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AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMMING
AND IMPLEMENTATION MANAGEMENT
(PIM) SYSTEM

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A B S T R A C T

This paper follows an earlier I.D.S. Working Paper (5) which made an evaluation of the PIM system of procedures developed by Belshaw and Chambers and currently being used in the Special Rural Development Programme in Kenya. Following the SRDP half year seminar at Diani (EPD 237/015 (1)) we anticipated that some changes had taken place in the PIM system since our previous research conducted towards the end of September 1972. We have now widened our sample to include officers concerned with the SRDP at the divisional, district, provincial and national levels. In doing this we hoped to:

- i) review our previous findings, modifying or discarding them where necessary; and
- ii) identify and evaluate any changes that might have occurred in the PIM system.

Once in the field we found that the only notable change in the system was a proposal to replace monthly management meetings and monthly management reports (MMMs and MMRs, respectively) with quarterly ones. In some areas this innovation had not been instituted while in others the innovations had been in operation for about four months. Therefore, many of our comments concerning these innovations will be more anticipatory than empirical. Only time will tell.

The PIM system is judged against the functions which it was intended or could have been expected to fulfil and is found to be generally successful. Various ways in which the system is not working well are noted and recommendations are made for overcoming these difficulties. The types of situations in which the PIM procedures are probably useful and the kinds of officers who are most likely to be successful in applying them are analysed. Within the limitations mentioned and with the reforms suggested, the PIM system is found to be a valuable tool for improving Government performance and is recommended for wider use.

INTRODUCTION

The Ndegwa Commission of 1970-1971 included in its Report a recommendation that Government give serious attention to Management by Objectives, a type of procedural system for improving organisation performance. (11, p.89) Following two years of experience as an evaluator of the Special Rural Development Programme (SRDP), in mid-1971, Robert Chambers reached the conclusion that, " The weight of the evidence points toward a primacy for procedures as a means of increasing the effectiveness of rural development administration"(5) Chamber's concern for procedural innovation from an administration point of view was soon coupled with the interest of an economist, Deryke Belshaw in system's analysis as a device for improving rural planning and plan implementation. This convenient combination of official support for new management systems, a set of SRDP plans in urgent need of implementation, and two interested academics led to a spurt of procedural systems for rural development programmes. (2) The first , most fully developed and in widest use of these innovative procedural systems is called " Programming and Implementation Management " (PIM). - In this paper we offer an evaluation of the use of the PIM procedures in the SRDP. In doing so, we also evaluate the SRDP Area Coordinator, whom the procedures were designed to assist, and the SRDP Linkman, who to an extent makes use of the PIM procedures.

In order to study the PIM system in operation we did extensive interviewing of the various divisional field officers in four SRDP areas in September 1972. During the second stage (April 1973) we did extensive interviewing of the various divisional field, district and provincial officers in the six SRDP areas. In addition we sought the views of the various national officers concerned with the SRDP. We should note at the outset that we failed to get the views of some of the officers we intended to interview. In most cases, this was because some were on leave and others were very new to the areas and had previously worked, more often than not, in areas where SRDP was not in operation. We are, however, confident that the people we interviewed constitute a sample that is representative.

The PIM system has been described several times by Belshaw and Chambers, most recently and effectively in " PIM: A Practical System for Implementing Rural Development Programmes and Projects". (2) Therefore this paper will proceed from the assumption that the reader is already

acquainted with the basic components of the system: an annual programming exercise (APE), a monthly management meeting (MMM) and a monthly management report (MMR). Our aims during the second stage of the research were: (1) to review our previous findings, modifying, discarding or standing by them where necessary; and (2) to identify and evaluate any changes that might have occurred in the PIM system. In practice, the only notable change in the system was a proposal to replace both the monthly management meetings and the monthly management reports with quarterly ones. Many of our comments concerning these innovations will be more anticipatory than empirical because in some areas the innovations have not been instituted, and where they have been instituted, they have been in operation for only about four months. Rather than describe the system, we shall instead begin with a analysis of what it was intended to accomplish.

Two early papers describe the objectives that the procedural innovators first had in mind. The first is a working paper, written while the system was still in an early stage of development. (7) Another statement of objectives is implicit in the public presentation of the first experimental set of procedures. (3) The purposes which the PIM system was to serve can be broken down as follows:

- 1) to improve and focus information flows between field and headquarters;
- 2) to increase coordination between sectoral ministries in the field;
- 3) to raise the level of commitment of divisional officers to the programme;
- 4) to provide for more effective hierarchical control over the performance of divisional staff;
- 5) to create mechanisms of collegial control among divisional officers;
- 6) to encourage divisional officers to make demands upon headquarters where necessary for programme implementation;

- 7) to improve the general understanding of officers at all levels of the steps and timings involved in the implementation process;
- 8) to provide data for subsequent programme evaluation exercises; and
- 9) to give the Area Coordinator a tool that would help him to both define and perform his job.

THE AREA COORDINATOR

In each area where there is a Special Rural Development Program an Area Coordinator has primary responsibility for the program. In practice, the Area Coordinator (AC) and the PIM system are interdependent and inseparable: where a divisional officer is rejecting the PIM procedures he is also resisting the Area Coordinator. As defined in the Office of the President circular GEN 149/009/88 of 25th July 1970, the Area Coordinator has wide responsibilities but little formal authority. Among his duties the principle ones are:

- a) to help officers at all levels to get the programme going, and in particular to tackle problems as they arise at the different levels. In this connection, coordinators should not attempt to dictate to other departments, but to act in a support role;
- b) to act as a communications link between divisional, district and provincial levels and interministerially between departments;
- c) to act as a contact or link man with donor representatives, evaluators and visitors;
- d) in collaboration with the PPO / Provincial Planning Officer /, to draw up timetables and work programmes to maintain the momentum of the programme.

The Area Coordinator is crucial to the success of the SRDP because he has the primary responsibility for the effective coordination and implementation of the SRDP projects and programmes. Yet, although the Area Coordinator is to a large extent responsible for the progress of the SRDP programmes in his area, he has no formal authority at his disposal for compelling action on the part of those involved. (10,p.2)

The Area Coordinator's lack of power is fully appreciated by the divisional officers, who note his lack of any special technical competence and are quick to question his authority if they find him a nuisance. In these circumstances the amount of cooperation an Area Coordinator can obtain from his colleagues depends on his personality and persuasive ability, his indirect influence over the sanctions that others control, and, finally, his ability to offer valuable services.

One of the consequences of the Area Coordinator's dependence upon persuasion is that those whose competence is mediocre or who are used to commanding rather than leading are quick to fail. Area Coordinators who are at all hazy in their grasp of the programme and what it requires do not get the necessary respect from their colleagues. Area Coordinators who do not cultivate the friendship of district and divisional officers through frequent contacts find them unresponsive. Where an Area Coordinator orders rather than requests action, he is likely to meet ~~covert~~ non-compliance. We gathered in our interviews that at least one Area Coordinator who was disliked by his colleagues was rendered ineffective by their withholding information from him.

Most of the Area Coordinators try to enhance their authority by relying heavily on the Provincial Administration. Such an alliance is a natural one, since all Area Coordinators are themselves former District Officers (DOs) ~~on~~ assignment from the Office of the President, and are seen as such by some senior Nairobi Government officials. The nature of this relationship seems to vary. We see four problems in this close relationship between Area Coordinators and Provincial Administration. First, it raises the question of whether the District Officer could not perform the role of the Area Coordinator himself. Second, where the Area Coordinator is dependent on a District Officer, he loses almost all independent influence. If we assume that an Area Coordinator is necessary in the first place because the coordination of a development project requires the full attention of someone who can command the respect of his colleagues, ~~then the~~ whole point is lost when a District Officer assumes effective control. Third, a close association with Provincial Administration perpetuates the law-and-order image of Government development activity. Fourth, it ties the Area Coordinator to the District Officer's side in any conflicts between technical departments and Provincial Administration.

For example, at the moment there seems to be a widespread struggle between Community Development and Provincial Administration for the control over and credit for self-help activity. Where the Area Coordinator is not closely tied to the Provincial Administration, he appears to be able to play a useful mediating role in this conflict. Our basic point here is that if the Area Coordinator is to be anything other than an administrative assistant to the District Officer he must carve out an independent sphere of influence. If he cannot, one might ask whether additional District Officers could not perform the same tasks effectively. In one area a District Officer One (a senior District Officer or administrative assistant to the Commissioner) did simultaneously assume the Area Coordinator's functions for a time including management of the PIM system. Apparently he was reasonably successful, except for the association of his law-and-order duties with his development ones.* We still feel that a competent, independent Area Coordinator is central to the success of the SRDP. The Provincial Administration can be a valuable source of development ideas and play a useful supportive role in the implementation of development programmes without making the Area Coordinator overly dependent.

The major indirect sanctions commanded by an Area Coordinator derive from his ability to report non-cooperation to an officer's own ministerial superiors. An Area Coordinator can speak to the district or provincial head of a department about the lack of effort at the divisional level, or, if this fails, he can report the problem to the SRDP Secretariat in Nairobi, which can raise the matter with the

* We would like to draw the attention of the reader to the possible effects of the announcement that there will be no more Graduated Personal Tax (GPT) collection effective from 1st January 1974. This would mean that the workload of a District Officer would be reduced, in effect, giving him more time to devote to development duties. The District Officer may therefore be able to effectively combine his duties with those of an Area Coordinator.

relevant ministry. But there is no guarantee that a ministry will give the Area Coordinator the hierarchical support he requires. One Area Coordinator complained that some of the district heads of departments tended to ignore him. It is dangerous to resort to hierarchical sanctions with doubtful effectiveness, since it is likely to lead to resentment and further non-compliance from the divisional officer concerned. In principle the PIM system may help the Area Coordinator out of this particular dilemma, but this may not be the case in practice if district and provincial superiors do not read and effectively act on the information contained in the reports. The new quarterly reports, being less frequent, may however help him in achieving this objective because they contain reports of programme delays and those responsible for them. The Area Coordinator can thus report the failings of a divisional officer to his superiors while at the same time disclaiming any vindictive motives. Thus the PIM reporting procedures are one of the major devices whereby the Area Coordinator can gain some hierarchical sanctions in support of his role in programme coordination and implementation. In return for this new vulnerability, the divisional officer gains a system that identifies which failures in his programmes are the responsibility of his superiors.

The cooperation that divisional officers give the Area Coordinator is ultimately dependent upon their perception that he offers them something useful in return. The major service that the Area Coordinator seems able to give is help in obtaining assistance higher up in the hierarchy. One of the major revelations of the SRDP experience is that ministry headquarters are often responsible for the failure of divisional projects. In particular, official Authorities to Incur Expenditures (AIEs) are frequently long delayed past project deadlines. (See the annual implementation reviews (AIRs) submitted by SRDP Area Coordinators for 1971.) Divisional officers have a strong interest in breaking these bottlenecks further up the hierarchy or, failing that, in being absolved of responsibility for a project's subsequent poor performance or collapse. The Area Coordinator can offer assistance in both these areas. First of all, through the management reports, the Area Coordinator is able to publicly identify those responsible for implementation delays and to communicate directly with them. Divisional officers, on the other hand, have to make their requests through the "proper", lengthy hierarchical channels.

Secondly, the Area Coordinator is able to go personally to see the appropriate authorities at any level in the Government machinery. The Area Coordinator has this unique ability because he is the only divisional officer without a local superior; he is responsible directly to the SRDP Secretariat in Nairobi. Local divisional officers have thus come to look upon the Area Coordinator as a divisional ambassador to provincial and national headquarters. The overall effectiveness of an Area Coordinator seems to be directly related to his ability to play this ambassadorial role well and to secure the timely release of blocked resources. Those Area Coordinators who seem unable to "deliver the goods" from Nairobi or second best, from provincial headquarters are largely ignored by their local colleagues. We might note here that this ambassadorial role is largely legitimised and facilitated by the PIM system. The final service the Area Coordinator has to offer is the identification of those project failures which are not the responsibility of local officers.

The centrality of the Area Coordinator's ambassadorial role to his effectiveness raises questions about the widespread replicability of the office. In the first place, SRDP areas are very unrepresentative of rural administrative divisions, some being right next to district and provincial headquarters and others being a considerable distance from one or both of these. We therefore wondered what effect this would have on the effectiveness of the Area Coordinator. We found that proximity to district headquarters, and even more so to provincial headquarters, did in fact have a very salutary effect. First, the Area Coordinator could hasten the flow of resources to his area by seeing district and provincial heads often. Second, regular intercourse with district and provincial heads improved an Area Coordinator's standing among his divisional colleagues. He could easily arrange tours of important projects in his area by provincial heads of departments. This would tend to improve the divisional officers' commitment and hence their productivity. Where the Area Coordinator's offices are not located at divisional headquarters, regular visits to the field not only keep him in touch with what is happening but also show that he is committed to what is going on. We therefore felt that where the divisional headquarters is within easy driving distance of the district headquarters the Area Coordinator should be stationed at the district headquarters. This is particularly important when there is no telephone service at divisional headquarters.

If Kenya were to have large numbers of Area Coordinators, their access to and effectiveness at ministerial headquarters in Nairobi would be severely diminished. The core of the Area Coordinator's effectiveness stems from his ability to secure the release of central resources. The role of the Area Coordinator is probably only widely replicable if one of three major structural reforms is introduced: extensive deconcentration of financial authority to the provinces is undertaken; a superministry for rural development is created with someone like the Area Coordinator as the hierarchical head of other officers at the local level; or a ministry such as Finance and Planning is made responsible for the disbursement of development funds (non-recurrent expenditures) at the local level and the Area Coordinator is designated as the ministry's local representative. (In this connection see also the section below on central delinquencies.)

The PIM system

has helped to legitimise the Area Coordinator in the eyes of his colleagues in technical departments and has enabled him to appear less as an arrogant administrator who lords over technical officers and more as a peer with special means of overcoming problems on their behalf. (1,p.13)

It has therefore become one of the central tools, if not the central tool of the Area Coordinator's effectiveness. In addition to the PIM system, we feel that for an Area Coordinator to be effective he needs to have wide administrative experience coupled with a quasi-specialist education. As an administrator, he would be equipped with the necessary diplomatic skills to coordinate the development activities of his divisional colleagues, and to play an effective ambassadorial role in obtaining the necessary development and plan implementation inputs from Nairobi, the provincial and district headquarters. We also feel that since an Area Coordinator is concerned with development, he needs the kind of education that will enable him to play his role effectively. A command of economics, preferably at university degree level, is therefore essential. We feel that an Area Coordinator who is a specialist in one field, say agriculture, would tend to be unduly biased in favour of his speciality, which might render his coordinating duties ineffective.

The PIM procedures are crucial to the success of the Area Coordinator and are a major instrument of his control, and this explains why the Area Coordinators have been reluctant to simplify the system, despite their acknowledgment that it is sometimes burdensome. (1,p.13) It also explains why we found that those officers who are resisting the Area Coordinator also reject the procedures, and that where the Area Coordinator is ineffectual the

PIM system will often be underutilised.

THE LINKMAN

In each ministry which is involved in the Special Rural Development Program, one official has been designated as a Linkman to plan and coordinate SRDP functions within his ministry. Initially we had intended to seek the views of the various SRDP linkmen in Nairobi about the workings of the PIM system. In practice we found that the various SRDP linkmen are crucial to the successful implementation of SRDP projects in the field. A constant complaint made by various divisional officers is the delay of Authority to Incur Expenditure (AIE) with the concomitant delay in the implementation of plans. Whereas the targets set in the annual programming exercise are considered binding commitments by field staff, they are apparently not so treated by Nairobi ministries. One of our hypotheses was that the SRDP linkmen who sign these forms for the various ministries are probably too junior to get the cooperation needed for results in their headquarters. In other words, the linkman should be a senior man in the ministry, senior in the sense that he can effectively commit his ministry during the annual programming exercise and later on ensure that the Authority to Incur Expenditure is not delayed. This will be even more necessary if and when SRDP is replicated.

Generally the linkman does not have the authority to commit his ministry in matters relating to finance. This places him in an embarrassing situation. Field officers expect him to be able to do this, and he is aware that if he admits his inability explicitly his standing in their eyes will suffer. It appears that this problem can be solved by having a senior financial officer as a linkman. But where the duties of a linkman are primarily in planning a financial officer may not be effective. The problem is therefore not only that the linkman is a junior officer, but also that his section is not senior to the finance section. In addition, the SRDP budget is but a part and generally minor one, of the total budget of a ministry. The speedy release of SRDP funds may at times depend on the personal relationship between the linkman and a senior finance officer. Such a situation is precarious. This problem could be solved by either having a senior finance officer as the linkman, provided that he has the necessary skills for project appraisal and evaluation; having the head of the planning section or his deputy combine his role with the duties and responsibilities of the linkman; or having the annual programming exercises signed by the linkman and countersigned by the head of a division, a finance officer, or

some similar senior Nairobi official before they are considered binding. We consider this last the best alternative. In effect, the linkman would act as deputy to a senior Nairobi officer. In the Cooperative Department the role of the linkman appears effective. He draws the estimates, presents them to the Treasury and advises his local staff on the mechanisms of government budgeting. In such a case, then, there is no need of having a more senior man as the linkman.

Although the PIM system has been successful in both coordinating the activities of divisional officers and improving communication between the field and the headquarters, there has been relatively little coordination between the linkmen. This has been attributed, among other things, to the fact that the SRDP is but one of the linkman's many responsibilities. More seminars and meetings among the SRDP linkmen and other interested parties can improve this position. If the management reports stressed inter-sectoral ministerial problems in implementing development projects, this exercise might be helpful in improving coordination between the Nairobi SRDP staff. What all this would mean, in effect, is that the Area Coordinator should put more stress on inter-ministerial problems in his reports.

PIM JUDGED BY ITS OBJECTIVES

It was a general finding that the PIM system was reasonably well accepted and effective in the SRDP areas but that some problems and difficulties still existed here and there. We will first evaluate the system on the basis of the nine objectives which were identified at the beginning, and then we will discuss the reasons for its difficulties.

1. Improving and Focussing Information Flows Between Field and Headquarters

The monthly management reports provide a wealth of information about the progress of the individual projects that have been programmed. The method of using position initials and a red circle to call the attention of an officer to only those sections of the report which concern him also helps to focus the flow of information. Nairobi staff is generally satisfied with the information generated, but linkmen tend to concentrate more on information dealing with their own departments. There is also a general feeling that though the monthly management reports are sufficiently informative,

they must be burdensome and time-consuming for those who prepare them.

In some areas the district and provincial headquarters paid no attention to the Monthly Management Reports, but instead preferred the conventional narrative report provided by their subordinates in the field. Therefore, in these areas this objective was not being achieved. The two reasons given for this were that the SRDP formed a very small part of the district and provincial officers' duties, and since they themselves were supposed to write their reports for Nairobi headquarters in a narrative form the monthly management reports were not sufficient for their purposes. The field officers, on the other hand, were dissatisfied with the narrative report because it had to be summarised and shortened at every level, eventually reaching the top without the information important to the field officer. The monthly management report helps to overcome this problem by being sent to the various levels of Government hierarchy simultaneously and without any cutting or editing. We, however, feel that the same purpose could be served by sending standardised letters. This is because divisional officers complain that requests for provincial or national action contained in the reports are effectively ignored, and that an additional exchange of correspondence still seems to be necessary before a request can be met. From the point of view of divisional staff, letters are still necessary and more effective devices for transmitting the information they want to communicate. This might not be a necessary fault of the PIM system, however, if provincial and national officials could be made to see the desirability of acting when they are first asked rather than when they are pestered. Such a major change in administrative behaviour seems a rather forlorn hope, however. The proposal to hold meetings and write reports every three months rather than every month may of course reduce the flow of information, but if regular ad hoc meetings are held and standardised reminding letters sent this problem may be solved. The fact that the reports will be less frequent may even mean that senior officers will be more likely to read and act on them.

2. Increasing Coordination Between Ministries in the Field

Field staff agree that the PIM system works well as a coordination device when more than one department is involved in a particular project or interrelated set of projects. Through the use of the procedures, it has been possible to draw up integrated programmes so that each officer

knows exactly what he is supposed to do and when to do it, as well as what others are doing at a particular time. The system works best when the resources needed for project implementation are under the control of the officers who commit themselves to the project schedule. Action dates set for national ministry headquarters or for self-help groups have proved unreliable, and where either of these has been involved the coordination exercise has had much less value. (But see the section below on self-help activities and local participation.)

The system would be just as effective as a means of intra-ministerial coordination, for it indicates the interdependencies between various activities of a ministry. In agriculture, for instance, where the success of various activities is dependent on uncontrollable natural phenomena, failure to meet a target would adversely affect other subsequent activities.

3. Raising the Level of Commitment of Divisional Officers to the Programme

The PIM procedures appear to have been particularly effective in raising staff morale. This has come about because the system enables an officer to identify clearly his own responsibilities and participate actively in setting his own targets. In contrast to their attitude when work has been assigned by the more usual authoritarian method, the divisional officers now find that their pride in the value of their own promises is involved when they meet their deadlines or do not. As the officers themselves set the work load, they cannot explain away delays later by saying the work was more than they could cope with. As mentioned above, the PIM system has provided an opportunity for SRDP field officers to transmit information directly to Nairobi thereby avoiding the censoring that inevitably takes place at district and provincial headquarters. This direct access has succeeded, in some cases, in raising the morale of field officers by making them feel that they perform important tasks, especially when officials in Nairobi solicit a piece of information directly from them.

4. Providing for More Effective Hierarchical Control over the Performance of Divisional Staff

The annual programming exercise provides an officer's superiors with a clear definition of what the officer is to accomplish during the year, and the monthly management reports give a running account of how these responsibilities are being met. The fact that the monthly management reports

are compiled by the Area Coordinator with the assistance of the other local officers makes these reports more reliable than those written by officers themselves. (We are not saying that falsification is impossible, but only that it is likely to be less than with the other reporting systems.) Most of the linkmen indicated that the information contained in the monthly management reports did not necessarily decide promotions. However, we feel that more attention needs to be paid to the annual evaluation reviews in deciding promotions for SRDP divisional staff. Where district and provincial heads of departments prefer conventional narrative reports, information from the monthly management reports, we may assume, does not decide promotions, though it appears clear that divisional officers fully appreciate the potential of the monthly management reports for helping or hindering their careers and act accordingly. The management reports, therefore, are not only a source of information but also a control device.

5. Creating Mechanisms of Collegial Control Among Divisional Officers

On the formal level there is very little that an officer's colleagues can do to make him cooperate with them or meet his commitments. Yet we found that, with very few exceptions, officers do make a real effort to live up to their fellows' expectations. The existence of public records of their performance is enough to make them conform. (This is a general behaviour pattern. See 4, pp. 178-180.) No officer wishes to be criticised by his colleagues in the monthly management meetings. The monthly management meetings enhance the spirit of teamwork and conformity to group norms. Formal and informal pressures are brought to bear on the delinquent officer without engendering personal animosities. The clear definition of responsibilities forms a basis on which criticism can be based with few possibilities for the officer to "pass the buck". Equally important, or even more so, are other informal social pressures. An officer's social standing among his peers is bound to suffer if he lets them down or is seen as lazy or incompetent. This is particularly true when the officers are living and working together in a small and isolated community, where they depend on one another both on and off the job.

6. Encouraging Field Officers to Make Demands Upon Headquarters Where Necessary for Programme Implementation

Organisational sociologists have observed that when the work of

subordinates is subject to impersonal mechanisms of control, such as objective performance records, the normal flow of demands along the hierarchy tends to be reversed and subordinates make demands of their superiors instead of the other way round. As the subordinates know they are going to be judged by objective measures of how much they achieve, they put pressure on their supervisors to provide whatever assistance is needed in order to improve their productivity. This reversal in the hierarchical flow of demands reduces the need for closer supervision in the organisation. (4, pp. 171-172) There is no doubt that the PIM procedures have achieved this upward flow of demands. Instead of field officers being told what to do by the headquarters, they set their own targets during the annual programming exercise, effectively agree to be judged by them and then demand the necessary resources from headquarters. When those at headquarters fail to fulfil their commitments to programmes, the management reports, which provide information about the progress being made in the field and the problems associated with the implementation of programmed development activities, letters and the Area Coordinator's personal calls put pressure on them for quicker action. This must be regarded as one of the most desirable effects of the procedures. Now some mechanisms for making headquarters more responsive to these demands are needed.

7. Improving the Understanding of Officers at all Levels of the Steps and Timings Involved in the Implementation Process

Most of the officers interviewed expressed the opinion that the PIM procedures had appreciably improved their own perception of the steps involved in the implementation of their projects. By using the procedures, they could make sure that all necessary inputs were acquired in the right quantities and at the right time. They said that the PIM system is superior in this regard to any other they had worked with previously, and the only improvement they could think of was a simplification of the management reports, which were too bulky and time-consuming. They were particularly pleased with the system's information providing facilities. It also enabled them to systematise their thinking and to avoid procrastination. Of course the procedures have not eliminated human oversight or failings; so the implementation process is still not perfect. The system can give an officer a false sense of security once he has met all the deadlines on his programming sheet, while in fact he has overlooked a minor but important detail. Nonetheless, the PIM procedures have improved the

implementation process and have probably gone as far into the details of programming as is desirable.

8. Providing Data for Subsequent Programme Evaluation Exercises

This early objective of the PIM system should now be seen as inappropriate. The monthly management reports (MMRs) provide far too much detail in a highly stylised format to be useful for evaluation purposes, except perhaps by those who wrote them. We wonder how helpful the quarterly management reports (QMRs) are going to be in achieving this objective. Since the format is unlikely to be changed, our observations about the MMR are still valid. The annual implementation reviews (AIRs) which have been developed are much more useful for this purpose.

9. Giving the Area Coordinator a Tool Which Helps Him to Both Define and Perform his Tasks

We have already noted that the PIM system has become central to the Area Coordinator's effectiveness and vice versa. This raises the question of whether PIM can only be used in conjunction with an Area Coordinator.

Certainly on an area basis the system can only be applied by someone who has a legitimised role as coordinator of his colleagues' efforts, who has the time and occupational interest to apply it, and who has some formal sanctions or rewards at his disposal. A development-oriented District Officer or District Commissioner could probably use it successfully. But we still feel that these provincial administrators would be overloaded by their law-and-order duties and may therefore not perform the duties of the Area Coordinator efficiently.* The proposed District Development Officers would probably be unsuccessful in applying the PIM system at present, as their role has yet to be institutionalised and they have none of the Area Coordinator's advantages of access to Nairobi to offer as an inducement to cooperation. Of course the system could be easily applied within any ministry, for the formal authority would then support it. It would be interesting to have, say, the Ministry of Agriculture experiment with the procedures as a device for inter-divisional coordination.

* But see the footnote on p.5.

PIM FAILURES AND PROBLEMS

As we mentioned earlier, there were cases where the PIM system was working rather poorly. Some divisional officers complained about it vigorously, saw little value in it, and asserted that their use of it was largely ritualistic. It is important to note that some of these complaints were voiced before there were proposals to simplify the system. Where these new proposals have been initiated, many of the problems appear to have been solved. We anticipated that the proposed changes may have created new problems, but since time has not tested the innovations, the new problems can only be dealt with by speculative anticipation.

Not all the problems encountered before the new proposals were inherent in the procedures themselves. We have had to look for explanations outside the PIM system. One problem was that of weak Area Coordinators. In one area, the Area Coordinator seemed hazy in his grasp of the projects and of the procedures. He also maintained only fleeting contacts with the divisional officers and so was gaining neither the insights nor the informal support he needed from them to succeed. Unlike another area we visited where the Area Coordinator was weak, the Provincial Administration had not stepped in to support the PIM system. We felt that the resistance of the divisional officers to the PIM procedures was partly a rejection of the control attempts of an Area Coordinator whom they saw as lacking technical expertise, unhelpful and not particularly friendly.

Inadequate Participation

Another part of the resistance to the procedures derived from the history of hierarchical relations in one of the ministries most centrally involved in one area's SRDP. Some of the divisional officers had had their past implementation targets dictated to them by their superiors without their participation. This past experience still rankled, and thus to them the system was exclusively a device of hierarchical control. Not surprisingly, in these circumstances the system was resented and resisted, did nothing to secure the commitment of the divisional staff, and perhaps lowered their morale. When we visited the same area about six months later

we found most of the officers still there whom we had interviewed earlier, but this time they were participating and their morale seemed high. Apparently, this was due to greater familiarity with the PIM system, as well as a new and more committed Area Coordinator. It seemed clear that the full and meaningful participation of divisional officers in the annual programming exercise is very important to PIM's effectiveness and well worth the minor inconveniences of the consultation process. Though the divisional officers are involved in the annual programming exercise, one officer complained that his ministerial linkman is in some cases not involved in it, an involvement and participation that we feel would perhaps boost the morale of the divisional staff and indicate that Nairobi was keenly aware and interested in what was being done by the local representatives. Officers involved in the SRDP should also be fully conversant with the workings of the system. Perhaps some problems arise because some officers do not understand the system. We are of the opinion that an officer who resists the system more often than not does not understand it.

Central Delinquencies

Nairobi ministry and provincial headquarters have been blamed for delays in the release of Authority to Incur Expenditure. In one area officers complained that they were unwilling to take actions that committed them publicly unless they were absolutely certain that any central resources required would be forthcoming and on time. Feelings on this point were stronger in some areas than in others, but the basic problem was mentioned throughout the SRDP. It is extremely awkward to organise local people for some programme which depends upon something promised from Nairobi, and then have that resource fail to arrive when it is needed. As a consequence, divisional officers have begun to develop a "diplomatic approach", trying not to commit themselves and postponing implementation activities until the promised resources are physically present. This cannot help but slow down the implementation process. The role of the linkmen in connection with fund releases has already been discussed. The need for financial decentralisation is obvious. A useful innovation would be for ministries to send copies of the Authority to Incur Expenditure to the district level immediately as it is released by the Treasury, with a copy to the provincial level for accounting purposes. The divisional officers would then be allowed to enter this Authority to Incur Expenditure

in their vote books and proceed with their projects without awaiting further clearance. Where 50% of the Authority to Incur Expenditure is released in July, the second instalment should be released automatically in January of the same financial year without any further delays.

Another central delinquency is the failure to post the required personnel on time. This inevitably delays implementation. Since it is an experiment, the SRDP exercise must have all the necessary resources ('elements'). Frequent transfers between SRDP and non-SRDP areas mean that officers who have gained some skills in the operation of the PIM are replaced by officers who are quite new to the system. This leads to unnecessary loss in efficiency. Transfer should be minimised and restricted to SRDP areas.

Self-Help Activities and Local Participation

We found serious problems in applying the PIM system to self-help activities and the Department of Social Services. It is fantasy to ask an officer to commit himself to the completion of voluntary public contributions to a project by a certain date. A Community Development Officer may attempt to persuade people to move faster or be able to make a relatively accurate prediction as to completion, he can do little more short of coercion. When targets are forced upon a District Officer or Community Development Officer, the almost inevitable result will be to change self-help from a system of voluntary contributions to one of extra-legal taxation with the forcible collection of "gifts" by administrative means: Belshaw and Chambers now acknowledge the likelihood of precisely such an outcome. (2,p.14) They suggest that the problem be partly dealt with by involving community leaders in the annual programming exercise for such projects. The community would then, to a certain extent, be committing itself to these deadlines. (2, p.1) One of the major dangers of PIM is the extent to which it substitutes scheduling for problem -solving. PIM is most appropriate where scheduling is the major problem, as it is with the delivery of Government work and resources. Recently, however, the Department of Social Services has introduced new procedures - Local Participation Procedures - aimed at involving the local people in the planning and implementation of self-help activities. These procedures may help discourage the local people from relying on Government funds to complete their projects. In this respect, the people's attitudes towards

self-help activities will be changed. A community development officer pointed out that there is now a need to discourage continuation of unplanned failing projects and to concentrate on maintaining the already completed projects. Local people's credit for self-help should not be stolen by Government officers as this might lower people's enthusiasm for self-help. These Local Participation Procedures have been in operation for a very short time and cannot be properly judged. However, initial reactions by field officers are very favourable.

Burdensomeness

At the time of our first interviews, divisional officers complained that the PIM system was cumbersome and time-consuming, but these complaints have now decreased considerably. Some felt that the procedures were so burdensome that they should be rejected; others felt the burden was justified by the other advantages of PIM. Either way, there is need for simplifying the procedures and restricting the projects to which they are applied whenever possible. We think that the full PIM procedures should be applied only to those projects and processes where there are inter-departmental or trans-hierarchical interdependencies. When the actions of more than one department or widely separated levels in a given ministerial hierarchy are required for a project, the PIM provides a valuable coordinating device. Nonetheless, it is probably necessary to formally programme only those aspects of the projects that are directly tied to the interdependency. Where a whole series of implementation steps are to be performed by one officer, only the concluding step needs to be written into the annual programming exercise. We believe that officers should be trained to do their work programming and then be left to do it privately when no interdependencies are involved. This would allow much of the process to be more informal, flexible and less burdensome. Similarly, we would advocate that the control function of the PIM procedures be isolated from the work planning one and the latter be made informal. Thus officers might be required to report on how they are progressing toward certain basic and identifiable benchmarks in their projects without getting into too much detail. The examples Belshaw and Chambers now give of the PIM system suggest that they have been moving toward less detail as well. (2, pp. 22-23, 30-33) We think it desirable to stress, however, that only those operations need to be formally programmed which serve a definite coordination or control purpose. Nevertheless, this does not preclude an individual officer's doing detailed implementation programming

privately for his own benefit.

Another aspect of PIM's burdensomeness is the size of the monthly management reports. Earlier, we proposed that mimeographed and widely distributed monthly management reports be replaced by standardised monthly action reminder letters to those concerned. We think this may achieve more effect and provide a better service to all concerned.

We pointed out above that complaints about burdensomeness have now decreased considerably. Many of the officers who voice this complaint are new to the system or have failed to meet their targets and know that both management meetings and reports will expose them. Most of the complaints were in fact levelled at the monthly management reports and meetings. At the Diani Seminar it was decided that "pending the issue of revised instructions Monthly Management Meetings should be continued on an informal basis and Area Coordinators are authorised to produce their own simplified versions of monthly reports for the benefit of Linkmen and the MFP / Ministry of Finance and Planning / SRDP unit". (8,p.7) If these simplifications have proven useful, then quarterly management meetings and quarterly management reports have probably replaced the monthly meetings and reports respectively. This is an attempt to make writing reports and attending meetings a smaller part of the work of the Area Coordinator.

The PIM system should be simplified in these ways:-

- a) The management report should become more of a sectoral ministry report. A linkman should concentrate on only those details which deal with his ministry. It is pointless to repeat what was contained in a previous report if nothing substantial has taken place. Quarterly management reports should cut down the amount of repetition.
- b) When something that needs urgent attention comes up, letters and other quicker means of communication should be used instead of lengthy reports. Routine management meetings should be postponed when warranted by local circumstances, such as, for example, an outbreak of foot and mouth disease.
- c) After writing the Progress Summary, both the Progress and Problems and the Progress and Action sections should be omitted.

The offices concerned in Nairobi should solicit what further detailed information they need. This would especially help the field officers who feel that their reports are merely shelved without being seriously read.

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS

In summary, we find the PIM system to be basically valuable. It has proved superior to any other system presently used in Kenyan rural development endeavours. The arguments for its wider application are overwhelming, particularly in intra-ministerial trans-hierarchical coordination. It has met the greater part of the objectives that were set for it, proving useful as a tool for coordination, control, implementation planning and identification of critical delays. It has also enabled the Area Coordinator to play a strong and useful role. However, greater care should be taken in the recruitment of Area Coordinators. The linkmen have not been able to play their roles effectively, because they generally lack the authority to commit their ministries financially. Several other problems, although not intrinsic to the procedures, do need attention. (1) The PIM procedures will be ineffectual unless they are applied by a strong Area Coordinator or similar officer. (2) The success of the system depends upon the full and genuine participation and understanding of the field officers who are committed by it. (3) The system has proved inadequate in keeping ministry headquarters up with divisional implementation deadlines. A method of gaining the commitment of senior and powerful officials to the implementation schedules is needed. (4) PIM does not work well with self-help activities. Where other projects depend on self-help ones and PIM does have to be used, the participation of local community leaders in setting target dates is essential. The innovations introduced by the Department of Social Services may hopefully solve this problem. (5) There is some danger that PIM will direct the attention of officers away from local opportunities and underlying problems and toward the mechanics of delivering Government resources. It needs to be stressed that PIM manages only a portion of the total resources that are necessary for ultimate plan success. (6) The PIM procedures can be burdensome in staff time and effort. They should only be applied to those projects on which they will produce the greatest benefits, i.e. those where

control or inter-departmental or trans-hierarchical coordination is needed.

(7) The overwhelming mimeographed monthly management report might be replaced by more focussed and individualised monthly action reminder letters .

The replacement of the monthly management meetings and monthly management reports by quarterly management meetings and quarterly management reports respectively has reduced the number of complaints about burdensomeness, but may have disadvantages, especially loss of effectiveness of collegial control. However, if informal, ad hoc meetings are sandwiched between the full-scale meetings and reports, the advantages of the monthly meetings and reports will be regained. If care is taken to avoid or minimise the above problems, we believe the PIM system to be quite useful and widely replicable.

APPENDIX: INTERVIEWS HELD IN APRIL, 1973

In the Kapenguria SRDP area, Herbert H.A.Chabala interviewed the Assistant Livestock Marketing Officer, the Assistant Community Development Officer, the Crop Husbandry Officer, the Animal Production Officer and the District Agricultural Officer. Since the Area Coordinator was on leave, the Project Advisor was interviewed.

In the Migori SRDP area, the Area Coordinator was also on leave, and the Provincial Planning Officer was interviewed. Mr. Chabala interviewed the SRDP Project Advisor, the Assistant Community Development Officer and the Provincial Director of Agriculture. The Assistant Agricultural Officer was new, and the Livestock Officer had just been transferred from a non-SRDP area, so they had not yet gained an understanding of the PIM system.

In the Vihiga SRDP area, Mr. Chabala interviewed the Area Coordinator, the Assistant Agricultural Officer, the Livestock Officer, the District Agricultural Officer and the Provincial Director of Agriculture.

David H.Kiiru interviewed the Area Coordinator, the Assistant Agricultural Officer, the Assistant Community Development Officer and the Community Development Officer in the Tetu SRDP area. The District Agricultural Officer had only been at this post for one week, and the officer who handled SRDP matters in the Provincial Director of Agriculture's office was not in.

In Nairobi, Mr. Kiiru interviewed the chief of the SRDP unit in the Ministry of Finance and Planning and the linkmen in the Office of the President, the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Cooperative Department.

In Mbere SRDP area, Solomon W. Mukuna interviewed the Area Coordinator, the District Officer One, the District Agricultural Officer, the Assistant Agricultural Officer and the Assistant Community Development Officer, and talked with the Provincial Planning Officer.

In the Kwale SRDP area, he interviewed the Area Coordinator, the Assistant Community Development Officer, the District Agricultural Officer, the Assistant Agricultural Officer, the Assistant Livestock Officer and the District Officer.

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

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