

This work is licensed under a  
Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-  
NoDerivs 3.0 Licence.

To view a copy of the licence please see:  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT IN  
KENYA: A STUDY OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF  
PERSONNEL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

By

Malcolm Wallis

DISCUSSION PAPER NO. 231

INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
P.O. Box 30197  
Nairobi, Kenya

FEBRUARY 1976

Views expressed in this paper are those of the author. They should not be interpreted as reflecting the views of the Institute for Development Studies or of the University of Nairobi.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT IN KENYA:  
A STUDY OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF PERSONNEL  
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

By

Malcolm Wallis

ABSTRACT

This paper focusses on a particular organisation concerned with rural development - the Community Development Division of the Department of Social Services. In particular, attention is paid to the position occupied by the grass-roots workers in this organisation - the Community Development Assistants (CDAs).

The history of the organisation is briefly outlined. This is followed by an analysis of the factors within the organisation which tend to produce fragmentation and, conversely, integration. It is argued that the tendencies towards fragmentation are strong; and those which might make for a more integrated organisation are not as effective as they might be. The consequence of this is that the organisation finds itself placed in an insecure position. The self-help movement in Kenya is likely to be weakened as a result.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the way in which a particular formal organisation in Kenya operates. Attention is focussed upon the Department of Social Services (D.S.S.) within the Ministry of Housing and Social Services (until November 1974, the Ministry of Cooperatives and Social Services). This department is divided into a number of divisions (e.g., Adult Education, Social Welfare, Community Development). One of these divisions has been chosen for detailed analysis - Community Development. The approach is partly derived from Herbert Kaufman's classic study of the U.S. Forest Service, where an attempt was made to demonstrate the usefulness of 'administrative anthropology' for the comparative analysis of administrative systems. (9, p.240) Kaufman stresses the importance of studying the work of people who occupy the lower rungs of an administrative hierarchy. (9, pp.3-4) He quotes Herbert Simon in this context:-

In the study of organization, the operative employee must be at the focus of attention, for the success of the structure will be judged by his performance within it. Insight into the structure and function of an organization can best be gained by analysing the manner in which the decisions and behaviour of such employees are influenced within and by the organization. (22, p. 3)

By examining the work of one such operative employee, the U.S. Forest Ranger, Kaufman was able to obtain substantial insight into the working of the whole Forest Service. His approach involved rather more than the normal methodological equipment of the student of public administration - interviewing senior officials, perusing both contemporary and archival documents and so on. Of more importance, he closely observed the situation (and the sub-culture) in which these operative employees actually carry out their work. In this way he has been able to carry the study of formal organisation a long way from mere formal analysis.

This paper focusses upon actors at similarly lower levels of the administrative hierarchy. The operative employees in question are the Community Development Assistants (CDAs) who have, at least theoretically, an important role to play in rural development programmes of various kinds in Kenya. The approach used is partially derived from Kaufman. Attention was given not only to documentary sources, but also to in-depth interviews

and field observation. By playing a consultancy role on the training of CDAs, which eventually culminated in a report (24), I was able to obtain a reasonably full picture of the situation which these particular workers face in the field. Further experience of relevance was obtained from carrying out an evaluation of the Special Rural Development Programme (SRDP) in the course of 1974. (8) This, too, gave a vantage point from which to examine the behaviour of CDAs in the field.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of CDAs in Kenya goes back at least as far as the 1940s. After the Second World War, throughout the areas colonised by the British, what was at various times called "mass education", "basic education" and, later, "community development" became something of a fetish. To colonial policy makers, its greatest appeal was that it could be regarded as both a political and economic instrument. Politically, it fell well in line with the emphasis on learning the arts of local government as a gradual preparation for the taking on of greater responsibilities; in this sense, a line of descent may be seen from indirect rule to community development. Its economic attraction lay in its emphasis on self-help, the more effective use of resources at community level and technological innovation. In both its political and economic aspects, there is little doubt that "C.D." was regarded as a valuable tool for the achievement of a greater degree of colonial stability.<sup>1</sup>

In Kenya, as elsewhere, some kind of organisation had to be created in order to carry out these ideas in the field. This is how the role of the CDA came into being. In 1946 a few "African welfare workers" were appointed. They were supervised in their work by officers of the provincial administration,<sup>2</sup> there being no separate organisation dealing with community development at that time. However, the chain of command can hardly have been clear-cut since their salaries were paid by the local authorities (the Local Native Councils

---

1. For an example of this kind of argument, see Askwith (1) and the British Report of the Ashridge Conference on Social Development (23).

2. These were generalist field administrators with primary responsibility for political and "law and order" matters. From the 1950s onwards they also were required to play a leading role at provincial, district and divisional levels in the "coordination" of the activities of the various functional agencies which appeared in the field. For a detailed discussion of their post-independence role, see Gertzel (5).

until 1948, thereafter the African District Councils). In 1950, the job title was changed to "Community Development Assistant" and a post of District Officer (C.D.) created. The latter was an officer of the provincial administration but also supposedly a specialist in community work. Part of these officers' duties was the supervision of CDAs. However, only a few Districts received the services of the D.O.s (C.D.) - Kisumu, Kakamega, Kisii, Fort Hall (now Murang'a), Kiambu, Kitui, Machakos and Nyeri; CDA employment was similarly concentrated in those areas. Thus, little attention was given to Districts within the present Coast, North Eastern and Rift Valley Provinces. It is not mere coincidence that these latter areas were those thought the more politically stable from the colonial point of view, and hence less in need of "mass education".

During this period, community development was often very close to being propaganda, and the CDAs were the operative employees involved in its transmission. In a Legislative Council debate in 1951, the Chief Native Commissioner (then the Senior Civil Servant in charge of Community Development) betrayed this ambiguity rather vividly:-

On the Community Development side I would say the Commissioner (for CD) is now responsible for discovering the particular need of the districts for material, educational material. I can never get the word for this, educational is the best word I can give. I loathe the word 'propaganda', it is not propaganda, it is information, education, whatever you like to call it. (Kenya Legislative Council debates, 27/11/51, Committee of Supply, Administration)

A description of the job which might be reasonably typical was given by a locational CDA from Machakos District in 1952:-

I give talks at chiefs' barazas (meetings) on good agriculture, community development, current affairs, cooperatives, school education etc.... I also help the ex-soldiers with various problems - also I give talks and advice to the locational council. I am a member representing education and welfare. (CDA, Mwala to D.O., Machakos, 8th March 1952, KNA: CD: MKS: 8/12)

In the same letter this CDA added that his work involved literacy clubs (evening classes run by volunteers), women's clubs, locational sports meetings and film shows. Much of the work of CDAs at this time seems to have centred on the community hall, a building where the CDA could organise shows, and "leaders'" courses on such matters as nutrition,

public health, current affairs and farming. It can be seen, therefore, that CDAs were, from the earlier days, multi-purpose workers. They can, however, be said to have had a special competence in the field of adult education. In 1950, 23 CDAs attended a 12-month training course at the Jeannes School (now the Kenya Institute of Administration). The emphasis of the curriculum was "placed on the practical aspects of mass education, mass literacy, projection work and information services". (11, p.35)

In that year there were 53 CDA and 10 D.O. (CD) posts. (11, p.1) However, the outbreak of the "Mau-Mau" emergency in 1952 gave a considerable impetus to the growth of community development organisation. The long-term effect of the emergency was to enhance the perceived value of community development methods in generating and controlling the direction of social change in the countryside. A good example of this is the strong enthusiasm which developed among administrators for the "District Course". Throughout the country a total of 447 students attended such courses in 1952. They were drawn from a number of branches of the community and included chiefs, headmen (deputies to the chiefs, now called assistant chiefs), teachers, agricultural instructors and veterinary scouts. Although the content of these courses obviously varied from District to District, four main purposes have been summarised:-

- 1) To acquaint individuals considered to be of influence in their respective communities with the complexities of modern local government and administration.
- 2) To show them what has been and what is being done by officers of the various departments at work in the district.
- 3) To give instruction with a heavy practical bias and capable of local application in Agriculture, Veterinary, Health and Forestry matters.
- 4) To inculcate the will to disseminate the knowledge so acquired among those with whom the students live and work. (12, p.7)

In 1954 what had previously been the "Community Development Organisation" operating within the office of the Chief Native Commissioner became the Department of Community Development and Rehabilitation of "Mau-Mau" detainees. The role of the department in combatting the revolt seems to have become more fully recognised:-

an insecure position. Can it be rescued? Following the October 1974 election, an ex-CDO was given the Social Services portfolio. In a speech at Kericho Club the new Minister, Mr. Arap Towett, pointed out that this background well qualified him for the job. (E.A. Standard, November 5, 1974) An organisation in such a precarious position requires a skillful, knowledgeable and committed leadership. If this is forthcoming, CDAs may still contribute significantly to rural development in Kenya.

APPENDIX: A NOTE ON THE STRUCTURE OF RURAL ADMINISTRATION IN KENYA

There are six geographical layers of administration in Kenya. At the top is what may be termed the centre, based in Nairobi. This is where all the ministries of the government have their headquarters. The country then is divided into seven Provinces, each of which is in turn divided into Districts. The latter are further divided into Divisions (on average, four per district) which then are broken down into locations (four or five per division). Finally, locations are divided into sub-locations (four or five per location). At each of these levels, the provincial administration is represented, and for the most part other ministries work parallel to it (few ministries, however, have representation at sub-locational level). In principle, it is the provincial administration which leads other ministries in the field. This does not mean, however, that field representatives of, say, the Ministry of Agriculture are directly under the authority of officers of the provincial administration. There is an ambiguity in the relationship which often leads to difficulties.

In the field, the provincial administration's representatives are as follows:-

(Centre - the Office of the President)		
Province	-	Provincial Commissioner
District	-	District Commissioner
Division	-	District Officer ('X' Division)
Location	-	Chief
Sub-location	-	Assistant Chief

For further details, the reader should consult the Appendix of Leonard's Rural Administration in Kenya (15).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Askwith, T.G. Progress Through Self-help. Nairobi, Eagle Press, 1960.
2. Association of Local Government Employers. Terms and Conditions of Service for Employees in the Salaried Grades. 1/3/71.
3. Bienen, Henry. Kenya: The Politics of Participation and Control. Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1974.
4. Du Sautoy, P. Community Development in Ghana. London, Oxford University Press, 1958.
5. Gertzel, Cherry. "The Provincial Administration in Kenya." Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies. November 1966.
6. Gertzel, Cherry. "The Provincial Administration of Kenya, 1965-68. Paper presented to the Sixth Annual Conference of the East African Universities Social Science Council, Dar-es-Salaam, 1970.
7. Gertzel, Cherry. Politics of Independent Kenya, 1963-68. London, Heinemann, 1970.
8. Institute for Development Studies. Second Overall Evaluation of the Special Rural Development Programme. Occasional Paper No. 12. Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, 1975.
9. Kaufman, Herbert. The Forest Ranger. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1967.
10. Kenya. Community Development Division. Appointment Requirements and Job Descriptions. 1973. (mimeo)
11. Kenya. Community Development Organisation. Annual Report 1950. Nairobi, Government Printer, 1951.
12. Kenya. Community Development Organisation. Annual Report 1952. Nairobi, Government Printer, 1953.
13. Kenya. Department of Community Development and Rehabilitation. Annual Report 1955. Nairobi, Government Printer, 1956.
14. Kenya. Development Plan 1970-74. Nairobi, Government Printer, 1970.
15. Leonard, David K., editor. Rural Administration in Kenya. Nairobi, East African Literature Bureau, 1973.
16. Mbindyo, J.S. The Effect of Extension Workers' Role Orientation on Rural Development. M.A. thesis, University of Nairobi, 1974.
17. Mbithi, Philip M. and Barnes, Carolyn. A Conceptual Analysis of Approaches to Rural Development. Discussion Paper No. 204. Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, 1974.
18. McGregor, D. The Human Side of Enterprise. New York, McGraw Hill, 1960.
19. Mutiso, G-C.M. and Godfrey, E.M. "The Political Economy of Self-help: Kenya's 'Harambee' Institutes of Technology." Canadian Journal of African Studies. 8 (1) 1974.
20. Oubina, F.M. and Odhiambo, F.M. "Understanding Community Development." Look Forward. Government Training Institute, Maseno. 1 1970.

21. Oyugi, W. Ouma. "Participation in Development Planning at Local Level."  
In Leonard, David K., editor. Rural Administration in Kenya. Nairobi,  
East African Literature Bureau, 1973.
22. Simon, Herbert. Administrative Behaviour. New York, Free Press, 1957.
23. United Kingdom. Colonial Office. Social Development in the British  
Colonial Territories. Report of the Ashridge Conference on Social  
Development. London, Colonial Office (MISC. S23), 1954.
24. United Nations Children's Fund. Community Development Assistants (Kenya).  
Nairobi, UNICEF, 1974.

The provincial administration was handicapped in this work (rehabilitation) through shortage of staff caused by the Emergency. Nevertheless, D.C.s in Kikuyu, Embu and Meru districts were emphatic that the second stage in overcoming Mau Mau must largely be conducted on community development lines with particular emphasis on the women. (13)

Attention was focused on the "affected areas" (principally the Districts referred to in the above quotation) and also on those felt to be potentially "Mau-Mau", notably Machakos District where a pilot project on community development lines was run in Mbooni location under the leadership of an African Administrative Assistant. (See 1, ch.3.) Although no CDO was involved in the exercise, CDAs played an important role. The guiding principle of the exercise was that "teamwork" at the locational level was an essential ingredient of development. To this end, a locational team, consisting of CDAs, departmental staff, the chief and his headman, was set up. More CDAs than the usual locational complement of one were made available by sending a party of CDAs in training at Jeannes School to Mbooni for their fieldwork. The objective was to show how effective community methods could be in bringing about home improvement, the idea being that by working together more could be done than by working individually. "Leaders" were identified, brought together, and given instructions by the team. (1, p.20) These leaders, having been trained, would then return to their home areas and convince their communities of the value of this approach, with the assistance of the locational team if required. The scheme seems to have been a success, its strength apparently lying in the way it combined existing patterns of behaviour (the idea of communal work organisation) with newly created administrative inputs (back-up work by the locational team, the organisation of training courses, etc.). Askwith, the Commissioner for Community Development at this time, certainly thought that his department had made a real contribution to keeping the people of Machakos District, at least to some extent, out of "Mau-Mau":-

During the emergency, it was thought extremely probable at one time that the tribe would join with Mau Mau. The fact that this did not occur was undoubtedly due to good administration, but it should not be forgotten that one of the prophylactic measures taken was a considerable increase in CD work. In the event, the tribe on the whole remained loyal to government, and is now probably one of the most progressive and prosperous in Kenya. (1, p.22)

- 6 -

Askwith's analysis of the situation may be open to question. However, his views are of interest in so far as they illustrate how C.D. was perceived at the time. Whatever the operational realities, political factors figured prominently amongst the objectives.

Partly as a result of the emergency, another dimension of community development took on heightened emphasis. A women's programme was set up by the department. An officer at headquarters was placed in charge of it and played a vital role in the creation of a new organisation, "Maendeleo ya Wanawake" (progress for women). This was an umbrella for the women's groups (or clubs) which sprang up around the colony with the encouragement and assistance of such field workers as the CDAs. In 1952, the number of "known clubs" was 172, but it is quite likely that many more than that were in existence. (12, p.16) These clubs were seen as being of great value to the security forces, and one club played an important part in the capture of a "Mau-Mau" general. (13, p.7) As a result of these developments, a number of women CDOs with special duties in connection with the women's programme were appointed, as were more female CDAs. The post of "women's leader" was also created; these workers were employed by the African District Councils.

A combination of circumstances, then, gave rise, in the 1950s, to the growth of a large and complex department. Further organisational complexity arose from the close involvement of the local authorities (the African District Councils) who were the employers of the CDAs; the department, as such, only employed the more senior officers from CDO upwards. As of 1957, there were 97 CDOs in the field (four of these were Africans, the first to be appointed). There were also 183 CDAs, 447 women leaders and 89 Training Staff (i.e., instructors attached to District Training Centres). (See 24, p.1.) This expansion was a direct consequence of the political situation at the time. New goals, however, arose with the coming of independence in 1963.

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SINCE INDEPENDENCE

After independence, a very considerable change took place. The idea of Harambee (meaning "pull together") was adopted by the national political leadership as an ingredient in the nation-building process. The role of President Kenyatta was particularly crucial in this connection. The idea spread rapidly in most parts of Kenya's countryside, and one result

was a proliferation of self-help projects. This was still, in a sense, C.D. but in a very different form from that of the colonial era. Such self-help (or Harambee) projects as primary and secondary schools, day care centres and health facilities (e.g., dispensaries) are a far cry from the home improvements and good citizenship syndrome characteristic of the 1950s.

At the take-off point of this movement (1963-1964), the Department of Community Development had a role to play. In fact officers of other departments began to resent the popularity of C.D. workers in the community.<sup>3</sup> A "planning vacuum" at district level - there being no officer of the planning ministry at that level - facilitated the take-over by CDOs of a coordinating role. The only real rivals to them, the officers of the provincial administration, were largely concerned with law and order rather than developmental matters and were less well equipped, in terms of training, to play such a role. (See Gertzel, 5 and 6.)

Not surprisingly, the work of the CDA underwent considerable change in the 1960s. In his capacity as registrar of self-help projects, the sheer volume of work increased greatly. Also, the CDA's crucial role in channelling aid (not only from Government sources) expanded greatly. As time went on, new programmes were added (e.g., Village Polytechnics, Functional Literacy) which also called on his time. In 1973, a job description for locational CDAs was drawn up by a senior officer in the Community Development Division. According to this description, the CDA is expected to:-

1. Act as secretary and executive officer to Village Development Committees and sub-locational self-help committees.
2. Help self-help groups plan projects more effectively.
3. Help self-help groups obtain technical assistance when and as required.
4. Help organize people in groups for the solution of their problems.
5. Help people identify and fully utilize local resources.
6. Organize local leadership training courses aimed at local leadership development.

---

3. Interviews with CDOs, 1973-1974.

- 8 -

7. Ensure that groups embark on projects which are within the Development Plan and thereby accord with Government's priorities.

8. Give regular feedback to the department by means of statistical reports and evaluation.

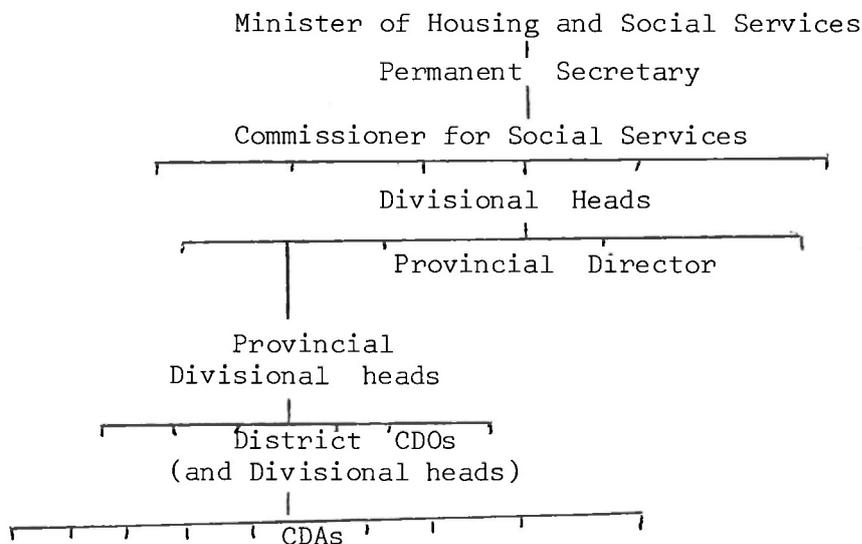
9. Advise and service youth programmes - that is Village Polytechnics and Youth Clubs.

10. Advise and service day care centres, adult education and welfare programmes.

11. Help in the development of sport and culture. (10)

CDAs are still employed by the local authorities (as in the colonial period). However, they are supervised by officers of the Department of Social Services (DSS) in the Ministry of Housing and Social Services - the District CDOs. At District level, other divisions of the department have other officers posted (e.g., Adult Education, Social Welfare Officer, Sports Officer). All these officers have to rely on the CDAs to carry out work for them at below District level. The CDO and his District level colleagues, in turn, are responsible to provincial headquarters, which is headed by the Provincial Director of Social Services. The chain of command then passes upwards to central headquarters in Nairobi. An organisational chart can be drawn thus:-

Diagram 1.



However, charts do not tell us all we need to know about the working of organisations. A more direct look is needed at what takes place in the field. Following Kaufman (9, parts 1 and 2), two concepts will be

employed in this exercise: (a) fragmentation and (b) integration. He argues that all organisations have to deal with the fact that tendencies towards fragmentation are likely to exist. Secondly, he argues that organisations therefore have to evolve ways of achieving integration (or holding the organisation together). By studying CDAs, the way both these tendencies manifest themselves in Kenya's community development organisational network will be clarified.

### FRAGMENTATION

In the framework within which the CDA operates, tendencies towards fragmentation are more marked than in most organisations in Kenya. This is so for a number of reasons.

#### Untrained CDAs

A major determinant of organisational unity is often the training of employees in the organisation's values, method of working, etc. (9, ch.6) Community development work has a complex nature, as has been demonstrated, and a new recruit cannot be expected to perform his role effectively without some form of training. In the case of community development this training should not merely be in a set of techniques, but is likely to also involve the transmission of certain values (a sense of 'community', the idea of 'participation', etc.). The problem in Kenya, however, has been that a very large number of CDAs in the field have not received training; this fact makes more difficult the achievement and maintenance of organisational unity. A survey carried out in April 1974 shows that in some Districts (e.g. Machakos, Kiambu), well over half of the CDAs have not received any professional training. (24, Appendix 4, p.3) Of the total of 650 CDAs in the field then, about 220 had not been trained for the job. This clearly raises considerable difficulties in the field, as shown by the CDOs who were questioned about this. A survey carried out by the United Nations' Childrens' Fund (UNICEF) shows that CDOs find it far more difficult to explain policies and programmes to untrained CDAs and more supervision has to be given them (which can be very time consuming for the CDOs). Also, untrained CDAs are not as good at addressing meetings (and, dangerously, may in fact make statements which are positively misleading) and they are not adequate at writing reports and gathering statistical data. (24, pp.6-7)

- 10 -

To explain how this situation arose, it is necessary to look at the two main training institutions, the Kenya Institute of Administration (K.I.A.) in Nairobi, and the Government Training Institute (G.T.I.) at Maseno, Western Kenya. Both these institutes are run not by the Community Development Division but by the Office of the President, and this inevitably is an obstacle to their fulfilling the needs of the Division. Both institutions have placed their emphasis on quality rather than quantity. As a result, only 25 CDAs per year have been graduating from each of them. Furthermore, no training has taken place since 1972, as UNICEF, which had been subsidising the courses, withdrew its support, having spent approximately half a million shillings over a fourteen-year period. This happened because no systematic evaluation, which was a condition for continued assistance, had been carried out during that period. In fact, UNICEF officials had very little idea what this money had been spent on. As a result, there are no longer adequate financial resources for CDA training, and the tendencies towards fragmentation, brought about by a large number of untrained CDAs in the field, continue.

It might be argued that training at District level can partly compensate for this deficiency. However, although many Districts have training facilities financed by their respective local authorities, severe financial constraints render it difficult for anything more than the occasional short seminar to be held. A few Districts have done something along these lines in recent years, but, given the prevailing financial circumstances, it is quite unrealistic to expect anything very substantial to be done at this level.

#### Salary Administration

An additional factor making for tendencies towards fragmentation is salaries. Until March 1971, the local authorities all determined their own rates of pay for their employees. In 1970 negotiations began between the Kenya Local Government Workers' Union (KLGWU) and the local authorities to coordinate terms and conditions of service throughout Kenya. It was agreed that locational CDAs throughout the country should start at £210 per year, rising to £300. Divisional CDAs (one rank higher than locational) would be in the range £330-£570, and District CDAs £660-£840 (a District CDA is a "personal assistant" to the CDO). (2) It is clear that many local authorities

- 11 -

did not implement this agreement. Some CDAs in fact start at £50 per year, £40 less than the minimum for an assistant chief before their 1972 salary increases, and over £100 less than the current rates. It is not surprising that the morale of many CDAs is low.

Even before the abolition of Area Councils in mid-1974, a problem arose in some Districts due to the non-payment of salaries. Several local authorities, by 1973, were virtually bankrupt. The County Council of Gusii, for example, did not pay staff salaries for two years. (East African Standard, Nairobi, December 18, 1973) Meru County Council has often gone two or three months without paying, and so on. Obviously, in these circumstances, CDOs feel compelled to refrain from ordering their CDAs to do anything at all. As a result, even the routine statistics collection procedures are not likely to be followed. Further, even in areas where salaries have been paid regularly (e.g., Embu, Kwale), the CDAs know that local authorities are in difficulty and they naturally feel insecure as a result. This came to a head in mid-1974 when a number of CDAs had to be dismissed in several areas following the abolition of Area Councils (which were the employers of many CDAs).

#### Other Problems Arising from Local Authority Employment

There are other problems of CDAs' working conditions which should not be neglected. Locations in Kenya can be very big in relation to the capacity of one CDA to operate effectively (and, in some Districts, such as Kwale for example, one locational CDA may have to cover more than one location). Yet CDAs do not have expenses paid for the travelling involved. This naturally leads the CDA to scale down the job, developing and maintaining good contacts only with the communities near to his base. Longer journeys will be avoided. Such immobility means that he cannot fulfil the requirements of his job. Many CDAs have worked in one location for two or three years without even visiting projects in more remote areas.

Because the employment of CDAs is not so much dependent upon central government requirements as upon priorities set by the local authorities, there tends to be considerable variation in the numbers of CDAs employed in different Districts. There are also large differences in the ratio of CDAs to population. The figures in Table 1 show this.

Table 1. Ratio of CDAs to population in each district of Kenya.

<u>District</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Total no. of CDAs</u>	<u>Ratio of pop. to CDA</u>		
<u>CENTRAL PROVINCE</u>					
Kiambu	475,576	30	15,833	:	1
Muranga	445,310	43	10,358	:	1
Kirinyaga	216,988	23	9,434	:	1
Nyeri	360,845	33	10,934	:	1
Nyandarua (N/A)					
<u>EASTERN PROVINCE</u>					
Embu	178,912	23	7,778	:	1
Kitui	342,953	22	15,589	:	1
Machakos	707,214	39	18,134	:	1
Meru	596,506	50	11,930	:	1
Isiolo	30,135	4	7,534	:	1
Marsabit	51,581	4	12,895	:	1
<u>COAST PROVINCE</u>					
Kilifi	307,568	8	37,446	:	1
Kwale	205,602	10	20,560	:	1
Lamu	22,401	2	11,201	:	1
Taita	110,742	12	9,229	:	1
Tana River	50,696	3	16,899	:	1
<u>NYANZA PROVINCE</u>					
Kisii	675,041	43	15,699	:	1
Kisumu	400,643	16	25,040	:	1
Siaya	383,188	26	14,738	:	1
South Nyanza	663,175	42	15,790	:	1
<u>WESTERN PROVINCE</u>					
Bungoma	345,226	35	9,864	:	1
Busia	200,486	10	20,049	:	1
Kakamega	782,586	21	37,266	:	1

Table 1. Cont.

District	Population	Total no. of CDAs	Ratio of pop. to CDA
<u>RIFT VALLEY PROVINCE</u>			
Baringo	161,741	7	23,106 : 1
Elgeyo Marakwet	159,265	11	14,479 : 1
Kajiado	85,903	7	12,272 : 1
Kericho	479,135	14	34,224 : 1
Laikipia	66,506	10	6,651 : 1
Nakuru	290,853	16	18,171 : 1
Nandi	209,068	19	11,004 : 1
Narok	125,219	8	15,652 : 1
Samburu (N/A)			
Trans-Nzoia	124,361	7	17,766 : 1
Turkana	165,225	2	82,613 : 1
Uasin-Gishu	191,036	12	15,920 : 1
West Pokot	82,458	10	8,246 : 1
<u>NORTH-EASTERN PROVINCE</u>			
Garissa	64,521	7	9,217 : 1
Mandera (N/A)			
Wajir	86,230	8	10,179 : 1

Source: 1968 Census and UNICEF Survey, 1974.

It is also possible to establish differences between Districts in terms of ratios of CDAs to self-help projects. Table 2 gives the pattern for Eastern Province (as of December 1973).

Table 2. CDA : project ratio, Eastern Province.

District	Ratio
Machakos	1 : 65.5
Kitui	1 : 34.5
Embu	1 : 25.2
Isiolo	1 : 20.7
Meru	1 : 24.5
Marsabit	1 : 17.2

Source : Report of Provincial Director of Social Services, 1973.

Note: This table includes projects which were abandoned in the course of the year, as these too contribute to the size of the CDAs' work load.

So it is clear that in terms both of self-help projects and population there are great variations between Districts as far as CDA employment is concerned. This pattern is apparently governed by two considerations - the availability of local authority financial resources, and the place occupied by CDA staffing on the priority lists of councillors and their staff. These factors have given rise to great variations between one part of the country and another.

An additional difficulty can arise from the fact that the local authorities, not the central government, are the employers of the CDAs. This gives ample scope for the 'conflicting directives' problem to occur. (See 9, p.67.) Whilst the CDA's formal job description indicates his responsibility in the field is to the CDO, the issue may not always be perceived this way in reality. In some Districts, real problems arise because councillors find strong incentives to use the CDAs against rival politicians, with the justification that the CDA is, after all, an employee of the local authority. At the same time, the CDA may have received policy guidelines from the CDO which run counter to the aims of the councillor concerned. The CDA is liable to be caught in a cross-fire, a situation which is frequently exacerbated by the fact that he is a part of the community in which the political contest is taking place.<sup>4</sup>

#### Relationships with the Rest of the Bureaucracy

Underlying a lot of these difficulties is the question of the status of community development within the Kenya bureaucracy as a whole. Within this heterogeneous network, various pressures have been exerted which have contributed to the situation. The development planners, for example, have been concerned with the mushrooming of self-help projects without, in their view, a proper degree of control. (14, p.526) Other affected ministries (e.g., Health, Education) have felt the same way, and this has led to criticisms of community development workers among senior bureaucrats in the ministries concerned. This seems to explain some of the problems that the organisation has had in obtaining resources.

Also, the community development approach has had to compete in the field with the provincial administration, the political importance of which has been described elsewhere. (Gertzell, 5 and 7, and Bienen, 3) Increasingly, the

---

4. Kaufman, describes this situation as "capture" of a field worker by the local community. (9, pp. 75-80)

provincial administration has tried to take over the self-help movement. This has been illustrated by Mutiso and Godfrey's study of the Harambee Colleges of Technology. (19) This increasing prominence of such figures as District and Provincial Commissioners in Harambee has certainly weakened the position of the Department of Social Services in the competition for scarce resources. Meanwhile, CD staff continue to carry the work load of more modest, and therefore less publicised, ventures.

#### Communication Difficulties

Many CDAs are faced with a situation where they lack adequate transport facilities to enable them to carry out their work. Mention has already been made of the inadequate system of travel allowances which is operated by the local authorities. The CDO has to face the problem that he has a geographically dispersed staff and a limited budget (from central government) for the use of the departmental Land Rover. (There should be one for every District.) For example, in Kwale, a medium-sized District by Kenya standards, there are 10 CDAs in a total land area of 8,317 sq.km. Some CDAs are posted to locations which are 120 km from District headquarters. The importance of this point is heightened by the fact that in many Districts roads to some locations may be impassable (or almost so) for part of the year. This may be regarded as a tendency towards fragmentation because it is a constraint on the frequency of face-to-face contacts between CDO and CDAs.

In this section of the paper, five principal factors, which produce fragmentary tendencies for the Community Development Division, have been described. Significant difficulties arise from 1) there being large numbers of untrained CDAs, 2) inadequate salaries (and sometimes non-payment), coupled with the threat of redundancy, 3) various difficulties arising from local authority employment, 4) relationships with the rest of the government bureaucracy and 5) communication constraints.

#### INTEGRATION

Given the existence of strong fragmentary tendencies, a degree of integration has nevertheless been achieved. Ideally, identification of all the contributory factors requires detailed analysis and, if possible, a method of comparing them in terms of importance. However, in this paper a more modest attempt is made to spell out what appear to be the important factors.

Kaufman argues that it is particularly important for organisations with a highly dispersed field staff that they find ways of "preforming" the actions and decisions of that staff. (9, ch.4) This is because it is impossible to exercise direct control over such workers; given typical communication constraints, many decisions have to be made by CDAs in the field independently. Therefore, methods are required to ensure that when CDAs make decisions they more or less know in advance what is applicable for each specific situation. A variety of methods are used to achieve this purpose. Four which will be examined here are 1) procedures, 2) supervision, 3) training and 4) recruitment.

### Procedures

The CD Division has not yet employed the sophisticated systems used by agricultural and livestock extension staff on an experimental basis, but measures do exist which enable CDAs to plan their work effectively and to let supervising officers know what they have been doing in the field. Every month, CDAs draw up monthly programmes. Usually this is done independently of the CDO, although some degree of consultation may occur. These programmes are not very detailed as they generally just indicate on which days the CDA will be in his office, and, when he is not there, where he will be. This is probably no great problem; it should be remembered that a detailed programme can take a long time to prepare. Copies of these programmes go to CDOs and also to others who may be involved, e.g., the District Officer of the Division in which the CDA is working. These programmes can provide some sort of administrative control because, by examining them, a CDO may be able to see which particular sub-locations are getting more attention than others from the CDA. This is something which he can then take up with the CDA concerned. However, this type of control is really not used as much as it could be; too often, the preparation of monthly programmes is seen as a formality.

Another procedure which is capable of having an integrative effect is reporting. In some Districts, CDAs are expected to report monthly, in others quarterly. These reports contain at least some information of use to senior officers and also provide an opportunity for CDAs to express their views on the situation in their locations, e.g., to point out that the cattle dip programme is suffering because of inadequate technical assistance from the department concerned. These reports, then, can go some way to bridging the communication gap between field and headquarters. It is, however, worth

noting that too often reporting is inadequate. Some CDAs seem to manage avoiding sending reports at all. Often they contain unexplained inconsistencies, e.g., the number of women's groups in a particular location might be reported as varying greatly from one month to another, but with little or no explanation as to why this is so. Also, CDOs could be more responsive to these reports than they are now. CDAs may not take the writing of them seriously precisely because they feel that little notice will be taken of what is contained in them.<sup>5</sup>

Another procedure which can produce a greater degree of integration is recommending self-help projects for assistance from various sources (e.g., the government, UNICEF, Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE), Oxfam). Forms are distributed for this purpose and the CDA is required to decide which projects within his area deserve assistance. This means that the CDA will have to make a reasonably detailed investigation of various projects in order to give an informed assessment. The CDA has to decide on such matters as:-

- a) Are the leaders of the project able to maintain support for it in the community?
- b) Have the leaders made optimal use of existing local resources?
- c) Is there a real need for this project in terms not only of the local community, but also in terms of wider planning criteria?

These questions force the CDA to keep himself reasonably well informed, and CDOs should, by this means, be able to detect which CDAs are effective workers and which are not. Again, there are some deficiencies in the working of the system. One agency which gives such assistance has complained that whilst it tries to assist all areas equally, some CDAs fail to process applications and thus no assistance could be given for self-help projects in their locations. Officials of this agency feel that if CDAs' performance could be improved their own programme could be much more effective. (private communication from officials concerned, CARE, 1974)

---

5. This raises the important question of whether CDOs have a sufficiently "participative" attitude towards their management role. It is probable that a greater effort could be made to give CDAs a more meaningful and influential voice in decision making. For a general discussion along these lines, see McGregor (17).

### Supervision

In the typical field situation, opportunities for close supervision are rare. But some supervision on a face-to-face basis is possible, and plays a useful role in organisational integration. Surveys were carried out in Embu and Kwale Districts to discover the extent of contact between the CDA and other officers. In this way, information was obtained for 61 'CDA weeks'. We take here the three most important departmental officers who rely on the CDA to carry out work for them in the field - the CDO, Adult Education Officer and Social Welfare Officer. Table 3 indicates the frequency of contacts between the CDA and these three officers.

Table 3. CDA contact with other personnel in DSS.

CDA in contact:	3 or more times per week	1 or 2 times per week	Not at all
CDO	21	25	15
AEO	10	25	26
SWO	5	26	30

Given the transport constraints which have already been mentioned, these figures show a relatively high frequency of contact, especially with the CDO. Although the Adult Education and Social Welfare officers are less in contact, it should be noted that they frequently can communicate to CDAs through the CDOs, who are in a position to undertake more frequent visits to the field.

Although personal visits by CDOs are a vital part of the supervision process, staff meetings are also useful. These are supposed to be held quarterly, but it is often not possible to maintain this kind of frequency. Two Districts only manage to hold two such meetings per year. An obstacle to holding meetings more frequently is financial; the Councils cannot pay transport expenses for the CDAs to travel. One CDO explained that monthly meetings used to be held in his District but because of the financial crisis facing the County Council this is no longer possible.

A typical staff meeting might have on its agenda such matters as:-

- Reorganisation and recruitment for Maendeleo ya Wanawake
- Social problems survey reports
- Adult education classes
- Self-help registration procedures

- Transport for field staff
- Sport and recreation
- K.I.A. and Maseno courses for CDAs
- Tour of another District by self-help leaders.<sup>6</sup>

Such meetings can be of great value. First, CDOs in this way can obtain an up-to-date picture of what is happening throughout the District. Secondly, CDOs can clarify the nature of various tasks which they require their CDAs to carry out (this is especially important for those CDAs who are untrained). Thirdly, good supervision should involve two-way communication, and these meetings provide a forum for CDAs to transmit their views to CDOs (and other senior officers).

Thus, such meetings can be used to build team involvement, and also to help ensure that the CDO links national policy as far as possible with felt needs at the local level.

### Training

The majority of CDAs have undergone training either at the Kenya Institute of Administration or the Government Training Institute, Maseno. Some have also been trained abroad. Between 1957 and 1972, UNICEF sponsored training for 520 trainees (combined total for both K.I.A. and G.T.I.). The length of the courses has been variable. In 1972, both K.I.A. and G.T.I. offered seven-month courses, in 1971, K.I.A. offered one year and G.T.I. seven months. In theory, K.I.A. has been providing training for senior CDAs and Maseno for more junior ones, but the evidence suggests that this distinction has been little observed in practice. The content of training and the background of the trainees has not varied greatly from one institute to the other.

Until 1974 neither the training institutes nor the Community Development Division had attempted to evaluate the training which had taken place, other than in a very impressionistic way. Under UNICEF's auspices, however, a workshop was held in Karen (near Nairobi) in July 1974 with the intention of improving somewhat on this pattern. (See 24.) CDAs tend to be unanimously uncritical of their training, although this judgement is rather independent of the content of the courses themselves. Training

---

6. Sampled from Embu, District CDO files, 1970-74.

appears to produce greater self-confidence and compensates for what are perceived as inadequate levels of attainment in the formal educational system. A degree of prestige is attached to having attended such courses. Training can also lead to promotion and salary increases. All this, however, is likely to be positive in that it enhances the commitment of CDAs to the organisation.

As far as the content of the training is concerned, a lot of emphasis is placed on the inculcation of the community development 'idea', sometimes with quite explicit political overtones. This emphasises the importance of the "non-directive" approach, which stands in opposition to the more "authoritarian" ways in which other extension agencies operate. Mbindyo's work in Machakos District (16) and other observations undertaken suggest very sharply that these attitudes are carried by CDAs into the field. An article written by two CDA students at G.T.I. in 1970 portrays this point vividly:-

C.D.A.: (to Veterinary Scout and Agricultural Instructor):  
You know, our CD working principles are somewhat different from yours.

Veterinary Scout: How?

Agricultural Instructor : You tell us how they are different.

C.D.A. : Your programme is directed from above - from the Government whereas ours is from down. It springs from the people.

Veterinary Scout : Do you mean to say that people can plan any sensible programme? I mean, can they plan a project which will be a success in the end?

C.D.A. : Why not?

Agricultural Instructor : Oh no! That isn't possible. It is putting the cart before the horse. People do not have any leadership knowledge so as to make any progressive programme without our presence.

C.D.A. : Look here, my friends. Our working principles are that people's own development begins with:

Their level of living

What they have

What they give priority, need most, and which they can give full support and take participation in voluntarily, according to their own resources and leadership. (20)

Perhaps this is a caricature, and it must be noted that the Ministry of Agriculture is moving nearer now towards what may be described as a "human relations" approach. (The curriculum of the newly created Bukura Institute of Agriculture in Western Kenya indicates this.) But, like all

good caricature, the above quotation focusses strongly on an important point - that CDA training has had an emphasis which differentiates it from other kinds of extension work. This does not mean that CDAs do not manipulate or progandise in order to make their perception of what should be a community's felt need equate to a need which is then actually articulated in the community. Nor does it mean that, in certain programmes, the CDA's approach does not have to give way to that of other officers (e.g., chiefs) who may have a different attitude towards these matters.

For our purposes, what is important is that the CDA does receive from his training the norms and values which enable him to act according to the organisation's purposes. He knows he should respond to "felt needs", should "enable" those needs to be met, should "train" leaders in the required skills, etc. This is very much in line with a point made by Simon:-

The organisation trains and indoctrinates its members. This might be called the "internalisation" of influence, because it injects into the very nervous system of the organisation members the criteria of decision that the organisation wishes to employ. The organisation member acquires knowledge, skill and identification or loyalties that enable him to make decisions by himself, as the organisation would like him to decide. (22, p.103)

### Recruitment

As Kaufman demonstrates, effective recruiting of staff can greatly reduce an organisation's problems in obtaining the correct behaviour from its staff. As far as CDAs are concerned, it is vital that the successful candidate be acceptable to the community in which he will work, to the employing local authority and to the CDO (in his capacity as District representative of headquarters). There is no standard procedure for recruitment, but the usual pattern is : 1) the Ministry of Local Government approves the advertising of a vacant post, 2) the post is advertised on the DC's notice-board at chiefs' centres and sometimes, but not usually, in the national press, 3) candidates are shortlisted, and 4) candidates are interviewed by a panel consisting of representatives of the local authority concerned, the CDO, possibly some other departmental heads, and the D.C. However, since there is no officially specified procedure, there have been cases, albeit few, where a CDA has been appointed without the knowledge of the CDO; this is obviously a potential source of difficulty in working relationships.

What are the backgrounds of people who are recruited as CDAs? A survey of Embu, Kwale, Meru and Taita-Taveta gave information on age, sex, formal educational attainment and previous employment experience of 47 CDAs working in these 4 Districts.

Table 4. Age at time of first employment as CDA.

<u>Age</u>	<u>No. of CDAs</u>
Below 20	6
20-30	31
31-40	9
41-50	1

There is not much to comment on here, save for the fact that some commentators have suggested that recruits should be rather older than those in the "Below 20" group. Du Sautoy has argued that:-

It is clear that a young girl fresh from school is unlikely to be a convincing exponent of child care or better home making to women old enough to be her mother, and a young man who is fresh from the School Certificate examination has little knowledge of the world and of the human beings with whom he is to be in close contact. (4, p.157)

This is of possible significance to Kenya; such CDAs may not find it easy to provide effective leadership in social situations where substantial deference is still paid to age.

Sex composition figures give 27 male CDAs and 20 females. The Ministry's figures for the whole country show that three fourths of the CDAs are male, and one fourth female. Interestingly, in some Districts (e.g., Embu and Kwale) there is rough equality of sexes, whilst in others (e.g., Taita-Taveta) there are no female CDAs. The latter situation could be problematic at a time when women's programmes are coming to play a greater part in community development work in most Districts. This is the kind of situation which can arise from local authority employment of CDAs. It may not always be possible to reconcile the needs of the job from the point of view of the administering agency with the view of the employing agency (i.e., the local authorities).

As far as formal education is concerned, the figures show little inter-District variation. Most CDAs have completed primary school; some have been to secondary school.

Table 5. Educational attainment of CDAs.

<u>Level</u>	<u>No. of CDAs</u>
Std IV	1
Certificate of Primary Education	33
Form II Secondary	12
School Certificate	1

Information has also been obtained on the previous employment experience of CDAs. A large proportion of them have previously had jobs which may be described as "indirect preparation" for the work of the CDA.

Table 6. Previous employment of CDAs.

<u>Job</u>	<u>No. of CDAs</u>
Teacher (Primary and Nursery)	22
Clerk	5
Agricultural/Veterinary	2
Women Leaders	4
Technical (e.g., plumber, mechanic)	5
Youth Leader	1
Health Visitor	1
Sports Organiser	1

Virtually all of the above jobs are likely to have provided some preparation for CD work. "Technical" jobs are perhaps a bit of a far fetched case. But the nature of the job may change in the future so that the CDA is more involved in advising self-help organisers about the more technical aspects of their projects (e.g., the construction of water tanks for schools). If this is so, people with a technical background will be strongly in demand.

In this section, we have discussed some of the ways in which a degree of organisational integration is achieved. Attention has been directed to four main factors involved in this process - procedures, supervision, training and recruitment. Whilst all four can be said to make a positive contribution, none can be said to be operating as effectively as is desirable if the organisation is to be a fully effective one. A number of reform measures are required to bring about improvements; if this is not done, the output of the organisation will deteriorate in quality and the self-help movement will be weakened (but far from completely undermined).

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has examined in some detail the growth of a particular organisation involved in rural development. As far as possible, the focal point has been the operative employee - the CDA. Our concern here has not been directly with what the output is; that requires another paper, and perhaps, a different method of analysis. The focus has been on what takes place within the organisation - in a sense, the linkage between inputs (government policies, felt needs, political leadership, etc.) and outputs (self-help projects, social welfare, etc.). In this way, it is hoped a greater understanding will emerge of the difficulties involved in bringing about greater local involvement in development policies, plans and programmes. A criticism which can be levelled at some writing on this issue is that it does not take into account the factors which have been outlined in this paper.<sup>6</sup>

Kenya's colonial legacy gave it a reasonably complex and developed organisation for the support of self-help activity. This largely arose from political pressures brought about by the "Mau-Mau" revolt of the 1950s. Community development was seen during this time as a way of killing two birds with one stone; it was simultaneously counter-subversive and developmental. The enthusiasm for self-help which arose with independence in 1963 provided the organisation with a new set of functions, displacing the old colonial ones. The scope of the new work has been considerable. To a large extent, this has given rise to difficulties; the organisation has confronted crises with some frequency. That it has usually continued to produce anything at all has often been to the credit of the CDAs who have continued working under conditions which can hardly be called satisfactory.

An obvious source of difficulty is that the organisation relies heavily upon local authorities to fulfill its staffing requirements in the field. It is unnecessary to discuss in detail the financial difficulties of these bodies. Suffice it to note here that since the late 1960s central government controls over local authorities have greatly increased to the detriment of the resource base of the latter. The most recent measure was the abolition of the Area Councils (E.A. Standard, August 3, 1974), bodies which up till then were the employers of many of the CDAs. All these problems certainly reinforce the feeling that the present organisation in Kenya for the fostering of community development is in

---

6. This is a criticism which can be made of Mbithi and Barnes's "A Conceptual Analysis of Approaches to Rural Development" (17). A more realistic view has been given by Oyugi (21).