

thropologists, since the emphasis is likely to be exactly what you suggest it should be: environmentally sound development through increased incomes.

Second, on empowerment. Perhaps some donors, and certainly some governments, are shy of this term. But another buzzword nowadays is "management." When it is applied to management of whole economies, or leads to wholesale "privatization" without thought of all the impacts, "management" may not sound very positive from the point of view of a poor person, but when it is applied to irrigation systems, for example, it almost inevitably leads to further empowerment of water users. Although the support from governments and donors for forming water users' associations has sometimes originated as a way of getting resources out of farmers, the increasing recognition that effective organizations are required for lower-level management, and

Development anthropologists, where are you?

[that] involvement of farmer representatives in irrigation-system policy making facilitates arriving at policies accepted by farmers (sustainability again), is ... leading to "empowerment" of irrigated farmers. ... [A]s modern western and Japanese management ideas are introduced into irrigation bureaucracies, with their emphasis on participatory management and responsiveness to clients, ... we are going to see very important changes in these bureaucracies, initially internal adjustments, and later major structural reforms.

... I must express my disappointment at how few anthropologists are contributing in the area of irrigation management—the field I know best. ... Development anthropologists, where are you?

From David Drucker, Independent Consultant,
Bouilly, France:

.... [W]e seem to be short of a vigorous and innovative development of the practice of working with the rural poor as genuine partners (each with different things to share) in the processes of identifying the need and options for change.

This implies what might be termed primarily a "clinical" or an operational rather than a research-oriented task.

To date this operational experience is thin, fragmented, and unfocused, and has rarely contributed in a usable way the insights gained. Even narrative accounts could provide data towards a cumulative understanding of the dynamics of change in the way in which specific communities are able to contribute their understanding; take hold of unfamiliar concepts, ideas, and resources; modify these from their own experience; and make the problems, the objectives, the changes, and the processes truly their own—matters surely of great anthropological significance.

"Empowerment" is the word increasingly in vogue—all to the good, if it seriously alters the behavior of the AIDists

who gives) to "beneficiary" (the one who receives), to that of equitable contributing partners sharing knowledge, resources, and endeavor.

"Social justice," as you rightly put it, must also mean redistributing the decision-making processes and the command over resources, including access to knowledge. This essentially involves complex political matters. Anthropologists might well pay more attention to the manner in which those at all levels with a variety of interests presently behave in altering the intentions of development which persistently result in the bypassing of ... social justice."

We might then find a role in inventing a new kind of planning that requires as much change in the planners as in the rural poor we know so little about. ...

(We refer the reader to "Community Development—Now You See It, Now You Don't" in UNICEF News (124) (1986), by David Drucker, as well as to his chapter, "Ask a Silly Question, Get a Silly Answer—Community Participation and the Demystification of Health Care" in Community Management, Asian Experience and Perspectives, David C. Korten, ed., Kumarian Press.

Has the World Bank Abandoned Its Focus on Poverty Alleviation? World Bank Symposium, Oslo, March 1987

I read in the proceedings of another World Bank symposium that somebody, after hours of debate on the Bank, suddenly asked the following question, "Will the real World Bank please stand up?"

This question may be particularly pertinent for this morning's topic. I am quite sure that if I started to make critical comments on specific Bank projects related to the problem of poverty alleviation, somebody would quickly get up and tell us about this wonderful project in Mali or in the Philippines and shut me up for the rest of the morning. So I am not going to do that. Nor will I try to compete with the economists who dominated much of the debate yesterday and will probably continue to do so today. If I can make any contribution on the important subject of the World Bank and poverty alleviation—where our record is rather appalling and where what has happened to the poor in the developing world can not be a source of complacency to any of us, including the Bank—it must be by approaching it from my own professional background as a social anthropologist. As an anthropologist, one of my main tasks is to analyze and understand how people try to live in worlds that they largely do not create themselves—a task that I believe must be at the heart of any debate on development.

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