

CREATE WORKSHOP

- ACHIEVING POSITIVE ORIENTATION TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM SOLVING IN KENYA

- By

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INTRODUCTION

- Environment moulds history
- Success of every society depends on its environment and its geographical location.
- History reflects these environmental differences and forces.
- Achieving positive orientation means registering social alignment in order to post positive outcomes on any environmental issue

- The environmental sociologist raises questions such as ‘how our environment affects our behavior and how we change our environment’
- The common association of ‘local’ or ‘indigenous’ knowledge with a better form of development than that associated with ‘Northern’ or ‘scientific’ knowledge is increasingly criticized, and linked more to the imposition of social categories on people than technical expertise of either knowledge system

DEVELOPMENTALISM

- Developmentalism is an economic theory which states that the best way for Third World countries to develop is through fostering a strong and varied internal market and to impose high tariffs on imported goods
- The Western conception of history is that it has been characterized by man's increasing understanding and mastery of the physical environment, by the progressive triumph of mind over matter.

DEVELOPMENTALISM (contd.)

- In the world of scholarship the more abstract subjects, for example, mathematics, philosophy and literature are more highly regarded than concrete and practical calls such as masonry.
- The mental activity of design has been considered an appropriate pursuit for gentlemen, while the actual physical labor of building has been carried out by laborers of the lower classes.

MAN OF THE EARTH

- So, how does history remember the self-professed agrarian “peasant” relative to the certifiable agrarian scientist?
- In other words, ‘if one wants a historical legacy, is it better to be credentialed scientist or a plain-spoken man of the earth?
- Given the strength and rigidity of traditional rural membership paradigms, to be *in* often requires being native to a place- so thoroughly inside that it is not only possible to be *from* a place, but also, and more emphatically, *of* a place, and *for* a place. The prepositions—*from, of, for*—wed advocacy with geography.

Rural Poverty

- Globally, poverty still has primarily a rural face, with two-thirds of the world's poor still constituted by rural poor.
- Effective control over productive resources, especially land, by the rural poor is crucial to their capacity to construct a rural livelihood and overcome poverty.
- The scientist's dialogue between generalization and context has often been lacking or at least imperfectly understood in policy and decision-making.

Environmental Refugee

- In Sub-Saharan Africa, there are fast-growing numbers of people who can no longer gain a secure livelihood in their homelands because of drought, soil erosion, desertification, deforestation and other environmental problems. In their desperation, these "environmental refugees"... feel they have no alternative but to seek sanctuary elsewhere, however hazardous the attempt.

Environmental Refugee (contd)

- Problems caused by environmental degradation, especially due to climate change, abound in Sub-Saharan Africa. Climate change was the single most destructive episodes in human history.
- Climate change has been identified as a leading human and environmental crisis of the 21st century.

Gullies

- For the farmers, the development of gullies leads to a loss of crop yields and available land as well as an increase of workload (i.e. labour necessary to cultivate the land). Gullies can also change the mosaic patterns between fallow and cultivated fields, enhancing hillslope erosion in a feedback loop. In addition, gullies tend to enhance drainage and accelerate aridification processes in the semi-arid zones.

Situation Analysis

- Recurrent and periodic floods affect low-lying parts of the country such as river valleys, swamps, lake shores and the coastal areas – particularly in Western and Nyanza Provinces and Tana River District in Coast Province.... Future rainfall projections for Kenya up to the year 2030 broadly indicate that there will be increases in annual rainfall, with highest amounts expected in western parts of Kenya around Mount Elgon, Elgeyo Escarpment and Cherangani Hills.

Situation analysis (contd)

- This means that the issue of environmental disasters is current and continuing in Kenya. One of the most serious flood related problem in Western Kenya is the vast delta between Kendu Escarpment and Lake Victoria, which was formed by the activities of rivers such as Nyando and Sondu.
- Factors that are pertinent to this are: social structure, living style and culture.

Social structure

- Rural communities have been viewed as places with highly cohesive social relations, law-abiding residents and low tolerance of deviance.
- But past rural development projects have failed to raise living standards significantly in African rural communities because they have typically adopted centrally driven, top-down approaches, often failing to appreciate the skills, perceptions, knowledge and aspirations of those whom the programmes are designed to assist.

Living style

- Nyasani argues that “African, Asian and European minds are products of unique "cultural edifices" and "cultural streams" that arose from environmental conditioning and long-standing cultural traditions. Within the African cultural stream, are psychological and moral characteristics pertaining to African identity, personality and dignity.

Farming systems

- In classifying the African farming systems, it is necessary to take into account the following factors:
- The available natural resource base, including water, land, grazing areas, forest, climate, particularly length of growing period, and altitude.
- The dominant pattern of farm activities and household livelihoods including field crops, livestock, trees, aquaculture, hunting and gathering, processing and off-farm activities.
- The main technology used, which determines the intensity of production and integration of crops, livestock and other activities.

Policy, policy policy

- At its most basic, policy is a course or principle of action, adopted or proposed by a government, party, business or individual.
- there are some central features common to all good policy:
 - it states matters of principle
 - it is focused on action, stating what is to be done and by whom
 - it is an authoritative statement, made by a person or body with power to do so.

Policy, policy, policy (contd)

- It allows people to get on with the organisation's core business more efficiently and effectively.

Development in Kenya

- The main development problem in Kenya is that it has not been exposed to policy in her development. Successive administrations have continued with the 'developmentalist' approach, even in dealing with issues so sensitive as environment.
- Social revolution is difficult to achieve since will require bold but original policy initiatives, and new ways of organising and governing the innovation process, top-down or down-up implementation in order to enable innovation that faithfully serves the needs of the majority.

Land consolidation

- Culture, among, for example, the Luo forbids the sale of cultural land held by one person to another person of the same clan, because cultural land is communally held and not owned by an individual. Sale of such land results in *chira* which is a problem without solution. Secondly, among the Luo cultural communities, women have unrestricted *access to* and *use of* land, but not ownership. This is also *chira*.

Land consolidation (contd)

- Land consolidation in Western Kenya resulted in ever diminishing parcels that are not able to sustain the ever increasing population in the community. This has also resulted in another kind of environmental refugee situation in which people move out and buy land elsewhere. There are two problems with this. First, buying land from another community necessitates the agreement of all subsequent generations. There are cases where a child, born years after sale of land, finds himself landless and starts to claim his ancestral land. This issue continues to cause problems to *jodak*.

Land consolidation (contd)

- Another problem comes when someone who desperately wants to buy land ends up buying a piece which was once a *gunda*. *Gunda* is a place that was once a homestead surrounded by a moat, *gunda bur*. *Gunda* is also a place where people fought and many people died. Clans and tribes used to fight for land and other natural resources. If one buys a piece of land in such places, there is bound to be problems due to the fact that many people died and were buried there. One can't build a home in the middle of a cemetery. That is a very serious *chira*.

Conclusion

- We have seen factors that relate to achieving positive orientation to environmental problem solving in Kenya, specifically that:
 - Scientists need to talk to people instead of themselves
 - Developmentalists need to be proactive policy makers
 - Land reform needs to be revisited in the light of people centred social policy

Conclusion (contd)

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