

LONG TERM REHABILITATION AND COMPREHENSIVE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA

Some preliminary suggestions for working out a project to be funded and administered jointly by the WCC/CICARWS and EOC/DICAD.

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I. Introduction

The Ethiopian drought continues, though not unabated. The agricultural production in 1985 has been a considerable improvement (29%) over 1984, but still 20% below the 1979-83 average. It is still estimated that there will be a two-million tonnes deficit in 1986 and that some 6.45 million may need to be fed.

Rainfall was good, though still inadequate in Harrar, Wollo, Tigray, Shewa and Gemu - Gofa. Production was impeded also by shortage of agricultural inputs (seed, oxen, etc.) and by damage from pests and hailstorms.

Part of the two million tonnes deficit will have to be covered by purchases and the other part by international aid. Relief operations will need to continue.

But the time has come for the WCC Africa Project and for the Development and Interchurch Aid Department of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to shift weight from emergency relief to long term rehabilitation and development. The E.O.C cannot stop its relief activities so long as there are hungry mouths to feed. But it has also to pay more attention to promoting the conditions among the people which will lead to the avoidance of a drought and the attaining of food self-sufficiency in the near future.

2. The Church in Crisis

Times are unstable in Ethiopia. It is by an insight born from centuries of experience that people are now resorting to the Church, specifically the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, for succour, guidance and support. It is important that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church rise to this occasion. The churches are all crowded not only on Sunday mornings, but also at other times of Prayer. New Churches are being built by the people of a magnitude hitherto unknown in Ethiopia, without assistance from government or outside agencies. One new Church in Addis Ababa is to have seating capacity of 7,000. Not even Emperor Haile Sellassie built such large churches.

The people have directly experienced the transience of wealth. The rich of yesterday have either fled the country, or been reduced to much lower standards of living. Hence the ordinary people, including the once-rich are giving generously to the Church. The buildings are only a symptom of a deeper longing on the part of people to find stability and guidance from the Church.

The spiritual and material resources of the Ethiopian Orthodox people are indeed impressive. The leadership of the Church has to provide the channels through which these resources can be deployed for the welfare of the people.

It is clearly a historic hour of testing for the Ethiopian Orthodox Church leadership. Can the Church give the people the guidance they need at this juncture of history, when the whole country seeks to jump from a feudal economy to a socialist one? The methods of the feudal era will have to be laid aside, and more people-based and people-oriented church activities will have to be devised.

3. Lay Participation.

It is as a spur to such a transition that the following suggestions are offered. The Patriarch, His Holiness Abuna Tekle Haimanot, is a man of the people, living an unostentatious and simple life committed to the welfare of the whole people of Ethiopia. There are many younger bishops also who are similarly committed.

The bottle-neck in the pouring out of Ethiopia's Christian resources in the service of the people seems to lie at the level of administrative and decision making structures. The bishops with all their good will and the best of intentions, are largely unable to cope with the intricacies of complex modern administration or to delegate decision making and implementing responsibilities to competent lay people.

The success of the sample projects listed below depends to a great extent on the skills and attitudes of a new breed of Ethiopian clergy who can elicit and ensure such lay participation in leadership and responsibility.

Whether in a clergy training school, in a resettlement colony, in a parish or monastery, everything depends upon good clergy laity co-operation so that the people may be served and the name of God glorified.

The project suggestions listed below have the promotion of such co-operation in mind, both at the overall project level and at the local level. Sufficient changes will have to be made in the administrative structure of EOC/DICAD to make lay people share more responsibility in planning, decision-making and implementation.

4. The Root Causes Seminar.

The main purpose of the Seminar on 'Root Causes of Drought and Prospects for Food Self-Reliance in Ethiopia' held at the International Live-stock Centre for Africa, from November 11-13, 1985, under the joint sponsorship of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the World Council of Churches, was to find some help in projecting and planning for long term development and resettlement project leading to food self-sufficiency and drought-free conditions in Ethiopia.

The study has revealed two sets of causes, mutually inter-related:

- a) the socio-economic causes of drought
- and b) the technical causes of drought.

The socio-economic causes cannot in fact be separated from the technical causes. We shall indicate the main causes here, without trying to distinguish between socio-economic and technical.

5. Socio-economic Pressures and Lack of Long-term Planning.

As the population increases at an average of 2 to 3% per year, there will naturally be increased pressure upon the food supply. If Ethiopian population was 42 million in 1984 and it began increasing at the rate of 2% per annum, the country would have 57.66 million people in 2000 A.D. - an additional 15.66 million mouths to feed. Present rate of increase is 2.9% per annum. If this rate continues, population in 2000 A.D. will be 65.44 million - 23.44 additional mouths.

One need not doubt the capacity of the land in Ethiopia to support that many additional people. The point is that there has to be planning, not just family planning, but also over-all planning to make sure that the increased population gets food, jobs, and the facilities for living a life worthy of man.

The single most important root cause of the recent drought is certainly the absence of planned productivity increase. Let us hope that we will not make the same mistake again and will do comprehensive planning to keep productivity in line with people's needs.

Socio-economically speaking the absence of proper planning may be attributed to the fact that those who held power in the nation were not committed to the interests of the whole people of Ethiopia. This situation has now changed, and let us hope that over-all planning would become a permanent feature of the political economic structure, and the peasant's associations, Parish councils and the common people will play an increasing role in national planning and implementation.

This is fundamentally the task of the party in power to ensure people's participation in national planning and implementation. The Church, with its wide infra-structure among the people, can however play an important role in making the people conscious and aware of their own best interests. It is important that the analysis and assessment of people's interests, and ways of making ^{effective} people's participation in national planning and implementation, should form part of the training of priests and lay leaders in the Church.

6. Environmental Deterioration

Here again a chain of factors has to be analysed. Chief among these are deforestation and mindless cutting of trees in town and village, over - grazing, soil erosion due to bad agricultural practices, mono-crop farming, lack of bunding and terracing, non-utilisation of available water, and so on.

The tragedy is that people in general are not aware of the linkage between these factors and the drought. The peasant's vision is too narrowly focussed on immediate personal benefit, not on long term common welfare of the whole nation and people. Working for a change in people's understanding and attitudes in these matters would constitute an important task of the Church.

Such change of understanding and attitudes cannot be achieved by preaching alone. There is no substitute for actual physical demonstration. Most of the project proposals given below are oriented more to demonstration rather than verbal education.

The Church can at this point co-operate and co-ordinate with peasant associations and other people's organisations in their efforts to achieve the same goals. The Orthodox Church in Ethiopia as a centuries old institution trusted by the people, has a very special contribution to make in changing the basic attitudes of the people from narrow selfish interests to more common social interests.

The project proposals and suggestions given below are directed to these over-all long term goals of food self-sufficiency and people's welfare in Ethiopia.

7. A multi-pronged Project.

What we propose here has four aspects:

- a) What can be done through priests training centres,
- b) What can be done through pilot projects in new resettlement areas,
- c) What can be done through parishes and monasteries,
- d) What can be done through orphanages and destitute homes.

There are some aspects which are common to all four, but clearly there are specific differences also.

The common aspect of all four centres around what has been said under the headings of socio-economic pressures and environmental deterioration. The project objectives have been worked out in greater detail in relation to (a) Clergy Training Centres, but this would apply mutatis mutandis also to (b) and (c) and (d).

8. The Seven Clergy Training Centres.

The Seven Clergy Training Centres of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church are

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| 1) St. Paul's High Level Theological School | - Addis Ababa. |
| 2) Zwai Clergy Training Centre | - Arssi |
| 3) Awassa Clergy Training Centre | - Sidamo |
| 4) Metu Clergy Training Centre | - Ilubabor. |
| 5) Bahar Dar Clergy Training Centre | - Gojjam |
| 6) Mekalle Clergy Training Centre | - Tigray |
| 7) Arba Mench Clergy Training Centre | - Gemu-Gofa. |

Most of these have now model farms attached to them. The best example is in Zwai, where river water is being pumped up electrically (using petrol or gasoline) to irrigate a wide area of farmland, with papaya, banana, sugarcane, maize, and vegetables being raised for the market.

These farms are quite successful and the experience in farming gained by the priest trainees will have a significant impact on the future of farming in this country, both directly through model farms and through the parishes that these priests will be serving in the future.

But these farms, which now serve mainly the function of producing surplus food for the market, can be improved to have a long term rehabilitation and development aspects as well. Some suggestions are given below, which can then be developed in accordance with local conditions.

a) Tree Planting.

If land is available it is necessary to organize a small nursery for tree seedlings which can then be sold at very affordable prices ^{to} prospective farmers and house-holders, along with a little leaflet explaining how to plant the tree, to protect it from the elements (wind etc.) and from grazing animals, how to water it and care for it in the early period. The leaflet will also explain in graphic pictures the benefits of tree planting for the climate~~er~~, for rainfall and for general welfare of the people.

The Training Centre in co-operation with local authorities and peasant organisations could hold competitions and festivals and publicly commend those who have planted and cared for large numbers of trees. Inexpensive sapling protecting cages can be manufactured and marketed.

This could also be part of the National Reforestation Programme, which I understand ~~is~~ soon to be launched by the government. The Agriculture ministry has very pertinent information regarding the varieties of trees best suited to different areas in Ethiopia, with reference to their soil-binding, water-conserving, precipitation-producing and nitrogen-fixing capacities.

b) Erosion Prevention.

Top soil erosion is beyond doubt one of the main root causes of drought. This has to do with over-grazing and several other factors, but some demonstration projects of bunding should be worked out in the Clergy Training Centre model farm. Farming areas can be protected by erecting stone-slope battlements (to prevent cattle and rain damage) and mud bunding to prevent soil erosion. It is found useful to grow grass on these bunds which can then be used to feed cattle, not by grazing, but by the cut and carry procedure of install feeding of cattle.

The possibilities are many, depending on the contour and lay of the land.

Bunding can be used for example for slow process natural terracing of gentle slopes.

Keeping thin strips of unharvested maize can help to prevent soil erosion.

One meter wide grass strips along contours can in some situations, prevent soil erosion, catch sediment flow and provide cut-and-carry fodder for plough oxen.

Mulching or feed-back of some leaves and plant residue to the soil can protect the soil from erosion, diffuse large raindrops during early heavy rains and increase the fertility of the land where this is possible.

Bunds can be used also for vegetable and root plants, (tapioca, manioca) though there are dangers in leaving bund-tops bare after harvesting the root-plants.

Planting rows of small nitrogen-fixing trees (Lucinia, Sespana etc) along the edges of farmlands can also help to prevent top-soil erosion and invigorate the land.

c) Controlled Breeding and grazing of Cattle.

Each Clergy Training Centre should also have a controlled cattle breeding and grazing project. The main focus will be on reducing quantity (numbers) of cattle and raising their quality (yield, productivity).

The present system of free grazing will have to be replaced by pounds, cattle-stalls and cut-and-carry system of feeding. Special areas can be set apart for growing special varieties of grass and clover.

The International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA) can provide valuable assistance for the Clergy Training Centres both in breeding better strains of animals and in feeding them more efficiently.

The prevention of over-grazing is one of the essential elements in preventing drought and famine. The Clergy Training Centres can play a major role in changing people's understanding and attitudes in relation to cattle raising and to change the value system in which the sheer number of heads of cattle constitute a measure of wealth and social prestige. Fewer heads of cattle with higher yields can be made attractive to people and people can be taught the over-all advantages of this for the country.

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d) Diversification of Agriculture.

Mono-crop agriculture has had negative consequences on the over-all health of farmland. Peasants have to be taught to diversify the crop. In addition to grain production, vegetable gardens, orchards and flowering plants related to bee-keeping should be encouraged. This is now being done in the model farms of the Clergy Training Centres. Mango, Orange, Papaya, Banana and other cash crops are now grown in the low-lands in addition to grains and vegetables.

There must be a system by which these model farms run by the Clergy convey their experience to the people through festivals, literature, visits by peasant associations etc.

Also new types of farm implements should be introduced and popularised. ILCA, for example, has developed, I am told, reversible ploughs and one-ox ploughs which should be examined and experimented with.

(e) Water Availability.

A great deal of agricultural productivity even in normally rainfed areas can be augmented by tapping ground water and spring resources. The Church should commission one or two experts in small scale irrigation, water pumps and ground water exploration, conservation and utilisation.

The possibility of solar water pumps (half to one horse power) should also be explored. Such pumps which need no fuel input other than sunlight, have been developed in India and are available in the market.

Hand pumps have a significant role to play in lift irrigation where the water table is not too low.

The Clergy in our Training Centres should have a minimum knowledge and some skill in the use of ground and spring water resources, so that they can make the parishes a source of inspiration and guidance to the people in this respect.

9. Pilot Projects in Resettlement Areas.

Most of what has been said under Clergy Training Centres would apply also to Pilot Projects in resettlement areas of Gojjam, Ilubabor, Wollega etc. 54,572 families have been resettled in Wellega alone in the newly created settler villages, as distinct from the 31,037 families who have been integrated into existing farming communities in Wellega.

The resettlement communities date from 1985 and are quite new, in the process of taking shape.

In the Ketto settlement (600 km from Addis Ababa) in Wellega, (April 1985) 12,092 families with 42,811 people have been settled in 20 separate villages. On the average this means above 2000 people to a village.

Having come from Wollo, the vast majority of these are Ethiopian Orthodox Christians. Each settler family gets a homestead plot of 0.1 hectare for the first year. Depending upon their success in the early period, they are to be given up to 5 hectares or even more of land.

It seems clear that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has a fundamental responsibility to these people, to serve their bodies and souls, in the difficult new beginnings of these families.

It is proposed that six villages be chosen from all the resettlement communities in Ethiopia and a pilot project be started in each of these six villages, with the following framework.

- a) A small church, modest, which can accommodate 500 to 800 people standing, built as far as possible with contributions in labour, cash etc. from the community.
- b) A health clinic attached to the Church with nearly free medical services, inoculation and preventive measures, sanitation and hygiene education.

- c) A small school and Community Centre, where the settlers can gather together to discuss their common problems and educate themselves and their children; a literacy programme with volunteer teachers should also be set up.
- d) A clean water supply system using available or newly cleaned springs, slow sand filters and bore-hole wells and pumps. The village should here find its water supply for home and farming. A proper gravity irrigation system with water pumps for lifting the water can be set up in some areas.
- e) A model farm where all the principles enumerated under Clergy Training Centres are implemented - forestation, soil conservation etc.
- f) A large sapling nursery and tree plantation programme.
- g) A co-operative project to improve roads and provide better access to all the houses in the village.
- h) A flour grinding mill and storage facilities for grain and flour.
- i) A controlled cattle-breeding system (if the Tse-tse fly allows) including plough oxen.
- j) An agricultural inputs and implements depot - hand tools, ploughs, seeds, pesticides, beehives, etc. Tools could also be made available for hire by settlers.
- k) If and ^{where} ~~are~~ necessary, a food storage and distribution system can be set up.
- l) A producing consuming and marketing co-operative, related to the peasants association.
- m) An arts and crafts school and factory.

Costs, personnel and administration for these six Pilot Projects would have to be worked out in detail in relation to the site and the elements to be incorporated.

10. Monastery and Parish Projects.

The main content of these projects will be related to a model farm, an arts and crafts school and a nursery for tree saplings. The Project will be staffed almost entirely by people from the Monastery or Parish, with a few teachers or workers brought in from outside. The main purpose of the project is always long term development and rehabilitation with a view to food self-sufficiency and people's welfare.

It is best again to begin with some six pilot projects in monasteries and parish churches throughout Ethiopia. The women's Convent in Sabbatha is a good example of what can be done. They already have a model farm with orchards, apiary gardens, vegetable gardens and grain cultivation. Their bunding, water supply and soil erosion prevention measures could be definitely improved. Their ground water resources should be explored and intelligently exploited. Their apiary can be doubled in size.

The projects will be operated in collaboration with the peasant associations and should not be alienated from the people. Its main purpose should be to change the understanding and attitudes of the people - not the enrichment of the Monastery or Parish.

Each project can take on new aspects like public health, literacy, water supply, roads and bridges, reforestation as priorities in accordance with local conditions.

The six Pilot Projects will not be uniform. Each will be worked out in detail in consultation not only with the monastery or parish concerned, but also with full opportunity for the people to participate in the formulation of the project itself. People's participation from the beginning is the key to the success or otherwise of each project.

11. Orphanage Projects.

The Church is now running several orphanages and destitute homes.

Attached to these institutions also, as there are in some cases already, there should be model farms where the orphans and destitutes can do good farming, paying attention to as many of the aspects of a comprehensive rehabilitation programme (listed under Clergy Training Centres) as possible.

Some simple new technologies related to development in the agricultural and small industries sectors as well as in handicrafts should be introduced into the orphanages and destitute homes so that the inmates of these institutions can learn some simple production skills.

Where this is already being done, the effort should be to expand the facilities to include soil conservation, tree planting, ground water exploitation and simple production technologies.

12. Funding of Projects.

There should be maximum reliance on people's own resources and to this end contributions in cash, kind and labour should be solicited from the people.

Assistance from abroad should be sought for specific items like equipment and supplies, administrative expenses, machinery and tools, travelling and other over-all project costs.

The initial planning should be for about 25 pilot projects.

Clergy Training Centres	- 7
Resettlement colonies	- 6
Parishes and Monasteries	- 6
Orphanages, Institutions etc.	- 6
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A budget should be worked out. Some of the work done by R. R.C. in this respect can help as a guide-line. For example the RRC's Ketto Comprehensive Agricultural Development Project (009/86) can be useful. It is a large two year project, for the lowland settlement area in Wellega and covers 20 separate villages serving more than 12,000 families, and has a total budget of Ethiopian Birr 11,851,307.00 ie, about U.S. Dollars 6 million. This includes stores, clinics, water supply, road improvement, equipment and vehicles, agricultural inputs (seed, tools, oxen etc) office and administration, cost of transportation, medical supplies and equipment and project running costs. Most of the money will be required in the first year. The Ketto Project envisages 9.79 million birr in the first year and about 2.06 in the second year.

The EOC/DOD Project may cost a little more than the Ketto Project, since it has so many different aspects. But with the infra-structure of the Church, the local contribution in terms of labour and supplies as well as cash may be much greater.

The most important aspect of the Project will be people's participation. Whatever outside assistance is sought should promote such participation and contribute to people's self-reliance in Ethiopia. It seems therefore necessary to aim at a much higher percentage of Ethiopian Orthodox people's contribution than is usual in such projects.

13. The need for a small Follow-up Seminar.

The Project will have to be worked out in a smaller seminar jointly organised by WCC and EOC preferably in Ethiopia within the next few months as a follow up of the 1985 Seminar. This Seminar will concentrate on the practical working out of the Project, on the basis of the Report of the 1985 Seminar and the proposals made in this paper. This seminar will need considerable preparatory work which should be done on a crash basis, by EOC/DICAD staff and Consultants.

14. Conclusion.

This paper has been prepared with highly insufficient knowledge and inadequate consultation. The writer, during his visit to Addis Ababa from 15th to 19th March 1986, has had extended discussions with His Holiness the Patriarch and with the Archbishops and bishops available in the Capital. Regrettably His Grace Abuna Garima, the Director of EOC/DICAD, as well as Ato Zemedhun Bezuwerk, its deputy Director, were on a fund-raising trip abroad. So was Lique-memheran Abebew Yegzaw the Administrator General of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

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