

Seminar on :

"Implications of the Basic Needs Model"

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NATIONAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS
OF THE BASIC NEEDS MODEL *)

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*) The views expressed in this paper are the author's own. They do not necessarily reflect those of the Indonesian National Development Planning Agency, to which the author is an adviser.

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We all know that the basic human needs approach to development grew out of the search for a development strategy which could deal more effectively with the problem of continuing poverty in large parts of the world. Such a strategy should, within the limited timespan of 25 - 30 years, be able to reverse the trend of growing inequality in developing societies, which threatens permanently, to leave the poorest 20% of world population, in conditions of absolute poverty. The basic needs approach constitutes a direct attack on world poverty by meeting the basic needs in the fields of food, nutrition, health, education and housing, as well as through employment and income generating activities among the lowest 40% income groups.

It is predicated on a policy package consisting of a relatively high growth rate (6-8%), redistribution of income, and - up to a point - wealth, reorientation of investment, and a review of consumption and production patterns.

It is hoped that such a thrust, with the rural sector and labor as major factors in productivity increase, will lead to processes of internally generated development, which over time, might develop into an indigenous engine of growth.

No wonder that the Basic Needs Model has, in a relatively short

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time, gained such popularity, and has even become fashionable in many quarters of the international community. In a way deservedly so. The Basic Needs Model, undoubtedly, is an important contribution to development theory of great moral appeal. It provides a promising point of entry into a development problem, which seemed beyond the effective reach of earlier strategies. It has, in fact, in various countries already led to important adjustments of existing development programs. Nevertheless, it is also true, while important work has been done in developing data in support of the concept¹⁾, as well as in developing policy packages in the priority areas which the Basic Needs Model is concerned with²⁾, surprisingly little has been done in studying the national policy framework for development which the Basic Needs Model requires for effective implementation; its relationship to other national development goals, or to the economic-political dynamic of the development process itself. Several studies mention the need of "political will" as a prerequisite for the implementation of the model, but all remain silent on how to generate such a will³⁾. Nor do they consider the political risks and costs involved, the difficult economic and political trade-offs that have to be made, and other perplexing dilemma's that have to be faced in this connection.

This paper is a modest, tentative and necessarily subjective effort to look at some of the broader domestic, as well as international implications of the Basic Needs Model for national policy. It raises the question of the capacity of political systems to absorb the requirements of the model, of the nature of social change and of the development process which constitutes the environment within which the Basic Needs Model has to be implemented, and of the ideological presuppositions which bear on the choice of methods in meeting basic needs.

One point should be made at the outset.

Although it is often presented in a very programmatic fashion, the Basic Needs Model takes us into a number of areas about which, collectively, we really know very little. We still don't know for instance, despite a few obvious success stories, how to bring about rural development. We know little about how to stimulate small business enterprises in rural areas or in urban informal sectors. We don't know very much about the income - and employment - generating linkages in the rural areas, and even less about how these are affected, directly or through different technology choices, by fluctuations in food prices. While we know something about the macro picture of production, consumption and import gaps for food, we know very little about food consumption patterns, broken down according to income-groups. Still such disaggregation would give us important clues as to which differential food price policies would most likely be able, in the face of higher prices for the main staplefood, to maintain and improve the calorie-protein intake of the poorest 20% in the rural and urban sectors. The policy choices that would have to be considered, require a data-base which, in many countries, is still quite inadequate, and which can only be developed over time.

In short, a great deal more research and analysis will have to be done before it becomes possible to postulate, with some degree of confidence, the policies and programs at the local as well as at the national level which the Basic Needs Model calls for. This brings home quite forcefully, that all programs should have a built in research component that would make possible continuous monitoring and evaluation, and which would ensure flexibility in implementation, and continuous correction and innovation⁴⁾.

I

Turning now to the several focal areas of the Basic Needs Model and the local and national policies they require⁵⁾, it should be

noted that while there is considerable consensus about the direction of such policies, there is much less certainty about how such policies should or could be implemented.

FOOD, NUTRITION AND EMPLOYMENT.

Although the increases in food production in several countries have been spectacular, mainly as a result of the new technologies of the Green Revolution, in many developing countries food production growth rates seem to be beginning to taper off, as the slack in existing systems is taken up, but also as a result of institutional constraints that are increasingly showing themselves to stand in the way of further rapid increases.

The expansion of tertiary and quaternary irrigation networks is an example of necessary development that is often held up by existing land ownership patterns, small plots and invidious land-tenure practices. The incentives to the full utilisation of potential water resources is sometimes checked by problems of water control. It is becoming obvious that unless social relations in the rural area are democratised, through countervailing policies and legislation, but especially through socially effective organisation of the small farmers, the traditional hierarchical structures will continue to exercise important constraints on initiative and productivity.

Land reform and improved land tenure practices should aim at the establishment of higher yielding farm systems through group - and cooperative organisation, and where necessary, through consolidation of fragmented mini-landholdings⁶⁾. Such improved farming systems should develop a broader range of foodcrops, supported by policies aimed at stabilizing food supply, and price policies for the various foodcrops which will ensure higher production without reducing, but rather improving, the nutritional value of food consumption by the rural landless and urban poor.

Although raising rural productivity is the key to meeting basic needs, increased mechanisation has already thrown a number of the landless poor out of work, especially women. Likewise, while

price increase of the major foodstaple may provide a stimulus to production, affecting the incomes of especially the larger farmers, its effect on the income of the small farmers and landless labor may be less positive. In this regard it should be noted that, contrary to conventional wisdom, in many of the populous and poor riceproducing countries with a large percentage of small farmers and landless labor, higher foodprices do not necessarily benefit the majority in the countryside⁷⁾. Even when increased income derived from higher foodprices do enable the rural poor to pay for their food, the larger farmers might at the sametime however, decide to go for more labor saving technology, in order to maximize his profits. Policies of this kind, aimed at the small farmer, and where possible at the group of landless labor, should also encompass support and incentives for intensive homegarden cultivation⁸⁾, small animal husbandry, trees for firewood, and fishponds, which could help in providing additional income, improve the nutritional value of the diet, provide traditional medicinal herbs, as well as restore the ecological cycle at the household and village level.

Labor intensive public work projects and stimulation of rural, non-agricultural small business, needed in any case, might provide the additional income which could compensate for the possible adversary effects on the income of the poorest groups and the present jobless. There is, in most developing countries, room for a considerable expansion of such public work projects. The building of local infrastructure, roads, tertiary and quaternary irrigation canals, terracing hillslopes, reforestation, in ways which simultaneously take care of the food production - and energy - needs of small farmers and landless labor, could be organized in such a way that these would provide additional income for those groups, while improving the carrying capacity of the environment.

In important parts of many developing countries, the combination of poverty and overpopulation has already seriously upset the ecological balance between man and his natural environment.

In those areas there is no prospect of absorbing the population doubling which has to be expected in the next 25 - 30 years unless erosion and large scale disinvestment in the natural environment is halted, and policies of massive rehabilitation and improvement of the carrying capacity of the ecology are carried out. The magnitude of the effort required, as well as its great urgency, provides a longlasting opportunity to increase income of landless labor and the smaller farmers providing their wages are competitive with those in agriculture⁹⁾. It would also provide an opportunity to improve organization and management capability in handling large numbers of people and its utilization towards the acquisition of higher skills.

Special efforts should be made for the agricultural infrastructure of supporting services, like extension and supervised credit facilities¹⁰⁾, to reach these two targetgroups of the small farmer and landless labor, while institutional constraints standing in the way of their access to processing, distribution and marketing facilities, but also those restricting their access to relevant information, technology and education or training, should be removed. In the development of these infrastructures these two targetgroups should be assured of increasing participation and control, as their own organisational and management capabilities grow through the stimulation of non-governmental community - and functional - organisations.

Efforts at increasing rural productivity, in both the agricultural and non-agricultural areas, of course requires integrated approaches to rural development. Effective inter-departmental coordination on the village level, has proven to be the most difficult to achieve, except in limited pilot project areas. This raises the question whether ultimately, effective decentralisation and a considerable devolution of power to the lowest possible level of the administrative hierarchy, where concentration of domestic technical assistance capabilities in various fields should also be located, might not be an essential

condition for the effective implementation of the Basic Needs Model. The difficulties encountered at this level also point to the limits of the capacity of centralized administrative systems in meeting the basic needs of the poorest 20%.

In addition, all these programs require a much greater degree of community participation and organisation, encompassing village cooperatives and the evolution of traditional village organisations, and the opportunity for them to exercise autonomous authority.

The development of such organizational and managerial capability is at best a slow and uneven process. It is obvious that both the program implementation on the administrative side, as well as the development of an increasing role of such grassroot organisations will inevitably have to be experimental in nature at an early stage, and will have to be continuously monitored and evaluated. But most important is the adoption at the national level of such policy objectives in the overall development strategy¹¹⁾.

HEALTH.

Even in countries which have committed themselves to expanding health care, it has become obvious that it will be impossible to provide conventional health services that would reach the poorest 20%. This is true even in those cases where significant reallocation of the total health funds available in favor of rural health, have taken place. The operative radius of health clinics may not be more than between 5 or 10 kilometres, i.e. the distance a patient could cover on foot. Cost, shortage of trained medical, technical and other para-medical personnel are the major constraints. The increase in outreach of conventional health services in poor developing countries with a large population, will obviously not be enough to keep up with population increase.

In contrast, the Basic Needs Model emphasizes environmental health and community health care. It is assumed that the pro-

vision of safe water and sanitation would significantly reduce the impact of waterborne diseases¹²⁾, and that, coupled with immunisation, this would improve the general state of health of the poorest, and the life expectancy, especially of children.

Community healthcare emphasizes the role of community leaders and especially of traditional midwives and traditional doctors using traditional medicine, in village healthcare promotion and aid. It also gives high priority to the training of paramedical personnel with the help of basic training packages at various levels. Primary health promotion and care might under certain conditions, even ride piggyback on village workers in the family planning field, in agricultural extension and education.

At the other end of the spectrum, it will be necessary to reorient medical education to the needs of the poorer 40%.

At the same time, medical schools should be able to keep up with recent advances in the various fields of medical science, in order to serve the needs of the modern sector and to have the capability of adapting new scientific breakthroughs for the improvement of mass healthcare. These two conflicting pulls are not easily reconciled.

On top of this, there is the need to inculcate a medical ethos among the young doctors to work and live among, and for, the urban and rural poor. Obligatory national service in environmental and community healthcare, initiated by various countries, is an important first step. It does not obviate the need for integrated reform of medical education.

HOUSING.

The emphasis on self help in building and improvement of housing, as the most promising solution for the poor in poor developing countries with a large population, will require credit facilities on the ground, for building the whole house, or parts of the house (core-house or roof), the development

EDUCATION.

A basic needs approach to education requires an emphasis on functional literacy for all, which, in so far as formal education is incapable of supplying it, will have to be achieved through various forms of non-formal education.

Here, the minimum learning package developed by UNICEF¹⁴⁾ might be of great significance, as would be efforts to integrate the literacy effort into other programs aimed at meeting basic needs. This calls for functional literacy efforts at the working place, in the family, and the community, with or without the help of ambulant teachers.

The use of electronic teaching aids would also have to be considered in this connection, and obviously more experiments are needed. Non-formal education programs will of course have to be differentiated whether they are directed towards the young child, youth or the adult, including girls and the drop-outs, with a view to give them a second chance at getting a useful education and at acquiring employable skills¹⁵⁾.

Here again the families of the small farmer and landless labor should be the primary targets of such programs.

The next priority will have to be on basic education, and the attainment of universal education, if not for the whole duration of primary school, then at least for a period of 3 years. Basic education to meet basic needs will require considerable educational reform, covering both curriculum reform and teacher training, in order to harmonize the educational system with the social and the natural environment, as well as with the new development requirements of the community and of the region. In addition, the basic needs effort in the field of education will require a reorientation of higher and secondary education to the problems of the rural areas, and to develop the higher as well as para-academic skills necessary to support this effort. University involvement in development research, planning and evaluation, as well as study service schemes, are obvious steps towards developing, among the

universities and their students, a sense of social solidarity with, and a commitment to serve, the poor majority of the population, but the process of reconciling this with the growing needs of the modern sector in its national and international aspects, as well as the need for academic quality, within a single university system, is bound to be long and difficult¹⁶⁾.

II

The Basic Needs Model requires an appropriate macro policy framework for development. This should include the adoption of employment and equity as development goals of equal importance as growth. It also means the determination of multiple growth goals, a commitment to development from the bottom up, to local self-reliance, community and grassroots organisation and participation in planning, decision making and implementation in areas affecting those communities, and a reallocation of total investment, but especially of national funds for health, education and housing, in favor of the lowest 40% income group.

Apart from policies and programs directed towards the target groups, the macro policy framework calls for:

Land reform (including where necessary the provision of land for home garden cultivation for each household), reform of hierarchical relationships and structures in the rural area, control of land use, and securing to the community, either wholly or in part, the unearned increment created by changes in the value of land.

Abandonment of price policies for food stuffs which traditionally tend to favor the urban population, and the adoption of price policies for different food stuffs favoring the rural

areas in a manner which stimulates food production and increases rural income, while at the same time ensuring improved calory and protein intake among the urban poor and rural landless labor.

Changing the terms of trade between the urban and the rural sector, which traditionally has worked to the benefit of the cities, to the advantage of the rural sector, through alignment of import - and export - duties, and a review of the exchange rate, thus also changing the relative valuation of labor and capital in favor of labor.

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adjustment to new methods of food production, new crops, new methods of improving livestock. Programs also to provide access to relevant market information, and to make possible the utilisation of new opportunities in trade and rural manufacturing.

Needed also are programs which increase the farmer's understanding of his utter dependency on, and his urgent responsibilities for, maintaining and improving environmental quality, as well as his understanding of changing social conditions because of changed economic circumstances, increased population pressures and greater mobility.

It is unlikely that the amount of information a farmer would need to adjust to social change and opportunities, could effectively be transmitted through the traditional channels of communication: the village headman, the extension services and the educational system.

What is essentially called for is the transformation of the village from a traditional society to an information community, capable of acting and responding creatively to relevant information reaching him, capable also of reaching out for that information.

National Human Settlement policies, the planning for which should extend over the whole of the national territory.

Area development policies stimulating the creation of systems of middle towns and rural settlements, with cheap transportation facilities.

Communications Policy.

The effort to meet basic needs obviously require an unprecedented inflow of information into the village, capable of reaching the poorest villagers as well.

It will be necessary to develop programs designed to help increase agricultural productivity, stimulate and guide adjustment to new methods of food production, new crops, new methods of improving livestock. Programs also to provide access to relevant market information, and to make possible the utilisation of new opportunities in trade and rural manufacturing.

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For in addition, the inescapable requirement in meeting basic needs of community participation and growing self-reliance on the part of the rural population, also requires such access to relevant information. Apart from village level wall-newspapers or newsheets for the tenants, the communications breakthrough that is needed may well require special programs on TV, radio and cassettes directed at the villagers, but at the same time responsive to their wishes and needs. Central programs will of course have to be developed, as well as their proper reinforcement mechanisms in the village, but always in combination with locally or regionally designed programs, in which the community directly concerned, could participate (in demonstration of results, exchange of experience, discussions).

The location of the public village TV set in countries where this is available, should be such that the programs are fully accessible during the whole broadcasting period to the poorest members of the village as well. This also holds for the village public telephone whenever available, as a means for the poor to communicate with markets outside his village, and possibly with the modern sector in town. Program packages that are comprehensible only to the better educated villager would work to the relative disadvantage of the lower income, less educated groups and would only widen the income gap within the village. In as much as the basic needs approach aims at improving the opportunities for the rural (and urban) poor, and requires for the successful implementation of its programs community and group action, the information flow into the village should also include specific information regarding the rights of each villager, inherent in each program. He also needs specific information as to where and how to get legal redress for real or perceived injustice done to him.

Although in a number of developing countries quite useful volunteer schemes for rural development have operated with generally encouraging results, in only a very few countries have such volunteers been given a mandate actively to promote the interests

of the villagers themselves.

It would seem that an expansion of the latter role of informing the villagers of their rights in such programs, and helping them to secure those rights if and when necessary, would be highly desirable. This could, conceivably be done through summer programs for highschool volunteers as well as through study service programs at the university level.

Even under the best^{of} circumstances, the communication problem in rural development is a formidable one. There is quite often a wide gap between the felt needs and aspirations at the village level and the assessment of local priorities on the part of administrators and planners at higher administrative levels. The basic needs approach especially requires new or improved mechanisms for dialogue and interaction - in short, for mutual education -, and above all, on the part of planners and administrators a greater capacity and willingness to listen respectfully.

Cultural Policies.

The efforts to meet basic needs may not have an appreciable impact on slowing down the movement towards the cities, unless simultaneously the overall quality of life within the village is improved, through access to, and participation in, cultural activities at the local, regional and national level.

If TV is not to be an instrument which increases the impulse to migrate to the cities, it will have to be domesticated to serve the needs for cultural participation of the village.

Decentralization of programming would open the way for locally produced programs which would stimulate local cultural activity and creativity, and would revive the community's capacity for cultural self enjoyment. It would also halt the long process of gradual cultural impoverishment that has afflicted village life in many developing societies, in part as a result of usually urban oriented modern education, but also for other reasons. Decentralized programming, linked, for instance, to

village competitions in music, theatre, dance, literature, sports, children's games and folklore, painting, sculpture, wood-carving and other crafts, would be an important means of combating the passivity that usually characterizes TV audiences. Such cultural activities would also preserve cultural continuity, so necessary for reducing the growing disorientation and alienation of the young from the cultural and spiritual values of their community.

On a more essential plane it is impossible to overestimate the difficulties in helping to stimulate and nurse the kind of attitudinal changes at the village level, which are needed to enable the villager to break out of the traditional hierarchical social structures which have for so long imprisoned him. Changes in the local distribution of power, i.e. democratisation, is of course, one important precondition. Still, many of those attitudes, of the rich and the poor alike, are rooted in transcendental preconceptions of the social order.

Individualisation, personal self-reliance and initiative, the stimulation of notions regarding the possibility and legitimacy of trying to improve one's material conditions and those of one's family, are important elements on the road to emancipation. And cultural policies aimed at stimulating those qualities and values have great developmental significance.

But on the other hand, given the need for community action in a labor-intensive type of rural development which the basic needs approach implies, as well as the high degree of population density that in the next 30 years can be expected as a result of population doubling, at continuing low levels of per capita income, in many populous developing countries, calls for cultural policies which at the same time stimulate contrary values, a greater capacity for cooperation, rather than individual competition, greater sense of social solidarity, an emphasis on mutual obligations rather than on individual rights, and an acceptance of voluntary individual self-restraint for higher collective goals¹⁷⁾.

Many of these values are part of the traditional value and belief

systems, although it should also be noted, that in many cases these values have been eroded by the growing inequality in the local distribution of power over the centuries, to the point where concepts and procedures of mutual help and local consensual decision making have been turned into vehicles for exploitation by the locally powerful.

The basic needs approach, and in general the concept of development from the bottom up, turns the conciliation of these contradictory requirements for cultural policy into a new imperative. At the same time, it is obvious that each country and each culture will have to respond differently to this challenge of harmonizing continuity with change, and identity with adjustment, through creative adjustment and imaginative innovation. But it may well turn out that in these societies, which by choice as well as by necessity, are not likely to attain the same degree of individualisation which western industrialised nations have achieved and cherish, emancipation, liberation, self-definition and self-fulfilment may have to be achieved in community, rather than in the pursuit of individual happiness. It may well represent a different path to human growth¹⁸⁾.

It is, finally, also in this light that cultural policies in transitional societies, especially in Asia, should not overlook the role religion¹⁹⁾ has played in shaping social organisation. It has also shaped people's perception of the meaning of life, and of their relationships to their fellow human beings, to society, to nature as well as to the transcendental. It still constitutes a powerful source of moral validation, and of motivation for individual and social action. Cultural policies in support of the basic needs approach in an environment of social transformation, with its uncertain and shifting value configurations, might therefore well find in the prevailing religions potentially powerful forces for constantly needed reintegration.

Research and Technology Policies.

As stated before, all basic needs programs will have to have a built in research component, that will make possible continuous monitoring and evaluation, adjustment and innovation. This includes the area of food production and food distribution technology, including the control of pests, diseases and waste. In many developing countries however, the growth of research capability has not matched the expansion in the use of new technologies. In addition, a national research policy supporting the basic needs approach will have to include research and development, aimed at bringing indigenous technology, including agricultural implements, up the next step of the technological ladder, without taking the improved product out of the reach of the small farmers,

Research should also include the adaptation of more sophisticated types of technology with their social and economic impact on the poorest part of the population.

Beyond this, in light of the growing awareness that certain types of research produce knowledge or technology which tend to be useful to the rich, other types which favor the poor, but that research can also be neutral in this regard, developing countries will have to direct a larger part of their research capabilities to those problems that are especially important to the poorest part of the population, or which at least are neutral in their social impact.

Proper evaluation of basic needs programs will also require the development of relevant social indicators²⁰⁾. A great deal more theoretical work will have to be done in this connection.

Many of the basic services use at present a technology that is still too expensive to reach the poorest among the rural, as well as urban population. New, cheaper technologies will have to be developed that are replicable on a large scale. In addition, research relevant to the development of non-agricultural small enterprises in the rural areas, as well as to stimulating orga-

organisational and management capacity, the establishment of modern rural institutions and the adjustments and upgrading of traditional organisations for the achievement of new goals, is another high priority research area.

Special attention should be given to the development of one other type of research and analytical capability. Considering the extremely difficult policymix, combined with the gaps in our knowledge and understanding of the complex processes of rural dynamics, it is extremely important for a country committed to the basic needs approach, to be able to make periodic assessments, not of where it intended to go, but of where it has gotten in pursuing its course within shifting parameters of the possible, of where things are going, and of whether it should pursue or adjust the policymix.

Basic needs connected research may require different institutions at various levels. They all require interdisciplinary work, with different disciplinary mixes, but all should include a much heavier participation of social scientists, often including historians as well, in light of the need to orient technology to serve social goals²¹⁾, and of the central role of social organisation and social development in the model. Ultimately, the Basic Needs Model aims at increasing self-reliance. As many problems in social development are country - and culture - specific, the development of national self-reliance very much depends on the country's capability to generate new knowledge relevant for the solution of its own development problems, in both their technological and social development aspects²²⁾. The development of such a research capability should include a training component, and links to the scientific community in industrial as well as in other Third World countries (collective self-reliance).

Energy Policies.

The Basic Needs Model raises questions about the supply and mate-

rials of energy available to the poor²³⁾, and the requirements concerning the direction of technological development, the solutions to which will have to be integrated into a national energy policy and national resource management.

Rural development will require increased energy use for irrigation, fertilizers, draft power for cultivating the land, as well as small machines for agricultural processing, and small scale manufacturing; of course also for cooking and heating.

While in some areas rural electrification may be the answer, in poor areas that are isolated, or have a widely dispersed population, the development of alternative energy resources is an absolute necessity (water, wind, bio-chemical energy conversion through utilisation and up-grading of the ecological cycle within the village, and photo voltaic devices²⁴⁾).

For a considerable period, fire wood is bound to remain the major energy resource of the poor. This will require the development of programs towards more efficient use, towards reduction of waste as well as towards increasing supply (re-forestation and establishing village wood lots).

In all these areas, vital linkages will have to be made with research and development abroad, especially with those concerned with the soft technologies in energy.

Policy analysis capability in the energy field connected with the Basic Needs Model, should also encompass the fundamentally different socio-political impact of energy systems. It should be taken into account that some energy systems may be inimical to community development and local autonomy²⁵⁾

Administration Policies.

Before the advent of the basic needs concept, it was usually the bureaucratic machinery which was considered the main ins-

trument for implementation of the development plan, and for the mobilisation and guidance of the population in the development effort.

The Basic Needs Model, with its emphasis on development from the bottom up, community participation and initiative, autonomy and village self-reliance, puts a premium on the development of the organisational - and management capacity of rural communities, as well as on the development of cooperatives and other forms of organisation, often derived from traditional institutions. With the right to run them under their own leaders.

It means in short the adjustment of traditional hierarchical and patron-client relationships to more modern, more democratic forms of social organisation, capable of addressing new problems. All this runs directly counter to the conventional bureaucratic approach to the village which tended to strengthen those traditional structures. It means in effect a quantum jump, from paternalism to emancipation, requiring fundamental changes in attitudes on the part of the administrators, and in the prevailing, deeply rooted, concepts of the proper relationships between the governing and the governed, on the part of the ruling elite as well as of the people at large.

The transition will not be an easy one. All the more because any central bureaucracy tends to overlook inherent limits to its role as the paramount instrument of development, i.e. that at some point in the development process, also in the conventional growth model, initiative and responsibility of farmer and rural community become essential conditions for further progress.

Secondly, that any such bureaucracy is incapable of policing itself effectively in the absence of countervailing social forces, outside itself. Thirdly, that despite all good intentions from the top, particular policies will inevitably be twisted, because of pre-existing cultural and administrative

patterns, as well as, because of the interplay of interests, thus reducing the effective implementation of central policies as intended.

Another reason for the difficulty in bringing about this transition, is the unavoidable drop in efficiency resulting from the handling of particular developmental tasks by inexperienced organisations and institutions. The absolute necessity that these young institutions be given the opportunity to make their own mistakes, is likely to be considered a waste of time. Still it is only in freedom that these institutions can learn, and can develop the skills, but also the self-confidence and self-discipline that is essential to their further development. It is therefore likely that only a firmly committed government, capable of maintaining continuous pressure on its bureaucracy, will be able to bring about such a transition. Apart from decentralisation²⁵⁾ and the development of a local, area, and provincial planning capability, which will allow planning to become a two-way process, the Basic Needs Model also requires adjustments of the administrative system in general to the autonomous role of non-governmental organisations and institutions at the grassrootlevel. It will have to develop a capability of helping to nurse them without bureaucratizing them, or suffocating them in its bureaucratic embrace. It also requires a capacity to monitor these growing rural institutions, and the development of new forms of administrative accountability suited to the budding capacities of these institutions, but at the same time easily incorporated into the public administration system.

The Basic Needs Model also calls for adjustment in the training and education in public administration. The earlier attitude towards public administration as a sanitized, insulated, tech-

nocratic enterprise, should be replaced by an understanding of how public administration is inextricably part of a whole network of social interactions, and an understanding of how different policies look when they come out of the bottom of the mill at the village level, from when they were initially formulated, and why. Just as important as effectiveness and efficiency in public administration, is an understanding of the pitfalls that face an administrator in the implementation of given policies.

The Basic Needs Model also calls for administrators who have a sense for the point at which efficiency must give way to justice, paternalistic guidance must give way to self initiated experimentation, and who know where and when not to interfere in order to make possible autonomous growth of grassroots organisations. It also needs administrators who realize that in a rapidly changing society, with a rapidly increasing population, and all the additional social changes following from it, administrative procedures should be capable of continuous adjustment to new demands and needs arising from those changes, and from the greater political awareness of larger parts of the population than before.

Legal Policies.

Land reform constitutes in itself, of course, a major piece of legislative work. The land reform law will have to cover adequate monitoring mechanisms and procedures for protection of the small farmers as well.

Furthermore, the establishment and proper functioning of co-operatives and other rural associations, of rural credit institutions, of the housing program, as well as the stimulation and protection of small rural business, require a legal infrastructure in the rural area, which in many developing countries still remain to be developed.

The Basic Needs Model also calls for a systematic extension of the judiciary to the village level. A revived rural sector needs a greater conflict resolution capacity. Traditionally, it has been the village headman, who, alone or with a few other village officials, adjudicated conflicts and acted more or less as a justice of the peace. In many countries he now has become a major implementor of development programs, and as such has, inevitably, become a party to many disputes. Such a breakdown of traditional judicial mechanisms has created the need for a place where and a way through which the villager can seek legal redress for real or perceived injustice done to him.

Also all basic needs program accord new rights to the villagers. The extension of the judiciary to the village at the same time requires therefore the development of rural legal aid facilities as well.

Political Dynamics and Ideological Implications.

This inevitably incomplete enumeration of national policies which constitute the macro-policy framework for development required for the effective implementation of the Basic Needs Model, serves to bring out that the Basic Needs Model, in the present state of its articulation, is not yet a substitute for a development strategy. The Basic Needs Model expresses a particular emphasis, and a particular approach to the development process, presenting specific points of intervention. It becomes meaningful only when it is firmly set within a framework of area (regional) and national development policies that are capable of coming to grips with the structural impediments to such change in emphasis, and to social development in general.

The enumeration of these national policies also makes clear the fundamental nature of the changes that these policies call for. Changing the balance between the urban and the rural sector,

between the center and the periphery, reducing consumption levels among the elite as part of the reallocation of total resources in favor of the countryside, opening the door of national socio-economic, and therefore political life to the active participation of hitherto disenfranchised or socially ineffective sectors of the population, the broadening of the political power base that this entails, together, amount to a structural transformation and a fundamental change in the redistribution of economic and political power.

Bringing about such changes entails grave political risks to any government seriously committed to implement the Basic Needs Model. At the same time the risks involved in not dealing with the problems of employment and equity, may in the long run, even be greater. There is therefore an obvious trade-off between present and future risks. Be that as it may, it should be realized that despite the often authoritarian character of governments in developing countries, the political systems remain fragile. (Maybe one should put it the other way: they are authoritarian because their power is so fragile). These political systems have in several important cases proven to be incapable of making the adjustment from growth to equity goals. There are evident limits to the capacity of a political system to make a fundamental adjustment of this kind within a short period.

The experience of a number of originally democratic developing countries in South America have shown that, stretched beyond a certain point, political systems can collapse through the breakdown of national consensus and social cohesion, erosion of the center, and finally polarisation, thereby plunging the nation into a tailspin of increasingly irrational violence, from which it almost seems impossible to recover. Such a collapse can take place both when the problems of equity, in the preoccupation with growth as such, as the paramount objective, continue to be disregarded, but also when the effort

to address the equity problem is in fact made, but failed. The Basic Needs Model therefore represents not merely a shift of emphasis in the development effort, nor is it simply a matter of intellectual perception automatically leading to appropriate behaviour, or the simple application of moral principles. Neither can it be implemented through the application of technology, funds, or technocratic methods alone; it is a profoundly political enterprise affecting vested interests and real, as well as, perceived threats to those interests, often evoking primordial fears and violent reactions. It means also, possibly for a considerable period, a slower growthrate, slower capital formation and therefore a slower development of the modern sector with its own legitimate interests, and the postponement of the capacity to improve their position in the international division of labor. It is also clear that the full realisation of all the economic, social and political implications of the Basic Needs Model invites a degree of state intervention and control which only a totalitarian state would be capable of generating and maintaining. This would undoubtedly destroy the opportunities to develop among the poorest part of the population, the free development of their organizational managerial and self-assertive powers through which a greater range of choices will open up to them, and through which greater social effectiveness, and the social conditions for human rights and freedom become possible. These would be crushed under the weight of either a technocratic or revolutionary, governmental - or party - bureaucracy, be it from the left or from the right.

On the other hand, without such a set of national policies, the Basic Needs Model would soon be reduced to a scheme for the supply of food and basic services, with little change in the condition of powerlessness and dependency of the poorest. In other words, freedom is in itself a basic need, if the meeting of basic material needs is to lead to emancipation and self-reliance.

We are faced here with a crucial contradiction inherent in the development process. On the one hand there is the need for strong central power and economic rationality from the top, capable of bringing about major structural changes and a rational allocation of limited economic resources. On the other hand, the building of a participatory society requires freedom, as an essential condition to develop the capacity of a society to organize itself. Local autonomy, self-reliance and socially effective participation at the village level are inalienable parts of that freedom. No developing country, including China and Tanzania, Brazil or Kenya, seems to have been capable so far, satisfactorily to conciliate these conflicting demands. It would therefore seem that the importance of the Basic Needs Model does not lie so much in itself, but in it being a potentially important building block in a democratic theory of development, still to be formulated²⁶⁾.

The international debate about the Basic Needs Model so far has not satisfactorily clarified how it would fit into a socialist system, into a society organized on the basis of a classical market economy, or of a mixed economy.

While the Basic Needs Model is usually taken as an ascent to freedom, its programmatic features lend themselves quite easily to the application of paternalistic and authoritarian methods of implementation. It is not entirely impossible to envisage in the not too distant future, nations explaining their transformation into totalitarian societies in terms of their commitment to the Basic Needs Model. The Basic Needs Model itself remains silent about these ideological questions, and provides no clue as to how the totalitarian pitfall could be avoided. In any case, a democratic development theory will most likely, not look at social change and development as linear processes, but as resulting from a complicated web of social, economic and political interactions in which it is most likely only the strength of moral commitment, the clarity of social vision and the capacity to sustain it in the face of conflicting pressures,

that will enable us to pick our way towards the conciliation of the contradictory goals of freedom and equity. This will of course require a high degree of political sensitivity and wisdom, the courage to keep on experimenting, and the willingness to expose to, and share with, the public, the unpopular dilemmas's that have to be faced, rather than a single minded and rigid programmatic drive.

The search for such a theory would inevitably have to be part of the more general effort towards the reconstruction of democratic theory²⁷⁾, relevant to the problems of humankind to-day and to-morrow, irrespective whether people live in industrial, post-industrial or pre-industrial society, and irrespective of whether the people concerned are affluent or poor.

III

The lack of clarity regarding the full implications of the Basic Needs Model, but above all, the lack of clarity regarding the extent and the seriousness of the commitment on the part of the industrial countries, also pose external dilemmas for national policy to governments of developing countries committed to this approach.

The commitments made by the OECD countries at the World Food Conference to establish a fully adequate grain reserve, to provide 10 million tons of grains for food aid conventions in the present UNCTAD negotiations, to pursue nutrition programs, to expand development assistance of food, and to resolve current food trade problems, have so far have not been honored. Inasmuch as food production is a pivotal element in the Basic Needs Model, this lack of performance has cast doubts about the seriousness of the commitments of these countries to the Basic Needs Model²⁸⁾.

Some of the questions that arise from those doubts in developing countries which reject de-coupling from the industrial world, are the following:

- It has become obvious that the basic needs approach to development requires not only structural changes in the developing countries, but simultaneously in the industrial countries as well. Put differently, it can be stated that world poverty demands structural changes within developing and developed countries alike, as well as in the international economic order. Without such a mutual compact, committing developing and developed countries together to such structural changes, the basic needs approach stands little chance of success.

To what extent then are donor countries really prepared to accept the transnational economic implications of the Basic Needs Model, like stable commodity prices, access to industrial country markets for processed and semi processed goods, produced by developing countries, but also worldwide economizing on depletable resources?

- The Basic Needs Model requires industrial policies at the national level which at least for an initial period, insulate small rural enterprises using local materials, from the greater competitive power of more efficient modern sector industries, including those in the foreign private sector. The set of policies aimed at redressing the imbalance between rural and urban sectors through changes in relative prices - discussed above, would also affect private foreign investment. Even if such policies were to affect only new investments, would the developing country concerned lose its attractiveness to private foreign capital, or would such investment capital continue to look for alternative areas of activity in that country. Would in light of such policies, donor countries not lose interest in maintaining adequate aid levels?

- Would expatriate personnel and foreign experts lose interest in working in developing countries which have imposed restrictions

on manifestations of an affluent lifestyle, which would make it harder for the host-country to maintain the relatively modest consumption patterns which social solidarity as well as pressure on resources, requires ?

- In its initial stages the Basic Needs Model proper requires mainly domestic funding. It must use cheap, locally available materials, develop rural institutions and increase rural organizational capability at the village level. Its foreign exchange requirements at that stage are therefore quite limited. It is only in its later stages that the Basic Needs Model would require a much larger financial input, and could even become itself a foreign exchange earner.

Nevertheless, we see more and more donor countries jumping on the Basic Needs Model bandwagon, without much questioning as to how much foreign aid the model at each stage can absorb. In a number of countries this is already causing sizable backups in the aid pipeline.

Do donor nations think that through better management techniques and greater efficiency which they could insist upon or themselves provide, that capacity could be increased within a short time ? How do donor nations visualize their role in the effort quickly to increase rural absorptive capacity and rural productivity ? Is it possible for foreign bureaucracies to push for the structural changes at the local level which this requires ? Here, more than in working at the national level, is where interests clash, where tremendous communication problems loom ahead, and where cultural differences are bound to be the sharpest, and a constant source of conflict. Are the donor nations prepared to accept the political consequences of such a deep intrusion on their part, in the life of another people ? History shows that only through foreign occupation after military defeat, or through the colonial relationship, could a foreign bureaucracy hope effectively to bring about, in such a short time, social changes that suit their own perceptions and values. It is impossible to

think that it is this what the donors have in mind.

And finally, would any developing country be prepared to accept foreign aid if it is combined with this kind of a foreign presence in their rural areas ?

- It is obvious that the Basic Needs Model brings the donor face to face with the most intractable of all problems of underdevelopment, which will need much time and effort to overcome. Are they willing to commit themselves to such a long and sustained effort ? Will their national constituencies, when social development turns out to be much more difficult and slow in producing tangible results, not lose interest even more quickly than was the case with the earlier concepts of aid ?

Can the developing countries committed to the model, count on such a commitment on the part of the donor countries for at least a period of twenty years. One would, of course, have to assume that this would only be feasible if such a longterm commitment is linked with real and important interests of the industrial countries. Still the question remains.

- The Basic Needs Model requires, on the part of these constituencies, a much more sophisticated understanding of the development process than before, but very little effort is being made in the donor countries to generate such a depth of understanding in the mobilisation for parliamentary support of aid programs.

On the contrary, there seems to be an increasing reliance on the humanitarian argument in doing so. But a humanitarian emphasis would reduce the Basic Needs Model to a relief operation, disregarding real development needs, and this would leave the poor even more permanently in a situation of powerlessness and dependency.

- The discussion above shows that there are a number of development requirements in support of the Basic Needs Model: area

development, roads, irrigation, transportation facilities within urban-rural networks, etc.

Would donor countries be interested in meeting these needs ?

Would they be interested, in the context of a basic needs approach, to make available the processing plants, the cold storage facilities, the motorized fishingboats and the trucks, if these are to be owned as soon as possible by farmer's - and fisherman's cooperatives ?

These questions are relevant in light of the views of some industrial country legislators that the Basic Needs Model only requires small mini-projects.

Would donor countries then be willing seriously to investigate the full range of supporting developmental requirements that the Basic Needs Model in the narrow sense, needs; and adjust their aid policy accordingly ?

- Speaking more broadly, would the donor nations be interested in committing aid funds to those developing nations which are willing to commit a large part of their total budget to the implementation of the Basic Needs Model, to be used by them for those development activities-especially in the modern sector - which these countries would have to forego because of the basic needs emphasis ? Or is it the unspoken intention to leave modern sector development entirely to private foreign investment and to the government ?

In other words, is it possible for the donor nations, in their mutual commitment to the Basic Needs Model, to envisage a complementary function for foreign aid, providing capital goods, modern technology and science, instead of all concentrating on the Basic Needs Model for rural development with its inherently limited absorptive capacity ? Such a basic re-orientation of the role of foreign aid in support of a basic needs approach, would constitute convincing testimony to the seriousness of the donor countries in supporting the basic needs approach.

- Such an enlightened concept of foreign aid in support of the Basic Needs Model, would go a long way to overcome the fear which exists in many developing countries, that the emphasis on the Basic Needs Model is only the outward manifestation of a basic desire on the part of the major industrial countries, to maintain the developing nations as probably better fed, better housed and better schooled, but still second class, pastoral societies.

It would also counteract the other fear i.e. that the basic needs emphasis is simply a way, on the part of major donor countries, to reduce aid levels, justified in light of proven limited absorptive capacity, while feeling morally good in doing so.

- Technology transfer, adaptation and development in conjunction with social organisation and development, which is the heart of the basic needs approach, is very much country - and culture - specific.

It requires an indigenous capacity to develop new knowledge, new skills, and new technological capability relevant to development needs. While it was possible and rational for donor countries and international agencies to have teams of experts moving about from one country to another, capable of building infrastructure in any country, the knowledge and skills required in the basic needs context, will have to be developed on the ground by national research institutions and country specialists.

To what extent would donor countries be interested in adequately supporting such efforts through special training programs, financial aid and technical assistance ?

A mutual commitment of both donor nations and developing countries to the Basic Needs Model would inevitably have to lead to a major reorientation of the science and technology production system in the industrial world. So far they have largely remained insensitive to the needs and the dilemma's of the

Third World, be they in the area of appropriate technology, or in the search for development strategies that are respectful of freedom and human rights.

It will be necessary for industrial countries to direct more deliberately, a larger part of their research capability to the application of high technology in trying to solve basic needs problems which could be utilized by the small farmer as well as the richer one, and which could be adapted or replicated cheaply in the developing countries. Further development of photovoltaic cells would be one of such examples.

In the field of food and nutrition a recent report of the US National Academy of Sciences²⁹⁾ identifies among the areas for high priority research efforts towards making plants more responsive to nutrients available in their immediate natural environments, and more resistant to pests and adverse climates through a.o. biological nitrogen fixation, photosynthesis and genetic engineering.

The country - and culture - specificity of social development problems in the rural areas, also raises the question of the availability of aid funds for the use of Third World country experts, with more relevant expertise, who at the same time may be cheaper and more willing to spend the time to transfer their skills to host country counterparts through built-in training programs (collective self-reliance). The coming UN conference on Technical Cooperation among developing countries is one important step on that direction.

- The slowness and labor-intensity of social development and rural institution building projects suited for foreign aid support, referred to above, also raises questions of modus operandi, personnel composition and structure, on the part of the bilateral and multilateral donor institutions, through which foreign aid is channeled. This means a.o. the need for more powers of decision for the aid representatives of donor

countries and international agencies in the developing host country. It also means adding social scientists to their staff on both the field level and, strategically located, in the decision making process at head quarters. They should not only be used in project implementation, but have to be involved already in the planning stage. Are donor countries and agencies willing to make these changes within their own internal structure and personnel formation? Are they willing to allow a more autonomous role to domestic institutions within the host country? Are these agencies prepared to adjust their monitoring, evaluation and administrative control procedures to enable them to work - either through the local government, or directly - with the non-governmental organizations at village and community level? Would they be willing, for instance, for projects of this kind, to go as far as accepting forms of joint post-audit control?

- To what extent are donor nations prepared to accept the full ideological implications of the Basic Needs Model? Is it the assumption that the model can be financed solely from the increments of growth, and that therefore no redistribution of productive wealth, except land-reform, would be required? But what if the necessary 6 - 8% growth rate is unattainable, for instance, because of low initial baseline capacity, and more drastic redistribution policies, like nationalization, are resorted to?

Would donors still be prepared to fill the remaining resource gap? Or would they respond ideologically, and stop, or significantly reduce, aid? The historical record of responses by some major donors to developing countries which have undertaken a direct and comprehensive attack on poverty, makes it, to say the least, risky, to discount the possibility that today's friendly donor might not turn into tomorrow's enemy, with all the adverse consequences thereof.

This paper has tried to show how much of the domestic and international dimensions of the Basic Needs Model have, so far, remained unexplored, and how urgent a full exploration and further elaboration is, if the Basic Needs Model is not to become another passing intellectual fad in the national and international development communities.

Such clarification and elaboration can only be achieved through a serious and continuing dialogue between the development communities of the industrial and the developing nations, sustained over a long period of time.

Even if it is assumed that the will is there, the obstacles are formidable. On the part of the industrial countries, these may stem from their preoccupation with their own dynamics, their own problems and opportunities, but also from a basic insensitivity to Third World problems and dilemma's, resulting from unfamiliarity with, and their social and psychic distance from the complexities of these problems and dilemma's, and from the unlikeliness of quick and tangible results, despite all the deadlines.

On the other hand, we should realize that in rapidly changing transitional societies, the development effort is just one among the many processes of social change which take place at the same time, although it may be the one process of change about which the government has some degree of control. All these processes interact; they fuse and collide; they change and change each other in the process, moving in constantly changing configurations. We are beginning to realize how little we really know about development, but the magnitude, violence and inhumanity of some the convulsions through which, in various parts of the world, several developing countries have gone, or are going, also show how limited our comprehension still is of these historical processes, and how even more limited the capacity of governments to control them. However strong they are, however committed to development, including to the basic needs approach, governments soon find out how much more complex than they had

thought, are the problems that they have to face in the realisation of their plans, and how wellnigh impossible it is to capture historical processes in neat models and flow-charts.

For the dialogue, this, in turn, creates difficult problems of explanation and credibility.

After all, how does one explain across the deep divide of different historical situations, things like trade-offs between effectiveness and freedom, efficiency and justice, objective urgency and the internal rhythm of social growth? And, having had to thread one's way so carefully through barely reconnoitred, domestic and international minefields, which could have exploded in one's face at any time, how sure can one be - and equally important, how sure can one's friends be - that after so many detours and compromises one has not lost one's way, or one's soul?

The possibilities on both sides, for misunderstanding, disillusionment, misjudgement and condemnation, therefore are numerous. In addition, the number of people available in the Third World with the necessary time and competence in analysis and synthesis to carry the dialogue, is extremely limited. Moreover, the data or assessments may not always be available at the time when they are needed to maintain the necessary frequency of these discussions.

In the end, the massive intellectual effort and the staying power which a continuing basic needs dialogue requires, can only be generated and maintained when three other factors are present. First, mutual trust on a personal level, between the participants in these discussions. Second, mutual faith

in the basic qualities of the other people, among the peoples represented by these participants, despite inevitable setbacks, deviations and disappointments. And thirdly, faithfulness, a willingness to keep faith with one another, to suspend final judgement for a long period of time, once a common commitment has been made.

Granted, these are rare commodities in to-day's world, but it may not be impossible to find them.

The fate of the poor on this globe, as well as our common survival may well depend on it.

Jakarta, March 7, 1978.

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 - a scientific outlook and an elementary under-
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 - functional knowledge and skills for earning
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