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MAKERERE
INSTITUTE OF
SOCIAL RESEARCH
RURAL DEVELOP
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PROJECT

RDR No. 78

LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEMES AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT.

A PROCEDURAL PAPER

by

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RDR No. 78
M. KEMPE
27.3. 1969

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INTRODUCTION

The term 'settlement' is used by geographers in two different ways. Firstly, it is used to describe the distribution of dwellings and other buildings, which may be either nucleated like villages and towns, or dispersed throughout the countryside. Essentially, this sense of settlement denotes a state of being at a moment in time. Secondly, 'settlement' is a process whereby people move into an area and occupy it for economic purposes (for example, 'frontier settlement'), and this is dynamic, resulting in some form of the first definition of geographical settlement. I prefer to call the second type 'land settlement'.

'Resettlement' is a term that is frequently used synonymously with 'land settlement', which gives rise to some confusion. There are two points of reference that can be used when discussing population movement - people and land. If people are the reference point then all movements of population must be classed as 'resettlement' (i.e. people were originally settled somewhere, move to a new area and therefore resettle). If land is the reference point, then any movement of people into new areas is 'land settlement', and operations such as the exodus of Europeans from the Kenya Highlands and the influx of Africans can be legitimately called 'resettlement'. 'Resettlement' by this definition, involves a double movement of population. There are many points in common between land settlement and resettlement, but also some fundamental differences, such as the state of the land that is occupied in terms of development (water supplies, farm buildings). In this paper I am excluding resettlement, though the scheme at S. Busoga could be classed as such. There, however, it has been left unsettled for so long that nearly all traces of the earlier settlement have vanished.

'Land settlement' is usually spontaneous, with people opening up new areas and infilling as the need arises. When high potential areas have been occupied,

technological improvement, such as irrigation, swamp drainage and heavy ploughs and tractors on clay soil, enables previously marginal areas to become economically productive. In recent years, the planned movement of people from one area to another has become more common in the form of 'land settlement schemes' and new towns, and is a feature of planned economies. In the USSR, new settlements were created at Bratsk to use the vast HEP resources from the Angara River, and also in West Siberia where large reserves of oil have been discovered recently. This population movement is primarily to utilise new resources, and secondarily to shift the economic and population centres of gravity from the west, eastwards for political reasons (China/Soviet conflicts). In East Africa, planned movements of population have all been into rural areas where the economic potential of agriculture needs to be exploited.

EAST AFRICAN LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEMES

Land settlement schemes in East Africa can be divided into two types:

1. Schemes involving non-Africans, such as the European soldier settlements in Kenya following the two World Wars. I am not considering these here.
2. Schemes involving Africans.

These land settlement schemes have been established for a variety of reasons, such as relief of rural overpopulation, tsetse control and settlement of urban unemployed, and they have not been planned solely to open up new areas. There has, in fact, been a tendency in the past to see land settlement schemes as solutions to problems other than that of expanding the economy. Whatever the reasons for these schemes, they have resulted in collections of people moving, under some form of inducement (even if only the opportunity of acquire some land), in a planned(?) fashion and settling within a defined area.

Studies of land settlement schemes so far have tended to concentrate on the scheme itself. This has certain advantages for the researcher, in that the area of the scheme is defined, and certain aspects of immediate interest have required investigation, such as the success or otherwise of the scheme in economic terms, or in terms of any other purpose of the scheme, the study of social change and of

agricultural innovation. These schemes do not exist in total isolation from their environment, and ultimately they may become unrecognisable from the area in which they are located, showing a similar adjustment to the environment, though the different imprint on the landscape, with planned roads and plot shapes, is likely to be visible much longer. Some of the schemes are very favoured at their inception with respect to the rest of the area in terms of agricultural extension services, capital availability and other services. This initially produces a sharp visual contrast as well as contrasts in crop patterns and production and in farming standards.

Although it has not been the expressed intention of settlement planners that integration between the scheme and the surrounding area should ultimately take place, the phasing out of scheme management, with the services being taken over by local government and the officers of the various ministries on a par with the rest of the area, indicates that this is assumed to be the ultimate state. In support of Uganda's policy of socialism (or 'moving to the left') and nation building, it can be argued that a favoured group must not remain favoured indefinitely, however much they might wish it. The Government's aim must be to see the less-favoured rise to equality with the favoured in terms of standard of living, health and farming techniques. Illingworth⁽¹⁾ suspects that the usual pattern is for the scheme farmers to sink to the level of the surrounding farmers, but has no empirical evidence for this. A more likely result is that there will be a spread of levels of farming techniques both among the settlement farmers and those outside the scheme, the final determinant of the standard of farming being the individual farmer's enterprise and ability to take advantage of the extension and credit services that are available to all. In the absence of alternative means of employment, this would presumably give rise to a similar variation in income levels and standard of living.

The influx of people onto a land settlement scheme can give an impetus to others to follow, particularly where land is available around the scheme. This can be followed by the arrival of entrepreneurs and hence gives a general impetus to the development of a wider area, with the growth of economic differentiation. Charsley⁽²⁾ has investigated

this at Kigumba and his study shows that this is part of the pattern of the integration of the land settlement schemes.

It therefore seems to me that a study of the type that I propose to undertake should be of general interest, and may point to certain aspects of the problems of land settlement schemes that need special attention in planning new schemes (of which there are 4 in the planning stage at present).

PROPOSED STUDY

The object of this study is to try to determine the extent to which integration has taken place between the settlement schemes and the surrounding areas in Uganda. An attempt will also be made to identify the main factors that affect integration, and to assess the effect that the scheme has had on the surrounding area in terms of stimulating local development.

Measure of integration: There are two immediately identifiable extremes:-

1. Totally integrated, that is when the scheme is indistinguishable from the surrounding area in institutional, economic and sociological terms. The older schemes, ethnically homogeneous with the area, such as Nzigo and possibly the early Kigezi schemes fall into this category.
2. Totally separate, where scheme management still exists and differences are pronounced. The refugee settlement schemes are likely to fall into this category.

Most of the schemes will fall somewhere between the two extremes, and some schemes are likely to be more integrated in, say, institutional rather than economic terms.

Factors affecting integration

1. Level of investment: this is to some extent a function of the purpose of the scheme. Schemes to relieve population pressure in Kigezi simply aimed to move people and to see them established on the scheme, and therefore a low level of investment was considered adequate, and a high level of integration would seem likely. On the other hand, high levels of investment

in services, agricultural improvement etc. would tend to place settlers in a favoured position with respect to the neighbourhood and therefore deter integration.

2. Organisation: this is related to the level of investment, but the emphasis of the organisation can be such that will encourage integration. For example, a deliberate policy of opening scheme schools, churches or co-operatives to all in the neighbourhood would aid integration, whereas exclusiveness would deter it.
3. Management: this factor places the emphasis on the extent to which the scheme management takes over the decision-making process from the settlers. Again, it is a factor that tends to set the settlers apart from other farmers, particularly when a high level of new learning has taken place such as on an irrigation scheme.
4. Age of the scheme: it seems reasonable to assume that the scheme becomes more integrated with time. At Nzigo, the oldest scheme in Uganda, it is probable that people do not even know where the scheme is.
5. Ethnic composition: this includes the distance that settlers have moved from their home area, and their different cultural and social backgrounds. Ethnic heterogeneity, both on the scheme and between the scheme and the surrounding area is a long term non-integrating factor. The numbers in each ethnic group on the scheme would affect the strength of the factor. I would not advocate total homogeneity as a desirable aim, but where language differences, for example, hinder communication and the development of education, and where cultural differences give rise to conflict, then it is inimicable to development. Heterogeneity often leads to economic differentiation which is prograssive. The distance from the home area affects the settlers' attitudes to permanent residence on the scheme, as many who lived near enough may still look to the old home area for social contacts, brides, etc.
6. Population characteristics: such as population density, whether there are local people in enclaves within the scheme, and whether the area is one of in-, out- or static migration. I suspect that the factor of in-migration is very important for the rapid integration of

a scheme combined with general regional development.

Criteria for selecting schemes to be studied. I propose to study 3 schemes in some detail, and to make a quick, mainly visual, survey of the remainder.

The selection of the 3 schemes must be based on the six factors listed above. Most of the information available at this stage refers to the age of the schemes, their ethnic composition and the population characteristics of the area (based mainly on the 1959 population census which is somewhat out of date, and the annual reports of the Ministry of Agriculture), with less specific information on the other factors. The ideal would be to give the 6 factors 'high', 'medium' and 'low' ratings and find the three schemes that between them covered the three ratings of all 6 factors. I doubt if this is possible and must therefore compromise by giving the factors an order of priority and covering as much as possible.

I tentatively list the factors in the following order:-

- Level of investment
- Population characteristics (particularly migration)
- Ethnic composition
- Organisation
- Management
- Age.

A secondary criterion^{on} for selection is whether the scheme has been studied before or not. The advantages of studying a scheme that has been studied before is that much more data is immediately available, it is useful for comparison with the previous study and much time can be saved by focusing on obvious areas for investigation. On the other hand, the number of schemes that have been studied in any detail is 6 out of 38, which reduces the number available for study rather too drastically. It would also be useful to add further schemes to the existing 6. I shall therefore study at least one 'new' scheme.

Fieldwork. Once the schemes have been selected, fieldwork will be concentrated on the following aspects of integration:

1. Institutional integration. Where do the people come from who use the various institutions?

Schools
Churches
Dispensaries / Hospitals
Co-operatives
Markets / Trading centres

2. Economic integration. This set should show the level of economic activity and the pattern of economic differentiation.

Agricultural systems / Crop distribution
Farm size
Equipment - hoes, oxen, tractors
Incomes / Standard of living. These will probably have to be assessed by observation and may prove unreliable.
Population mobility
Markets / Trading centres - level and types of activity
Co-operatives - level of activity

3. Social integration. This is likely to take a great deal of time which may not be available, and may therefore have to be left out.

Intermarriage
Beer clubs
Languages

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank Professor Langlands for his helpful comments and criticisms, and for his encouragement; and Dr. R. Apthorpe who gave me the opportunity to air some of these ideas.

Mr. Ferguson
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