
Gambia	0.6	2.8	51	79	244	0.4	97(iv)
Guinea	4.9	2.5	20	81	262	0.6	84
Guinea-Bissau	0.6	1.5	16	83	250	0.0	73(iv)
Haiti	4.9	1.7	177	68	278	2.3	93
Lao People's Democratic Rep.	3.6	2.3	15	75	83	-2.1(iii)	94
Lesotho	1.3	2.4	43	85	145	1.3	99
Malawi	5.8	2.9	49	85	175	4.7	90
Maldives	0.15	2.5	503	77(i)	147	..	90(iv)
Mali	6.5	2.5	5	88	131	0.1	90
Nepal	13.7	2.1	97	93	119	0.3	91
Niger	5.2	2.8	4	89	220(ii)	1.5	91
Rwanda	4.7	2.9	177	90	188	1.1	98
Samoa	0.15	0.8	56	75	520	..	82(iv)
Somalia	3.5	2.7	6	81	130(ii)	1.4	88
Sudan	17.9	2.7	7	78	320(ii)	0.5	93
Uganda	13.2	2.9	56	82	280(ii)	-3.1	91
United Republic of Tanzania	18.0	3.0	19	82	263	2.2	89
Upper Volta	6.7	2.5	25	83	126	-0.8	79
Yemen	5.6	2.0	30	76	447	2.2	91
Total least developed countries	268.5	2.6	20	82	183	0.7	86
All developing countries	2164.6	2.6	32	60	661	2.9	97

Source : UNCTAD secretariat estimates mainly based on data from the United Nations Statistical Office, FAO, UNESCO and the World Bank.
(i) 1980 - (ii) G.N.P. - (iii) 1970-1978 - (iv) 1974-1978



The world community adopts a ten-year action programme

When the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries ended on 14 September, it was amid hopes that the world community had agreed on a prescription which would relieve the plight of the 275 million people living in the world's poorest and economically weakest nations. These hopes repose on a Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s (SNPA) which delegates adopted by acclamation.

The Programme, approval of which climaxed two weeks of discussion and negotiations in which representatives of 142 countries took part, is designed to transform the economies of the least developed countries towards sustained self development and enable them to provide at least internationally-accepted minimum standards of nutrition, health, housing and education, as well as job opportunities to all their citizens, particularly to the rural and urban poor.

The Substantial New Programme of Action has three chapters: Chapter I deals with the general situation and national measures; Chapter II covers international support measures, and Chapter III arrangements for implementation, follow-up and monitoring.

In the introduction to the Chapter on the general situation and national measures, the Conference stated that the least developed countries have the primary responsibility for their overall development. Sections are devoted to measures that should be envisaged at the national level in key sectors such as food and agriculture, human resources and social development, natural resources and energy and the manufacturing industry.

Among the objectives cited are the 4 per cent annual growth target in agriculture set in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade for all developing countries, so that food production in each country would increase faster than population growth with a view to guaranteeing food security. The target set for the manufacturing industry in the least developed countries should aim at increasing the rate of manufacturing growth to an overall annual growth of 9 per cent or more.

The dependence of the least developed countries on external aid is indicated by the fact that they are now able to finance only half of

their imports out of export earnings. The import costs of these countries has risen by \$10 billion in the last decade with only a small increase in the real volume of imports. With the growth in population there has been an actual decline in *per capita* terms. Recognizing this situation, the Conference stated in the Programme of Action that only a "substantial" increase in official development assistance in real terms during the 1980s would enable the least developed countries to achieve the objectives of their country programmes.

In the Programme, donor countries also reaffirmed their commitment to the target of 0.7 per cent of their Gross National Product (GNP) for overall Official Development Assistance (ODA) to all developing countries, as envisaged in the provisions of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, and agreed that the flows of ODA would be increasingly directed towards the least developed countries.

According to the Programme, most donors of ODA will devote in the coming years 0.15 per cent of their GNP to these countries. Others will double their ODA to the least developed countries in the same period. "Taken together these efforts are likely to achieve, by 1985, a doubling of ODA to the least developed countries, compared to the transfers to them during the last five years".

Agreement was also reached on other international support measures related to aid modalities, technical assistance, commercial policy and transfer of technology. These measures taken together were also considered as likely to have considerable impact on the situation of the 31 least developed countries.

The programme emphasizes that regular review and monitoring of its implementation at national, regional and global levels is essential. National reviews would be fundamental for the execution of the SNPA in the least developed countries while the regional and global reviews will be crucial in ensuring international support for it. The review mechanism as a whole will be a "means to ensure that every least developed country receives an adequate minimum flow of assistance and demonstrates a minimum standard of performance in economic development".



1. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan

AFGHANISTAN is a land-locked country with a *surface area* of about 650,000 square kilometres and a *population* of about 15.5 million. Arable land accounts for about 12 per cent of the total area, forest and woodland for about 6 per cent. The terrain is mountainous or hilly, the climate continental. About 71 per cent of the population is rural, 16 per cent nomadic and 13 per cent urban, with almost half the urban population living in Kabul. *Life expectancy* at birth is 42 years. The number of children in *primary schools* is expected to reach the one million mark shortly; the adult *literacy rate* is about 12 per cent. *Agriculture* (including forestry) is the principal activity, accounting for about 58 per cent of the national income in 1978/79 and for 70 per cent of employment. The main crops are wheat, fruit, cotton and sugar beet. Animal husbandry is a major occupation for the rural and nomadic population and livestock products are exported in considerable quantities. In 1978/79 *industry* accounted for about 11 per cent of the national income and trade for about 9 per cent. The active labour force is estimated at about 5 million. The country's *mineral wealth* (coal, iron ore, copper, natural gas) and agricultural raw materials provide a basis for industrialization, and the *energy potential*, as yet largely unexploited, is considerable. The constraints hampering the industrialization process are the rugged terrain, the land-locked situation of the country and the shortage of managerial manpower.

2. The People's Republic of Bangladesh

BANGLADESH, with a *population* over 90 million, is the world's eighth most populous country (density about 580 persons to the square kilometre). Over 90 per cent of the people live in rural areas and depend largely on agriculture and related activities for a living. The *manufacturing sector* accounts for only some 10 per cent of Gross Domestic Product. It is estimated that 80 per cent of the population are living below the poverty line, i.e. their income is not sufficient to cover minimum requirements of food, shelter, clothing, education and health care. The country's *natural resource* endowment is limited, consisting essentially of fisheries, natural gas and some mineral deposits. At present adequate shelter, piped water, sanitation and other community facilities are available only in about 100 urban and semi-urban locations in the country, serving about 10 per cent of the total population. There is one physician per 11,000 persons, one hospital bed per 4,500 persons. Of the country's 8,500 medical practitioners, fewer than 10 per cent work in the rural areas. In earlier years privileged treatment was accorded to university education, at the expense of primary education and as a result the *literacy rate* remained low (about 22 per cent). Per capita consumption of *energy* is one of the lowest in the world. While three-quarters of the energy consumed comes from sources like firewood, cow dung, etc., the import bill for fuel nevertheless represents more than half the country's total foreign exchange earnings. Vulnerability to natural disasters (floods, cyclones) is another formidable obstacle to sustained economic and social development.

3. The People's Republic of Benin

BENIN, a country of almost 113,000 sq. km., is situated in the equatorial coastal region of West Africa. Its *population* was estimated in 1979 at about 3.3 million. The yearly *demographic growth rate* is about 2.7 per cent. Owing to climatic conditions and to water-borne diseases, certain infectious diseases and inadequate health care, *life expectancy* at birth is very low—about 39 years. *Infant mortality* is very high. Over 80 per cent of the population lives in rural areas, which are poorly provided with health services. The average school enrolment was estimated at about 47 per cent in 1978. The *literacy rate* of the population as a whole is estimated at about 12 per cent, but it is thought that only about 5 per cent of persons over the age of 35 can read and write. *Agriculture* is the principal occupation of over 60 per cent of the labour force of about 1.5 million. The modern sector gives employment to only about 61,600 wage-earners, of whom almost half are employed in the public service. The physical infrastructure, roads, railways, port, is inadequate for the needs of the country's economic development. Many rural localities are not accessible the year round and hence cannot market their produce. Piped water and electricity supplies are available virtually only in the large urban centres. The country's principal *export commodities* are palm oil, coffee, cotton, groundnuts and shrimps. Both the value and the volume of these exports have been declining in recent years.

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4. The Kingdom of Bhutan

THE Kingdom of Bhutan, a land-locked country with a *total land area* of about 47,000 square kilometres in the Himalayan ranges, has a *population* estimated at 1.2 million. There are three climatic zones: the southern characterized by a hot humid tropical climate; the central belt is temperate; and the northern area is alpine. About 70 per cent of the total surface area consists of forest, 9 per cent is under cultivation and the rest is wilderness. The vast majority of the Bhutanese work force (95 per cent) is engaged in *agriculture* which contributed 54 per cent to Bhutan's Gross National Product in 1979/80. Animal husbandry is an integral part of farming activities and in the alpine region forms virtually the sole economic activity. There are only two urban centres, including the capital Thimpu, with more than 20,000 inhabitants. Bhutan's abundant but as yet largely unexploited *natural resources* consist principally of forestry resources, hydroelectric energy potential and certain mineral deposits. The average *life expectancy* is 46 years and the rate of *infant mortality* is high. The existing *health care* system is weak (one doctor per 20,000 inhabitants, 12 general hospitals, about 80 dispensaries and three leprosy centres). The two principal constraints hampering activities in all sectors are the shortage of trained and skilled *manpower* and the lack of adequate financial resources. The *illiteracy* rate is estimated at 78 per cent. *Industry* in Bhutan is still at the infant stage accounting for about 6 per cent of Gross National Product.

5. The Republic of Botswana

BOTSWANA is a land-locked country in the centre of the Southern African plateau. Its *area* is about 582,000 sq. km. Two-thirds of the country is desert. It is estimated that less than 5 per cent of the surface is arable. On the other hand, much of the land is suitable for cattle grazing. The *de jure* population is estimated at 884,000; of these about 55,000 are absentees, mostly males employed in South Africa. The *de facto* population (persons resident in Botswana, whether citizens or not) is estimated at 849,000. The annual rate of *population growth* is about 3 per cent. About half the population is under age 15. According to the 1971 census, the infant mortality rate was 97 per 1,000, and 152 per 1,000 did not survive to the age of 5. *Life expectancy* at birth was then 52.5 years for men and 58.6 for women. It is thought that since 1971 infant mortality has been reduced thanks to better health care. Because of lack of educational opportunities in the past, most of the adult population of Botswana is *illiterate*. The majority of the children however now have access to primary education. It is estimated that about three-fifths of the country's labour force (i.e. about 250,000 persons) depend mainly on *subsistence agriculture* and on informal activities for a livelihood. Botswana produces no petroleum or natural gas and has no hydroelectric potential. The majority of the people use wood for heating and candles or paraffin for light. It is hoped to exploit the country's almost unlimited coal resources and to lessen its dependence on expensive imported petroleum products.

6. The Republic of Burundi

BURUNDI forms part of the lakes region of East Africa. It has a gross *surface area* of 27,834 sq. km., the waters of Lake Tanganyika accounting for 2,000 sq. km. In 1979, total population was just over 4 million. About 95 per cent of the people live in rural areas, the towns of Bujumbura and Gitega being virtually the only built-up areas. *Life expectancy* at birth is 45 years and the *infant mortality rate* is 138 per thousand. The climate is favourable to *agriculture* and two or three harvests per annum can be brought in depending on the crop and the area concerned, so the country's effective agricultural area is probably doubled. However, strong demographic pressure and the system of land cultivation are causing the soil and vegetation to deteriorate rapidly. In 1979, four crops—coffee, cotton, tea and cinchona—accounted for the bulk of the total value of Burundi's exports. Lake Tanganyika yields an annual fish catch of about 20,000 tonnes. The *manufacturing sector* (textiles, footwear, cigarettes, etc.) is scheduled to achieve an annual growth rate of 11 per cent between 1981 and 1985 and a similar growth rate is forecast for the mining and energy sectors. Despite progress made in recent years the *health* situation remains precarious; the doctor/inhabitant ratio is 1:34,000 and there is one hospital bed per 286 inhabitants. In 1977/78 the number of pupils attending State *primary schools* was slightly above 142,000 (23 per cent of the age group concerned); a further 45 per cent were attending private schools and literacy centres. The *literacy rate* was 25 per cent in 1978.



7. The Republic of Cape Verde

CAPE Verde consists of ten islands and three islets with a total *land surface area* of about 4,000 sq. km and a *population* estimated at a little less than 300,000. The terrain of most of the islands is rugged. Owing to prolonged drought and to food shortages, many Cape Verdeans have emigrated. It is estimated that the number of emigrants is about equal to the number of residents. The almost total lack of an economic and social infrastructure, and the ravages caused by progressive desertification have contributed to the present state of the country's underdevelopment, aggravated by the small size of the internal market and the decline of the output of subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry in recent years. The country is dependent essentially on external financial assistance, food aid, commodity aid and remittances of emigrants to cover the difference between Gross Domestic Product and total expenditure (the "gap" is estimated at more than 50 per cent). *Industrial activity* accounts for about 10 per cent of GDP and employs about 3 per cent of the labour force. More than half the population depends on *agriculture* for a meagre livelihood. The *illiteracy rate* is about 50 per cent and the health situation is precarious, as exemplified by an *infant mortality rate* of close to 100 per 1,000 and by a doctor:population rate of about 1:5,800. Technical and vocational training facilities are insufficient but the educational standards are expected to improve as almost all children of school age (7-14 years) now attend school.



8. The Central African Republic

THE Central African Republic is a landlocked country with a *surface area* of about 623,000 sq. km, and a *population* estimated (in 1980) at about 2,334,000, of whom over 40 per cent are under 15. The rate of population growth is estimated at 2.5 per cent per annum. The *illiteracy rate* was estimated (in 1962 by the World Bank) to be in excess of 90 per cent. The general mortality rate is estimated at 250 per 1,000, the *infant mortality rate* at 130 per 1,000. All imports and exports have to be carried over long distances by road and rail from and to the seaports of neighbouring transit countries (e.g., the distance from Bangui to Douala is about 1,530 km). About 80 per cent of the population depends on *agriculture* for its livelihood. Less than 2 per cent of the country's surface area is cultivated; about 10 per cent is used by nomadic population groups for cattle raising; and dense forest accounts for about 5 per cent. In 1980 exports amounted to about \$100 million, imports to about \$180 million. The *doctor:population ratio* is about 1:27,500. The diet, particularly of vulnerable groups such as pregnant women and children, is insufficient and unbalanced. The rate of school enrolment is about 47 per cent of children of school age. According to preliminary geological surveys, the Republic possesses large mineral resources but as yet these have not been thoroughly explored or evaluated. It also possesses a great—though as yet largely unexploited—potential of hydro-electric power, thanks to its numerous water courses which could be harnessed to generate electricity.

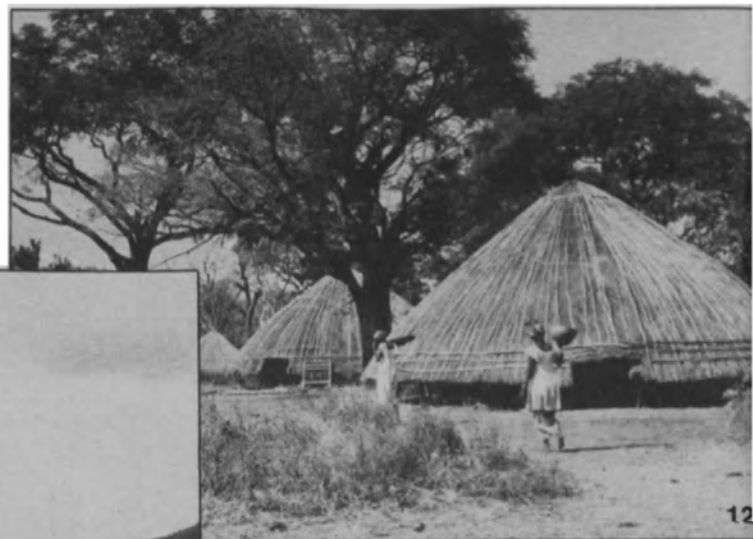
9. The Federal and Islamic Republic of the Comoros

THE islands that constitute the Republic of the Comoros have a *surface area* of about 2,240 square kilometres and a *population* of about 400,000. Population density is very high, averaging 190 persons per square kilometre. The islands are of volcanic origin, the coasts are rocky and there is practically no natural harbour. On the island of Grande Comore there are no year-round rivers or streams and the island is dependent on rainwater stored in tanks and reservoirs. *Agriculture* accounts for about 40 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and for virtually all export earnings. *Export crops* include vanilla, cloves, coconuts and ylang ylang (an important ingredient for perfumes). *Forest resources* have been seriously depleted and now cover only about 20,000 hectares. The *fish catch* is estimated at about 3,000 tonnes annually, but the potential fisheries resources are much greater. At present fishing is carried on by traditional methods. *Non-agricultural production* plays only a minor part in the national economy and *tourism* is still in its infancy. The *health situation* is distressing. The rate of *infant mortality* is about 20 per cent and *life expectancy* is 41 years for men and 44 years for women. The diet of the inhabitants is short of calories and protein. There are three hospitals with about 500 beds. The country has 28 doctors. Nearly all children between the ages of 5 and 7 attend the *Koranic schools*. About 63 per cent of children of school age are enrolled in primary schools, which are modelled on the French system. The teaching staff is to a large extent underqualified.





10. Ethiopia



11. The Republic of the Gambia



12. The Revolutionary People's Republic of Guinea

ETHIOPIA has a total land area of 1,223,600 square kilometres comprising a central highland mass surrounded by lowlands. *Population* was estimated to be 31 million in 1980. Ethiopia is a land of young people with about 54 per cent of the population being below 20 years of age. There is a low standard of nutrition, inadequate access to clean water, widespread disease and a *high infant mortality rate*. Agriculture is based on small-holder production which makes extensive use of the land. The main food crops are cereals, pulses and oilseeds. The main cash crops are coffee (Ethiopia is the largest Arabica coffee producer in Africa with an annual output of 200,000 tonnes), oilseeds, cotton, sisal, tobacco, fruit, pepper and sugar cane. Ethiopia is first in Africa and tenth in the world in the size of its *livestock resources*: 70 million cattle, sheep and goats and about 8 million horses, mules, donkeys, camels, etc. The *manufacturing sector* plays an important role in supplying consumer goods to the domestic market and absorbing agricultural raw materials. Food processing accounts for 30 per cent of manufacturing production, textiles for 25 per cent and beverages for 12 per cent. The remainder comprises tobacco, leather and footwear, wood, chemicals and construction materials. The post-revolutionary period has witnessed a great expansion in *health services* which now reach a significant proportion of the population. There has also been notable progress in *education* with more than 1.8 million children enrolled in primary schools in 1979/80. During the *Mass Literacy Campaign*, nearly seven million adults were covered by courses in basic literacy.

THE Gambia covers some 10,360 sq. km. forming a narrow strip of 350 km. entirely surrounded by Senegal and bordered on the west by the Atlantic. It is one of the Sahelian countries and suffers from frequent droughts. The *population* was estimated (June 1980) at 603,000 and is projected to reach 1 million by the year 2000. The urban population accounts for about a quarter of the total and is concentrated in and around the capital Banjul. Among the effects of migration from the countryside are a shortage of housing, inadequate urban services and increased unemployment. *Health* and sanitary conditions are among the poorest in West Africa, especially in the rural areas. It has been estimated that 62 per cent of the rural population has to walk more than 10 km. to reach the nearest health care facility. The national *literacy rate* is 10 per cent, and is lower in rural areas. According to the Gambian 1973 census (the latest available) average *life expectancy* was 36.1 years. *Infant mortality* is 217 per 1,000 and 30 per cent of children die before the age of 2. The average calorie intake is only 80-90 per cent of the "minimum" required level.

GUINEA, which is situated in the south-western part of West Africa, has a *population* of 6.4 million (1980) and an area of 246,000 sq. km. The rate of *school enrolment*, which was about 15 per cent at independence in 1958, was raised to 70 per cent in 1979. A *mass literacy campaign* was launched in 1968, and functional literacy has been achieved throughout the country in eight national languages. The crude *death rate* fell from 27.7 per thousand in 1960 to 20.7 per thousand in 1980, while *life expectancy* during the same period rose from 36 to 43.5 years. However, the general mortality rate was 20.7 per thousand in 1977 and the *infant mortality rate* 156 per thousand. With its land, climatic and water resources, Guinea has a high potential for *agricultural development*. Cultivated land is estimated at about 1.1 million hectares, of which 76 per cent is used for crop rotation. The country has a considerable timber potential for all purposes. Bauxite reserves are estimated at 12 billion tons, or two thirds of world resources. Iron ore deposits are currently estimated at 15 billion tons. Prospecting has revealed substantial uranium shows and deposits are estimated at more than 5 million tons. Hydroelectric resources are extensive and as yet practically untapped.



13. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau

GUINEA-Bissau is situated on the west coast of Africa, south of Senegal. Its *surface area* is about 36,000 sq. km. of which about 8,000 consists of rivers and swamps. The population is about 800,000 (1979) of whom about 87 per cent live in about 3,600 villages in the interior. The birth rate is fairly high (average family size: 6.3 persons), but the *infant mortality rate* is very high owing to poor health care (about one hospital bed per 600 persons, a low doctor-population ratio (about 1:10,000), endemic diseases, deficient diet and inadequate supply of safe water. The principal economic activity is *agriculture*, which has recently suffered from drought for three successive years. The *literacy rate* is barely 15 per cent. Of the active labour force of about 450,000, only about 25,000 are wage earners; the bulk of the labour force being engaged in the subsistence economy. The agricultural sector, which employs almost 90 per cent of the labour force, accounted for only about 40 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product, owing to low yield and low productivity. The country's *food deficit* in 1979 amounted to about 20,000 tons of cereals, 3,000 tons of sugar, 800 tons of edible oils, 200 tons of milk.



14. The Republic of Haiti

HAITI has a *surface area* of about 27,500 sq. km. and a *population* of rather more than 5 million, of whom about 3,630,000 live in rural areas. Three-quarters of the territory is mountainous, and large tracts of the plains consist of infertile land. The principal cause of the impoverishment of the soil is excessive exploitation of the forest resources by the growing population in search of fuel wood and timber, which has led to an erosion of the land and to a water shortage of well-nigh disastrous proportions. The consequential ecological damage has had a most serious effect on *agriculture*. The population is growing at an annual rate of about 1.8 per cent. Average *life expectancy* is about 52 years; the *infant mortality* is very high at about 150 per thousand. The *Gross Domestic Product* grew at an average rate of 2.7 per cent between 1970 and 1980. Economic and social progress is hampered, however, by the stagnant agriculture, on which 80 per cent of the population depends for a livelihood, and by the chronically adverse balance of payments. There is widespread unemployment and underemployment, and the country suffers from a maldistribution of incomes and inter-sectoral and interregional imbalances.



15. Lao People's Democratic Republic

THE Lao People's Democratic Republic, established in 1975, is a land-locked country with a *surface area* of about 237,000 sq. km. and a *population* estimated at 3.75 million. The labour force is about 1.6 million. The *infant mortality rate* is about 200 per 1,000 and *life expectancy* at birth was estimated in 1972 at 50 years. There is one doctor per 31,000 inhabitants and one hospital bed per 458 inhabitants. The *agricultural sector* employs 80 per cent of the population and accounts for about two thirds of Gross Domestic Product. The principal crops are rice, cotton, coffee, tobacco, vegetables and maize. The country's principal *natural resource* and *export commodity* is the timber from the vast forest area. The country's potential hydroelectric resources and *mineral deposits* known or thought to exist are as yet largely unexploited or even unexplored. At the moment, the only mineral deposits worked commercially are those of tin and gypsum. The constraints affecting the country's development are mainly: its land-locked situation, the low density of the population, the inadequate infrastructure of roads, communications and means of transport and the country's vulnerability to natural disasters. The development task is hampered by the loss of lives and property and the destruction of large areas (almost 40 per cent) of the cultivable land during the long period of war, when more than a quarter of the population became refugees, and by the consequences of natural disasters (drought in 1977 and floods in 1978).



16. The Kingdom of Lesotho

LESOTHO is a small, land-locked country entirely surrounded by one economically more advanced and dominant neighbour, South Africa. It constitutes a very limited market and has a restricted *resource base*. The total *de jure population* (1976 census) was 1,216,816; the resident population was 1,064,162, with 152,654 nationals employed in South Africa. The vital role played by migrant labour in Lesotho's economy can be assessed from the fact that in 1977/78 migrants remitted some \$156 million to Lesotho, an amount almost equal to the income generated from domestic activities. Only 13 per cent of the total land area is suitable for crop cultivation. However, *agriculture* is the most important economic sector in Lesotho. Together with mining employment in South Africa it provides the main source of income for about 90 per cent of the population. The country has a comparatively high rate of *literacy*: about 60 per cent of the population have attended school, and around 57 per cent aged 10 and over have had at least 3 years of primary education. Only about 10 per cent of the population have access to piped water. Lesotho's socio-economic problems are largely a result of the country's geopolitical position. The country being a labour pool for the mines and industries of South Africa, little effort was made prior to independence (1966) to develop Lesotho's infrastructure.

17. The Republic of Malawi

MALAWI, a land-locked country, occupies a narrow strip of land and lakes totalling 118,500 sq. km. bordered by Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania. It has a total *population* of some 6 million people. *Average life expectancy* is 42 years. *Infant mortality* is 130 per thousand but is higher in rural areas. Health services are free, but facilities are old and in need of improvement and extension. *Population per physician* is 50,000. About 36 per cent of the adult population are *literate*. Primary school enrolment is 60 per cent of the relevant age group and secondary school enrolment 4 per cent of the 14-18 age group. The main agricultural crops are maize, groundnuts and cassava (grown mainly for subsistence), and tobacco, tea, sugar and cotton produced for export on large commercial estates. Known *mineral resources*, such as coal, bauxite, apatite and uranium have not yet proved to be economically exploitable. Possibilities for the development of these and other minerals as yet undiscovered are being studied.



18. The Republic of Maldives

THE Republic of Maldives consists of an archipelago of nearly 1,200 islands in the Indian Ocean. Most of the islands are tiny, none larger than five square kilometres. Only two (including Male, the capital) have a population of more than 5,000. The *total population* is estimated at 153,000. *Life expectancy at birth* is estimated at 46.5 years. The adult *literacy rate* is at least 70 per cent, this relatively high figure being accounted for largely by schooling at Koranic schools. *Health* and hygiene conditions are poor; the drinking water supply is inadequate, and communicable diseases and malnutrition are widespread. There is no regular inter-island transport. *Agriculture* is very much a subsidiary activity in the Maldivian economy, accounting for about one tenth of employment. *Fishing*, followed by tourism and shipping, is the principal occupation of Maldivians, and the sale of fish to foreign buyers is an important source of export earnings. The manufacture of coir products is the leading *industry* not based on maritime resources. There are also some small-scale artisan and cottage industries. The high economic growth rates (10-12 per cent annually) achieved by the Maldives in recent years are attributable to tourism, to mechanization of the fishing industry, to the operations of the merchant shipping fleet, and to the growth of the capital, Male. The single most important impediment to the development of the Maldives is the lack of trained manpower. Although the level of literacy is high, the level of *educational attainment* of the population as a whole is low; in 1977, only 20 per cent of the population had attained the standard of primary education.



19. The Republic of Mali

20. The Kingdom of Nepal

21. The Republic of the Niger

MALI is a semi-arid land-locked African country with a *surface area* of about 1,240,000 sq. km. between the Sahara and the Sudano-Sahelian belt. It is estimated that the *population* (average annual growth rate about 2.5 per cent) will reach or exceed 7 million in 1981. Over 83 per cent of the population live in rural areas. Over 80 per cent are under 40, over 44 per cent under 15 (1976 figures). These statistics of a very youthful nation contrast with the grim *mortality rates*: over a quarter of the children born in rural areas died before age 5. An estimated 3 per cent of the population suffers from such serious diseases as leprosy, trypanosomiasis, tuberculosis and river blindness. Average *life expectancy* is about 38 years. In 1975 the *literacy* rate was estimated at 10 per cent. As regards resources of trained *manpower*, graduates with academic training are looking for work, whereas there are unfilled job vacancies for people with specific technical and practical skills. Mali actually exports highly qualified manpower and at the same time is short of personnel for the execution of large projects and its health and educational services. *Health services* are insufficient. In 1976 there were only 212 medical practitioners, one for every 4,000 persons in the capital Bamako, but only one for every 56,000 or so elsewhere. The value of *exports* was estimated at \$99 million for 1979. Imports amounted to about \$234 million. The import bill was aggravated by the high cost of petroleum products and of transport and by the effects of successive droughts which cut domestic production of foodstuffs and necessitated heavy imports of these essential commodities. Mali possesses considerable mineral resources, some of which are being exploited: gold, phosphate, gypsum, bauxite, iron ore, manganese ore.

NEPAL is a land-locked country in the Himalayan region, with a *land area* of about 141,000 sq. km. and a *population* estimated at 14.3 million. The mountain region (altitude 5,000 to 8,000 metres) constitutes about one third of the territory, the hill region (altitude 1,000 to 5,000 metres) 45 per cent, and the fertile tropical Terai plain for the remainder. The *literacy* rate is about 24 per cent. *Agriculture*, including animal husbandry, supplies about 80 per cent of exports, provides half the raw materials for industry and contributes about 60 per cent of Gross Domestic Product. *Industry* is as yet in the infant stage of development employing fewer than 60,000 people. In addition there are about 750,000 cottage industry units employing over a million people. Tourism has expanded greatly in recent years. *Health* conditions in Nepal are among the poorest in the world. *Infant mortality* rates are very high; the doctor/population ratio is about 1:39,000; the average calorie intake is below the recommended minimum. Since 1950 a community health system has been created and malaria in the Terai has been almost eradicated. *Life expectancy* at birth is estimated at 43 years. In 1979/80, over a million children were enrolled in 10,000 primary schools, staffed by 27,000 teachers. Secondary school enrolment stood at 500,000, and over 39,000 students were enrolled in centres of higher learning.

THE Republic of the Niger is a land-locked country in the Sahelian region; the nearest point to the sea is 760 km. from the port of Cotonou. The country's total *surface area* is about 1,267,000 sq. km., with a *population* of about 5.1 million (1977). About 90 per cent of the population live in rural communities, including a nomadic population estimated at about 740,000. The *birth rate* is estimated at 52 per thousand, the infant mortality rate 200 per thousand, and the *child mortality* rate (children under the age of 5) 500 per thousand. At present, only about 30 per cent of the country's rural settlements are adequately supplied with water. In the last 5 years the economy has experienced strong growth. The recent drought severely affected the cultivation of groundnuts, but the country's *agricultural production* still satisfies about 75 per cent of the population's food needs. The principal *exports* are uranium, livestock, *niébé* (a local bean), hides and skins, edible oils and cotton. Imports consist of a vast range of consumer and capital goods and petroleum products. The balance of trade is chronically in deficit. The country's natural endowment, on which its future development depends, are the land, water and mineral wealth. Of the 15 million hectares of cultivable land, only about a fifth is at present cultivated. The mineral wealth consists of deposits of uranium, coal, phosphate, limestone, iron ore, molybdenum, manganese, lithium, cassiterite and other ores. The Niger's output of uranium accounts for about 10 per cent of the world output.



22. The Republic of Uganda



23. The Rwandese Republic



24. The Independent State of Western Samoa

UGANDA, with a total area of some 241,000 sq. km. suffers from the double disadvantage of being both a least developed and a land-locked country—its major outlet to the sea is the Port of Mombasa in Kenya, about 1,280 km. from the capital, Kampala. In 1980 Uganda had a population of 12.6 million. Some 90 per cent of the population live in rural areas. Uganda's economy is predominantly agricultural. Over 80 per cent of the rural population depend on agriculture for income. Over the years, Uganda's export trade has been dominated by coffee exports, in particular *robusta* coffee. Exports of cotton, tea, tobacco, blister copper, hides and skins, and cotton fabrics began to fall by the mid-1970s. Tea exports declined from an average of 16,000 tons over the period 1970-1972 to a mere 1,000 tons in 1979. Sugar exports were reduced to negligible quantities and even the domestic market supply faced shortages. Uganda's economy is today experiencing deep-seated economic and social problems. The productive base in the agricultural, livestock, industrial and mining sectors has been destroyed. There are acute shortages of consumer goods and production inputs and as a result inflation is in the four-digit range. The basic social services in the health, education housing and water supply sectors are functioning only on a skeleton basis.

RWANDA is a completely land-locked country situated at the point where Central Africa and East Africa meet, at the centre of the region of the great lakes and volcanoes. It occupies a land area of 26,338 square kilometres and is an essentially mountainous country. In August 1978 total population stood at 4.8 million, with 47.5 per cent under the age of 15. In the health field, the doctor:inhabitant ratio is 1:28,700 and there is one hospital bed per 711 inhabitants. Primary school enrolment in 1978/79 amounted to 515,700 pupils and 2.3 per cent of pupils leaving primary school went on to post-primary education. The development of the agricultural sector, in which 93 per cent of Rwandese are engaged, is being frustrated by the growing scarcity of land and severe soil degradation. About 60 per cent of farming families have holdings of less than one hectare and the quality of the land varies widely. Export earnings from agriculture are limited with coffee as the main ingredient. Rwanda's other natural resources (mining and quarrying) are also limited. The mining industry accounted for 3 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in 1978. Production is scattered throughout the country. The principal products are cassiterite and ferberite.

SAMOA is an island country in the South Pacific which attained independence in 1962. It consists of seven islands with a total land area of about 2,850 square kilometres and a total population of about 161,000, roughly half of which is under the age of 20. About three-quarters of the population live on Upolu island and most of the remainder on Savaii island. Subsistence agriculture is the principal occupation. Export crops are copra, cocoa and taro. In addition there are large forestry resources. The manufacturing sector, which accounts for only a small share of Gross Domestic Product, comprises some medium-size plants that produce beer, cigarettes, animal feed and matches. Life expectancy at birth is about 63 years; infant mortality is about 37 per 1,000. The level of education is reasonably good and literacy in the vernacular is almost universal. About 70 per cent of children attend secondary school. The Samoan economy suffers from a number of handicaps: the country's isolation and remoteness from the rest of the world; lack of mineral resources; relatively small fishing zone; heavy dependence on foreign trade; vulnerability to fluctuations in world prices of copra and cocoa; shortage of skilled manpower (emigration is estimated at about 2,000 a year).



25. The Somalia Democratic Republic

SOMALIA is located in the Horn of Africa and has a total *land area* of 638,000 sq. km. The annual rainfall is meagre and irregular, creating the constant threat of drought. The economy of Somalia is at present heavily burdened by the influx of *refugees* into the country as a result of the Ogaden conflict and the drought in the surrounding areas. In addition to the normal resident population there are at present about 1.25 million refugees in camps and 800,000 more spread all over the country. The present *resident population* is estimated at 5 million (excluding refugees). Of the total, 2.8 million are nomadic, 1.1 million settled rural population, and 1.1 million live in urban areas. Almost 47 per cent of the total population consists of children under the age of 15. The *infant mortality rate* is 177 per 1,000 and the overall *life expectancy* is 41 years. The *illiteracy rate* is estimated at 30 per cent. Agricultural and allied activities are the occupation of 80 per cent of the labour force and generate 60 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product. *Livestock* is Somalia's most important renewable resource and generates 75 per cent of export earnings. It is estimated that there are 5.2 million camels 2.74 million head of cattle, 9.43 million sheep and 15.12 million goats. The coastal waters of the country have a substantial fishery potential, but at present the fishing industry is undeveloped.

26. The Democratic Republic of the Sudan

THE Sudan, with a *land area* of 2.5 million sq. km. is the largest country in Africa. It has a *population* of only 18 million and unlike the situation in most other least developed countries population growth is not excessive. Indeed, there is often a shortage of labour which is aggravated by the emigration of skilled workers to the oil-rich States in the region. *Life expectancy* at birth is 46 years. Nearly 80 per cent of the adult population is illiterate and about half the children of school age do not enter *primary school*. The Nile is the backbone of the country. It links the northern and southern regions, is an important source of hydroelectricity and is vital to *agriculture*. Cotton is the dominant cash crop and for a long time provided 80 per cent of export earnings. During the past decade efforts have been made to achieve crop diversification and production of groundnuts, wheat, fruit and vegetables has increased considerably. Since only 10 per cent of available land is at present under cultivation there is a vast potential for agricultural expansion. Nevertheless, even today agriculture, including livestock, contributes about 40 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and nearly 95 per cent of *exports*. The contribution of the *industrial sector* to the economy is modest, accounting for less than 6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product. At present there are some import-substituting industries producing notably textiles, sugar, cement, footwear, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages. Heavy industry is currently confined to cement manufacture and some petroleum processing.

27. The United Republic of Tanzania

THE United Republic of Tanzania, with a *total area* of some 945,000 sq. km. of which 5.4 per cent is arable land and under permanent crops, has a total *population* of around 17 million, growing by 3 per cent per annum. The urban population accounts for 13 per cent of the total population. Average *life expectancy* at birth was 51 years and *infant mortality* was 150 per 1,000 live births. All *health* services provided by government health institutions are free of charge. There are serious problems caused by nutritional deficiencies. Protein malnutrition causes about 50,000 deaths among pre-school children every year. In 1978 *agriculture* constituted 39.5 per cent of the national income (*industries* 9.3 per cent and *infrastructure* 11.5 per cent). After independence (1961) the major focus of attention in agriculture was placed on: (1) the production of food and export crops, and (2) the integrated development of the rural areas which support over 90 per cent of Tanzania's population. This new policy was embodied in the Arusha Declaration (1967) which provides the fundamental basis for the country's ideology of Ujamaa (i.e. familyhood based on the African traditional family life of living and working together as a unit). By focussing on staple food production Tanzania has been able to avoid over-all food shortages and limit reliance on food aid to serious drought years. According to UN data Tanzania was the third most seriously affected country and lost about an eighth of its national purchasing power during 1972-1976 in terms of trade deterioration.



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28. The Republic of Chad

No country presentation was received from Chad and the following information, with the exception of the figures for land area, is taken from United Nations sources.

Land area: 1,284,000 square kilometres

Population: 4,400,000 (1979)

Life expectancy at birth: 43 years (1978)

Infant mortality rate: 160 per thousand (1978)

Adult literacy rate: 17.8 per cent (1980)

29. The Republic of Upper Volta

UPPER Volta is a land-locked African country, far from any port (1,145 km. to Abidjan by rail, 1,020 km. to Lomé by road). It extends on either side of the Mossi Plateau, a flat dome of rocks yielding for the most part poor soils of low permeability, poor in groundwater. The more fertile and better watered Volta valleys form a breeding ground for sandflies, vectors of onchocerciasis (blindness) where human settlement has become possible only as a result of campaigns to eradicate this disease. The climate is hot and dry. The *population* in 1975 numbered 5,638,203 of whom 5,127,000 lived in rural areas. The population is young, with 17.3 per cent aged between 0-4 and 24.9 per cent between 5 and 14. Population pressures result in massive emigration to the coastal countries. Of the economically active population, 91.8 per cent are employed in *agriculture*, 3.5 per cent in *industry*, and 4.7 per cent in the *tertiary sector*. Wage earners number 41,600. The main crops are food crops. Less than 15 per cent is marketed, the remainder being consumed by the producers. The *illiteracy rate* is 92.5 per cent. Upper Volta has scarce *energy resources* apart from wood, which supplies the necessary energy for cooking meals but at the cost of alarming *deforestation*.

30. The Yemen Arab Republic

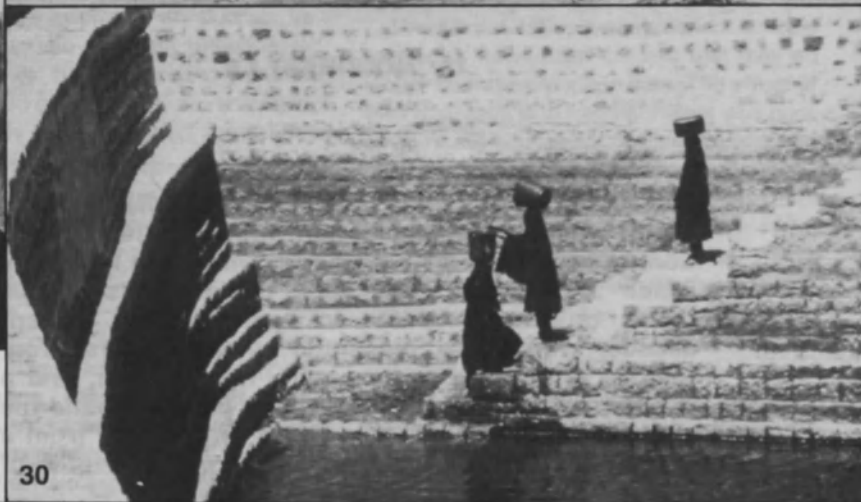
THE Yemen Arab Republic has a *land area* of about 195,000 sq. km. and is located in the south-western part of the Arabian Peninsula. In 1980 *population* was estimated at 6.5 million. *Life expectancy* at birth is 35.7 years for females and 38.3 for males. *Literacy* barely exceeds 10 per cent. *Agriculture*, in which 83 per cent of the population is engaged, is still considered the leading sector in the national economy, but its relative importance has declined substantially in recent years to about 29 per cent of Gross Domestic Product. Output consists mainly of food grains and livestock products. Between 1966 and 1981 the contribution of *manufacturing industry* to Gross Domestic Product was 5 per cent. Since 1962 new industries have been set up including textiles, cement, oilseeds, cigarettes, plastics, sweets and soft drinks. Approximately 20 per cent of the labour force (600,000 people) are temporary emigrants to the Gulf States and in particular to Saudi Arabia. While their remittances have provided a welcome boost to Yemen's balance of payments, development projects in the country are suffering from the resultant shortage of manpower, both skilled and unskilled. Other constraints to the development of Yemen include organizational and administrative problems, a low resource base, the mountainous nature of the country and scarcity of water resources.



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31. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen

DEMOCRATIC Yemen, which attained independence in 1967, covers a *land area* of about 337,000 sq. km. and has a *population* estimated in 1980 at 1.9 million. The country's principal resources, other than human, are fisheries, the port of Aden, the Aden oil refinery, and salt. *Life expectancy* at birth is about 46 years; the *infant mortality rate* is about 114 per 1,000. There are 1.1 doctors per 10,000 inhabitants. The *illiteracy* rate is estimated at about 80 per cent. *Agriculture* is limited to about 80,000 hectares (0.2 per cent of the total land area), principally because of the water shortage. The rainy season is brief and unreliable. There is some irrigation from underground water. The pasture land is extensive but vegetation is sparse. About 40 per cent of the labour force is employed in the agricultural sector. Livestock production accounts for about half of the total value of the output of the agricultural sector, but falls far short of meeting the demand of consumption. Thanks to a fairly long coastline (1,200 kilometres) Democratic Yemen possesses substantial fish resources which are a major source of export earnings. In addition to the Aden oil refinery, the *industrial sector* covers salt production, mining and quarrying, the production of goods of agricultural origin (foodstuffs, cigarettes, textiles, leather goods) and some import-substitute industries such as paints, matches, plastic products, tiles, nails, etc.). The major constraints hampering development are the poor endowment of natural resources, the adverse climate, the rugged terrain and the shortage of technical and managerial skills.

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African youth between tradition and modernity

by Boubakar Ly

The United Nations has proclaimed 1985 *International Youth Year* and, as a major contribution to its preparation, Unesco has just published *Youth in the 1980s* (see inside back cover). The book includes a synthesis report on the prospects for youth in the present decade, which was presented to the General Conference of Unesco at its twenty-first session, and a panorama of the situation of young people around the world. The article below is based on extracts from a chapter devoted to the rapidly changing world of African youth.

A brief examination of the position of youth in traditional African society reveals certain characteristic features. The first is the limited and relatively small-scale character of traditional society, which was organized on ethnic, tribal, clan and lineage rather than on national lines. The real social group was often made up of the living descendants of a known common ancestor. The latter were grouped together within the villages, where they were members of other non-kinship groups such as age-groups and affinity groups.

The whole social system was held together by regard for the ancestors, who were the cornerstone and guarantors of the social order. Tradition legitimized by the ancestors was the main factor for social integration.

Young Africans grew up in this social and ethical context. Indeed, either individually or collectively they were taken in hand by the community and its various institutions and personalities at every stage of their lives.

From earliest youth their families taught them to live within a broad social setting; and this eventually accustomed them to the presence of others.

The community at large for its part showed them adults as interchangeable, and gave every adult the right to take part in their up-

bringing. Similarly with age-groups, which acted as a finishing-school by giving young people a collective education consisting essentially of training for independence.

Education was in general diffuse, informal, pragmatic and functional. Vocational training formed no small part of it: in traditional African society it was one of the dimensions of human kind, for it was part of life. Training was progressive, in step with the acquisition of maturity in life. Vocational training was concerned *inter alia* to reproduce the position of the father, mother or other person in charge of the child. Social and occupational mobility were unknown in this kind of society. The reproduction of the position of the "authorities" in charge of the young person was facilitated by family tradition, which acted here as a justificatory ideology. Tradition as ideology served to fix the young person in his or her occupation and place in society. In other words, society suggested to young people that their place in society was prestigious because it was that of the founding ancestors and all their descendants from time immemorial.

In such a context work of whatever kind carried prestige. Young people accepted and loved their trades. They were in a hurry to finish their training and take their place in the family production structures, which society skilfully portrayed as imbued with both honour and prestige.

Once their training was complete, young people were started off in life by society. This "starting-off", be it noted, took place when society judged it opportune. It took the form of declaring the young person's individuality within the community. The

young man or woman came in a sense to model his or her life on that of the group. Traditional African society neither allowed nor encouraged young people to become independent. "Liberation" in traditional society consisted of splitting off in order to become more firmly embedded in the group. Young people did, of course, show signs of impatience and rebellion, but these were the marks of their eagerness to acquire as soon as possible the freedom to take root.

Society as such was never challenged. No one tried to break away from parental care and start life elsewhere: indeed, young people aimed rather to integrate themselves into society by becoming more responsible and playing a part in perpetuating it. The act of freedom lay in the will to play a part in perpetuating society. Once young people became responsible members of society, they helped to perpetuate it by up-dating at their level the traditional models of authority, which were in fact distinctively African cultural models.

Reference to models of authority and dignity was facilitated by another aspect of the education of young people, namely the teaching of history.

This society was, after all, founded on the ancestors: and consequently it was continual reference to them (and hence to the history of the group) that helped to forge, sustain and reinforce the sense of belonging to a community. The history of the group was young people's constant companion; they were steeped in it, because they were always in the line of descent. Genealogy was not merely a fact, it was also a value. Ancestry had prestige value, like a coat of arms. The roll-call of ancestral names was a matter of pride. When consciously asserted it served to make the young man or woman part of an honourable line, within an honoured structure.

This continual reference to the history of the family, through mythical or legendary ancestors and some actual heroes, was an effective technique of psychological integration, designed to reinforce community spirit by broadening its base so as to make it in some respects comparable to present-day national pride.

The existence of this community spirit was a major factor in developing in young people the readiness to serve already fostered by their family education.

The system of values was such that youth had a duty to serve. Any youngster was available and could be called on at any time by any adult or by the community to do a service. Community service was thus far from being a chore; it was part of life. By and large, African youngsters in traditional society, as turned out by the educational system, were characterized by a number of inter-related traits, namely the habit of living with other people, willingness to serve, sense of identification with their parents, acceptance of their lot and devotion to their trade, dedication to the values of the community, and acute awareness of membership of and identification with the group.

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These traits combined with others to produce a type of African man who has been represented as the epitome of "peasant humanism".

African youth, which in the traditional period attracted attention for its adaptation to society, began to set society problems and to see itself as a problem when African society underwent radical changes. These changes were primarily introduced by colonization, but were then taken up and developed on new lines by the independent régimes.

The problems of youth have taken on a new aspect in modern society. The latter developed out of colonization, and has certain characteristic features: market economy, complex organic division of labour, population growth, emergence of towns and the formation of national political entities. Moreover, it is part of a world characterized by unequal development, by colonial, neocolonial and generally imperialist domination.

It is in this general context that youth has become a problem and society has become a problem for young people. It is difficult to separate youth from other social groups, as is often done. Its problems are bound up with those of society as a whole, their specificity has probably been exaggerated.

It can be argued that the essential feature of the position of modern youth is failure to integrate. Modern African youth is maladjusted, both objectively and psychologically, to society. There are several reasons for this.

Probably one of the most remarkable phenomena of contemporary African society is population growth and the number of young people. In 1976, of a total population of 413,000,000, 253,469,000 or somewhat more than half were young people below the age of 24. The annual average growth rate of the population of Africa from 1975 to 1980 has been estimated at 2.8 per cent.

This general population growth has been accompanied by an internal rearrangement of the structure of society; and paradoxical as it may seem, scope for the individual's integration into society has diminished.

What has happened is that the social group in which young people grow up has become narrower, kinship no longer being as important as it used to be. Clans and lineages have disappeared and been replaced by the extended family, and in the cities by the nuclear family that is now taking over. This narrowing of the social field is accompanied by a process of individuation. The individual is becoming a sociological fact.

The extent to which nuclear families and individuals are becoming independent has, however, been exaggerated. In the countryside the problem does not arise, whilst in the towns relatively extensive kinship networks still exist. Nuclear families and individuals form part of social networks, and it is rare to find either quite alone. There is always some kin in the background: if necessary it may be

some form of surrogate. It is, after all, common in Africa to find that where no real (biological) kinship exists a surrogate (social) kinship takes its place. It is in this context that modern youth must be considered. The social system in which it is growing up is new, but retains some of the characteristics of traditional society.

The State has replaced the traditional clan community as the all-embracing society on which modern African young people depend. From now on it is the State that gives them their political status and nationality, and also takes over responsibility for their education. In other words, an abstract, rational, bureaucratic grouping unconnected with the family has replaced a concrete grouping based on emotional ties and linked with the family because rooted in kinship.

Moreover this new phenomenon, the State, is not the result of the inner dynamism of African society. To establish itself, it had to "cut into the flesh" and replace what Lévi-Strauss calls "home-made models". The African State was established from outside, which explains why it is not always functional in relation to the pre-existing social structures, even though African societies have adopted it and (in the sociological sense of the word) *reinterpreted* certain aspects of it.

Nowadays there is practically nothing any more between the family and the State, and many sectors of traditional education that were presided over by intermediate institutions such as age-groups, initiation groups and the adult community have fallen by the wayside. The modern family can no longer undertake them, and the State as conceived is not designed for such tasks. Hence education today is in smithereens, and the State, which has replaced the all-embracing community, accepts responsibility for only one aspect of education—intellectual training.

All contemporary African societies support the current world movement according to which elementary education is the right of every citizen. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights lays an obligation on all States signatories to the Charter of the United Nations to give their citizens elementary education. At Addis Ababa in 1961 Africa adopted a resolution under which all participating States undertook to achieve universal compulsory education by 1980. The obstacles they encountered in fulfilling the objective were discussed at the Nairobi, Lagos and many other conferences.

Despite the considerable efforts that have been made, Africa today is still a continent in which ignorance is pretty well-developed. In 1970 it accounted for 18.7 per cent of total world illiteracy for the 15 and over age-group. This figure is expected to reach 19.7 per cent in 1990. For the same year (1970) African illiterates from 15 to 19 made up 26.8 per cent of the world total for this age-group. In 1975 51.5 per cent of children from 6 to 11, 31.2 per cent of those from 12 to 17 and 5.8 per cent for those from 18 to 23 were enrolled in schools. In all only 32.3 per cent of young people from 6 to 23

were at school. The school-attendance rate for this age-bracket was expected to reach 41.8 per cent in 1980. The percentage of girls attending school for the period 1965/1975 is 6.8. Hence a great many young people are still outside the educational system. Since the extra-familial training institutions have virtually ceased to exist, some young people are thus left without any collective training. Those in rural areas may still, in default of a general education, be taught a trade. This is more than can be said of urban youth, who are often doomed to receive no schooling but that of the streets.

The second difficulty that modern schools encounter flows from the fact that they no longer train the complete man. The effect of their approach is to fragment what was once an all-round education. African societies did not have schools: they represent a cultural phenomenon from the history of other civilizations. The school, in its classic form, is concerned with only part of man's psychological whole, namely the intellect. Intellectual training has now replaced all-round education, and modern African schools are concerned with only one side of a child's personality. The result is that a cleavage has developed that affects the structure of the personality. Children operate within two unconnected worlds, family and school. The point has been made that in Africa "starting school" represents entry to a cold, abstract, rational, intellectual world quite different from the emotional world of the family. It is true that this cleavage between the two worlds is a universal phenomenon and that in all societies going to school for the first time is traumatic for children. Nevertheless, in the case of Africa there is the further point that school and family represent different cultural worlds. The cleavage between school and family tends to persist, like the fragmentation of the educational process.

Schools are divorced from society. The transition from family to school means moving from one language to another. The use of a foreign language is in itself an alienating factor; but then so is the subject-matter taught. Specialists have been very struck by the unsuitability of school syllabuses. African cultural situations do not occur in the texts set for children, and real life is not reflected in the facts or values. The situations, actions, behaviour, attitudes and words used often have no African flavour. In view of this it is hard for children fully to understand the models they are given or to identify with them.

The situation has the additional drawback of instilling (often unconsciously) foreign life-styles. Hence schools play no small part in the alienation of young Africans, and will probably continue to do so in the years to come unless the situation is remedied.

Traditional society automatically saw to the training and placing of the young, but modern society has run into difficulties over this. Because of the complexity of the division of labour, trades have proliferated and professional mobility has increased along

The community tradition

"African youngsters in traditional society, as turned out by the educational system, were characterized by a number of inter-related traits, namely: the habit of living with other people, willingness to serve, sense of identification with their parents, acceptance of their lot and devotion to their trade, dedication to the values of the community, and acute awareness of membership of and identification with the group... Young people did, of course, show signs of impatience and rebellion, but these were the marks of their eagerness to acquire as soon as possible the freedom to take root."



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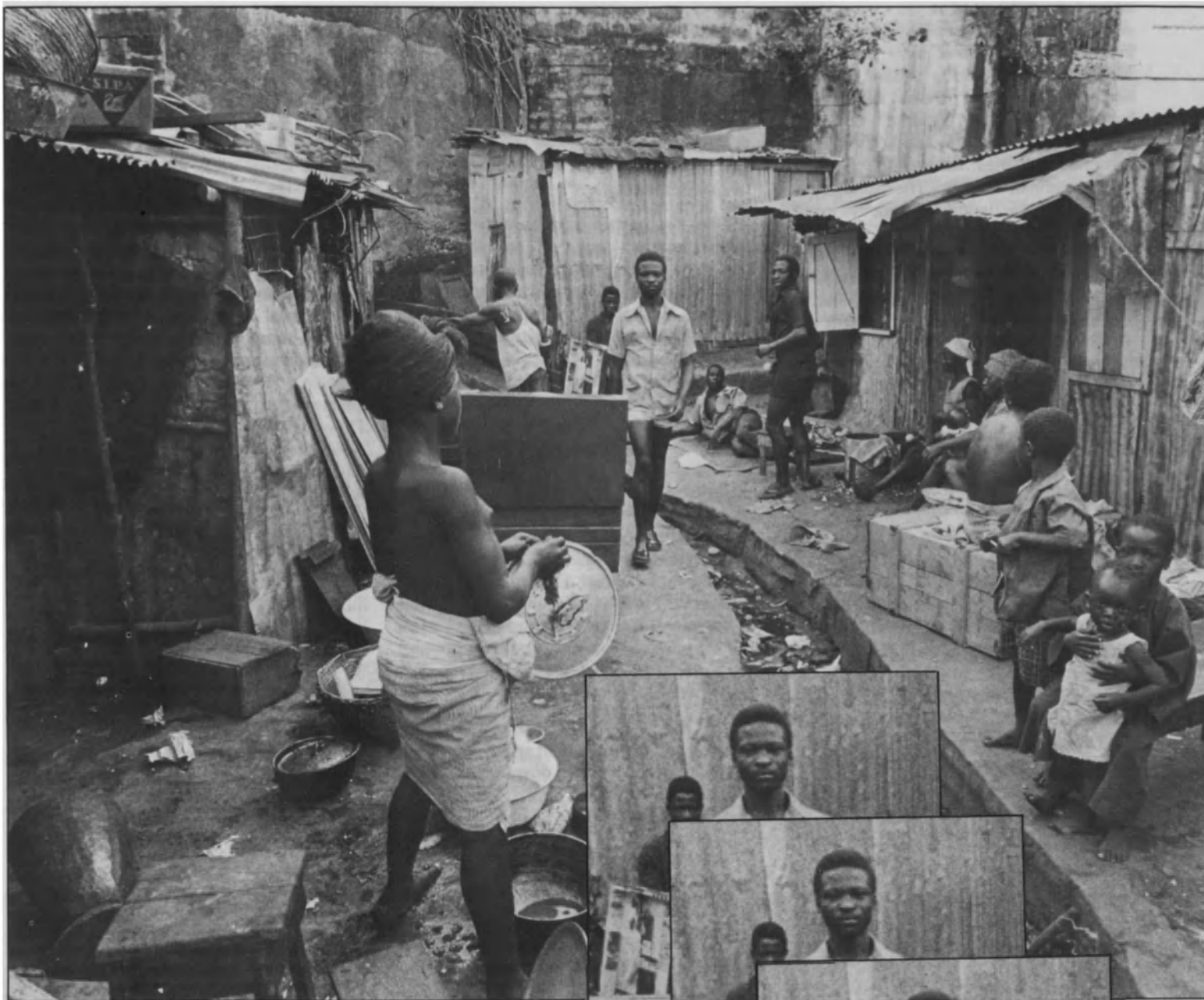
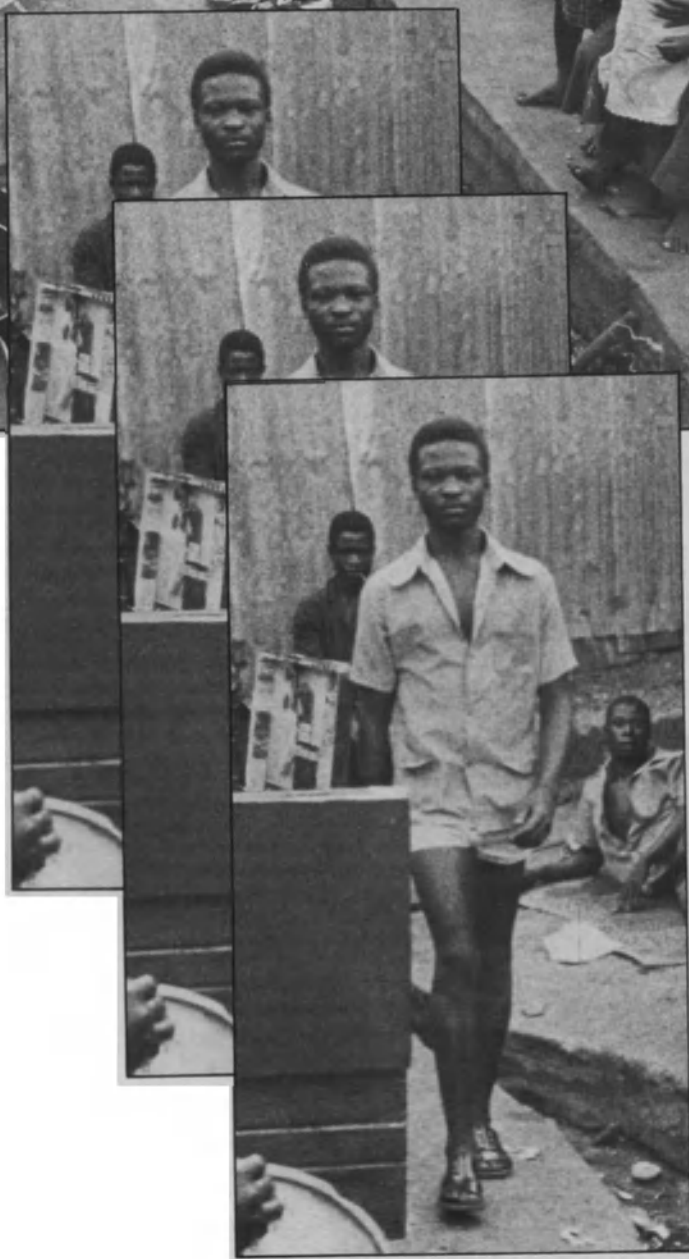


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The emergence of the individual

"The problems of youth have taken on a new aspect in modern society. The latter developed out of colonization and has certain characteristic features: market economy, complex organic division of labour, population growth, emergence of towns and the formation of national political entities... Modern African youth is maladjusted, both objectively and psychologically, to society... What has happened is that the social group in which young people grow up has become narrower, kinship no longer being as important as it used to be... This narrowing of the social field is accompanied by a process of individuation. The individual is becoming a sociological fact."



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with them. Under the new system of values in Africa, occupations have become individualized, and young people no longer necessarily ply their parents' trades. They have in a sense been "liberated", but only at a price. Apart from the peasantry and certain craft industries, families no longer provide vocational training. The State, which has replaced the traditional collective institutions, does not provide it either. It is active in certain limited sectors such as education (general or technical), and for some time has attempted to give out-of-school training. The state of education being what it is, a great many young people find themselves without any vocational training.

Nothing is done for children not attending school, or for all those who have been weeded out by successive selection steps or have had to give up school for one reason or another. These young people without vocational training make up with some adults the mass of the unemployed.

Youth unemployment in particular has been a matter of concern to the authorities, especially since it has a number of causes and effects, such as the flight from the land.

"The first evidence of unemployment came not from statistics but from the appearance in the towns of people who obviously had nothing to do. They came in increasing numbers, and lived in shanty towns..."

The flight from the land is due among other things to the unprofitability of

agricultural work and its seasonal character. It is brought about by lack of land. The migrants come to town to earn money. The importance of money in modern African societies has been noted. The monetarization of the economy drives people to go and look for money where it is to be found, i.e. mainly in the towns.

This has certain consequences for the towns, such as "vagrancy", to mention only one, though this term is not always quite appropriate. After all, it is questionable whether "vagrancy" is the right word for certain features of African life that are described as such. "Vagrancy" is a relative notion, and varies according to the cultural context. The term is inappropriate to the situation of those young people who come to town on the off chance, and then live by their wits in an economy based on living by one's wits. For underdevelopment leads to an attitude of "all's grist that comes to the mill", and to the emergence of trades that not only are not regarded as such in other cultures but do not even exist in them. Hence the youths you hear calling out "Madam, let me carry your shopping bag" or "Madam, let me look after your car", and the paper boys and shoeshine boys found in many African societies—all "trades" plied only by young people.

It has been stressed that those who leave are the marginals of the community: but this is not always the case. Those who leave—especially the young people—are the

representatives of the community. Hence migration is an organized affair, as it often was in traditional society. The young have all the more reason to leave because they realize that the low profitability of agriculture does not always allow them to make a living. New needs have appeared both in the country and the towns. The flight from the land may be expected to continue in the years ahead, and even to be intensified by the economic crisis.

In a society needs are related to historical and cultural development. In the case of Africa, young people in modern society cannot have the same needs as their parents at their age. They aspire to certain forms of consumption offered by modern society. They also experience a state of affairs that their parents could in the nature of things not experience, namely boredom. Nothing worthwhile happens in town or country—indeed, still less in the country than in the towns. Youth does not feel itself involved in any "grand design" or general mobilization. Furthermore, now that modern society has lost its sense of fun, young people no longer enjoy themselves in a worthwhile way.

What young people come to town to look for is a chance to be. Here the idea of magic combines with the spirit of adventure. People go to town because something might happen there that certainly does not happen in the country. Migration is therefore a way of achieving freedom, all the more because



young people can no longer feel at home, especially after being introduced at school to a modern cultural world with which they can no longer fully identify. Nor can they any longer fully identify with their parents, though remaining emotionally attached to them. Very often when asked about their parents young people reply that they are "decent folk" who make considerable sacrifices and work for a pittance. They also reproach them (and this shows how deeply they resent their situation) with accepting their lot. Their parents' occupations are no longer regarded as prestigious, and by and large young people have lost interest in manual pursuits. In other words, a very important factor for social integration, which worked normally in traditional society, can no longer do so.

Unable to identify with their parents, young people are sometimes faced with problems of authority. They often reproach adults with no longer having authority and no longer knowing how to bring them up—in short, with no longer taking them in hand as they would like to be taken. The question is how parents are to re-establish their authority, and how young people are to be persuaded to ply manual trades. The future will increasingly see a rift between the situation of parents and the aspirations of young people, especially among the peasantry and the urban rank and file.

Unfortunately the crisis of authority in modern society often leads to delinquency.

Delinquents are generally in an abnormal family situation. Merely moving from country to town does not automatically produce delinquency; it all depends on the situation they are moving into. In most cases delinquents find themselves in a social (and particularly a family) vacuum. Young people very often turn to the State, asking of it something it cannot give. The same is true of those parents who, reacting as they would have done in traditional society, try to hand over to the State—in this case to the police—children they have difficulty in controlling. The State often only acts when the misdemeanour has been committed, and then applies repressive remedies.

This State intervention after the event illustrates the difficulties facing modern African society. The family as a factor for social cohesion is not supported by institutions in our all-embracing society. Modern society does not take responsibility for young people (or does so badly); and in view of this vacuum they withdraw into themselves and try to find their own solutions. The social vacuum will become more acute, and young people are increasingly turning in on themselves in order to fill it.

This brings us to the problem of psychological integration through consciousness of belonging to a nation, i.e. national awareness.

Traditional society managed by continual reference to the history of the group to

create an awareness of shared allegiance, attachment to lasting values and acceptance of society's goals. Modern society, despite the attempts that have been made, is not quite able to bring about and sustain a minimal awareness of belonging to a single group, because of ideological and political divisions. There are also the difficulties that stem from ethnic and tribal differences, which although they have sometimes been exaggerated are nevertheless real. Modern African youth is thus often deprived of an important dimension in the shaping of its social and cultural personality, namely an opportunity to identify with the group and its shared values. In Africa the State, which as has often been shown preceded the nation, has the historic task of building national awareness. This national awareness is inseparable from awareness of political "Africanity": they are dialectically linked. Here again the integration of youth presupposes that modern African societies find suitable ways of inculcating in it the idea of its "Africanity", in which cultural values play a considerable part.

This task will be the easier because despite all the difficulties mentioned African youth is not incurably alienated. The striking thing in Africa, and this needs emphasizing, is the strength of tradition. Traditional African society is still alive; it has extraordinary powers of survival and hence of recovery.

■ Boubakar Ly



Photo Georg Gerster © Rapho, Paris

"Modern society, despite the attempts that have been made, is not quite able to bring about and sustain a minimal awareness of belonging to a single group, because of ideological and political divisions... Modern African youth is thus often deprived of an important dimension in the shaping of its social and cultural personality—an opportunity to identify with the group and its shared values."

Unesco Peace Education Prize Awarded for First Time

Finnish adult educator Helena Kekkonen and the World Organization of the Scout Movement jointly received the first award of the \$60,000 Unesco Prize for Peace Education at a ceremony held on 1 October at Unesco's Paris HQ. The Prize, created by Unesco's Executive Board in 1980, was made possible by a \$1 million gift from the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation. During the ceremony, the Director-General of Unesco, Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, pointed to the urgent need for steps to stimulate public opinion and mobilize consciences to build peace based "upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind", as enjoined by Unesco's constitution.

International Literacy Awards for 1981

International prizes for outstanding work in literacy teaching were recently awarded to educators in Cuba, India and Angola. The 1981 Nadezhda Krupskaya Prize, sponsored by the USSR, went to the Federation of Cuban Women for its participation in Cuba's mass literacy campaign. The prize donated by the International Reading Association was awarded to the Department of Adult Education of Bihar State (India) whose programme led to the creation of 8,000 centres for 240,000 participants. The Noma Prize was won by the National Literacy Commission of the People's Republic of Angola which has made literate more than 500,000 persons simultaneously in Portuguese and in one of the 6 national languages. Speaking at the awards ceremony, held at Unesco HQ in Paris on International Literacy Day (8 September), Unesco's Director-General Mr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow pointed out that while the world illiteracy rate was falling, the absolute number of illiterates had risen from 742 million in 1970 to 800 million today. If current trends continue, he warned, there would be more than one billion illiterates by the end of the century.

Fair Play Awards for Outstanding Footballers

Two outstanding figures of the football world, Giacinto Facchetti, 94 times capped and 70 times captain of Italy, and Sir Stanley Rous of the UK who for many years headed the International Federation of Football Associations, received Pierre de Coubertin Fair Play Trophies for 1980 at a ceremony at Unesco's Paris headquarters on 6 October. Five other sportsmen received diplomas of honour in recognition of sportsmanship. They were Fernande Schmidt, cross-country runner of Luxembourg, Stefan Branth and Gert Petterson, Swedish orienteering runners, Stanislaw Olszewski, Polish cross-country motor cyclist, and Georgi Sinko, Hungarian cross-country runner. A diploma of honour was also awarded to Guru Hanuman, former Indian wrestling champion.

Julian Huxley Memorial Appeal

A Memorial Fund has been created to commemorate the life and work of Sir Julian Huxley (1887-1975), the distinguished British scientist who was Unesco's first Director-General. The range of Julian Huxley's interests and genius took him beyond the boundaries of science to the practical problems of human development, notably in his pioneering work on conservation and population control. One of his greatest gifts was to make the complexities of science accessible to the layman. If the necessary funds can be provided, Balliol College Oxford (where Sir Julian was an undergraduate) and the Royal Society of the UK have agreed to establish a "Julian Huxley Memorial Research Fellowship" for study in the biological or human sciences, and especially fields in which Julian Huxley was himself interested such as evolution, genetics, population, ethology and ecology. At least £100,000 is required for an adequate endowment of the Fellowship, which will be tenable for 3 years at Balliol and open to men and women from any country. Those wishing to contribute to the Julian Huxley Memorial Fund should address their remittance to: Peter G. Roberts, Esq., The Bursar, Balliol College, Oxford, UK..

World Food Day

Representatives of Unesco Member States, international organizations and French associations connected with development and the struggle against hunger are observing the first World Food Day at Unesco HQ in Paris on 16 October, the 36th anniversary of the foundation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). World Food Day, which will be an annual event, has been proclaimed by the UN General Assembly and the Conference of the FAO in order to increase public awareness of global food problems and to provide an annual occasion for renewed commitment to measures to vanquish world hunger. Governments, non-governmental organizations, schools, communities and the media in many countries are marking World Food Day with a wide variety of events and activities. Educational materials connected with the Day can be obtained free from World Food Day Secretariat, FAO, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100, Rome.

UNHCR Wins Nobel Peace Prize for Second Time

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been awarded the 1981 Nobel Prize for Peace in recognition of its work on behalf of "the enormous and growing number of refugees" around the world. This is the second time that UNHCR has been awarded the Nobel Prize. The first was in 1954 when it was honoured for resettling European refugees after World War II. Under the leadership of High Commissioner Poul Hartling, UNHCR currently assists about 10 million refugees or displaced persons throughout the world.

BOOKSHELF

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■ **Leopard Among the Women (Shabeelnaagood)** a Somali play by Hassan Sheikh Mumin. Translated with an introduction by B.W. Andrejewski. London, Oxford University Press. 230 pp. 1974.

■ **Anthem of the Decades, A Zulu Epic**, by Mazisi Kunene. Translated from Zulu by the author. Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, London, Ibadan, Nairobi. 312 pp. 1981 (£3.50, UK only; local prices elsewhere).

BRAZIL

■ **Trash (A Bagaceira)**, by José Américo de Almeida. Translated from the Portuguese by R.L. Scott-Buccleuch. Peter Owen, London. 160 pp. 1978.

EUROPE

■ **Rocky Shores, An Anthology of Faroese Poetry**, compiled and translated by George Johnston. Wilfion Books, 12 Townhead Terrace, Paisley, Renfrewshire PA1 2AX, Scotland, UK. VI+124 pp. 1981 (£4.00/\$10).

■ **Ancient Monuments** (original title: *Vem älskar Yngve Frej?*), by Stig Claesson. Translated from the Swedish by Irene Scobbie. Thule Press, Stornoway, Scotland. 142 pp. 1980 (£3.50).

■ **The Tower at the Edge of the World (Tårnet ved Verdens Ende)**, by William Heinesen. Translated from the Danish by Maja Jackson. Thule Press, Stornoway, Scotland. 183 pp. 1981 (£2.50/\$6.50).

JAPAN

■ **The Quilt and Other Stories**, by Tayama Katai. Translated by Kenneth G. Henshall. University of Tokyo Press. 204 pp. 1981.

Popular Archaeology

Unesco-sponsored activities in archaeology have been given extensive coverage in recent issues of the British monthly magazine *Popular Archaeology*. The September 1981 number describes current restoration work on the Athens Acropolis, in which Unesco is involved, and previous issues have featured highlights of the work of the archaeological rescue teams in the Nubian campaign and an account of survey work in Tripolitania in which aerial photos are being taken from a kite! Other themes in the September 1981 number include medieval Islamic ships, a project to recover a wrecked Tudor warship, and an interview with Jean Gimpel, who uses archaeological models to assist rural development in Third World countries.

Youth in the 1980s



The Unesco Press

Just published by Unesco

On the threshold of a decade which seems likely to confront young people in both the industrialized and the developing world with the problems and anxieties of an era of scarcity, Unesco has published a detailed study of world youth and its prospects in the 1980s. The study, a major contribution to International Youth Year proclaimed by the United Nations for 1985, consists of a synthesis report, followed by thirteen research articles and essays which offer a wealth of interesting and sometimes controversial insights into the situation of young people in the coming decade. Contents:

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African youth in the 1980s

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