COMMUNICATION AND MANAGEMENT
IN INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE:
A CASE STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

COMMUNICATION AND MANAGEMENT IN INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE: A CASE STUDY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN KENYA

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Development planners in national organizations and those in international agencies often have different purposes and different frames of reference for the development planning process and their relationships with one another. When cultural differences between members of two or more cooperating agencies are great, so is the potential for dysfunction in communication about, planning for, and management of joint efforts. This study sought to understand the different operational assumptions and purposes of development planning in the Nakuru (Kenya) Laymen Association (NLA), an African voluntary association engaged in agricultural extension and rural community development activities, by studying its organizational culture.

The research encompassed three modes of inquiry: (1) formal interviews of five Western development assistance volunteers who worked with the NLA; (2) ethnographic inquiry through participant observation; and (3) formal interviews of five NLA leaders.

The purpose of each mode was, respectively, to: (1) identify types and sources of communication dysfunction and

management disarticulation problems--as perceived by the Westerners; (2) describe cultural approaches to project planning, personnel management, organizational development, and interorganizational relations (IOR) indigenous to the NLA; and (3) identify ways to promote greater intercultural understanding and more effective forms of partnership between Western development assistance workers, their sponsoring agencies, and members of their host organization in settings sharing features in common with the one studied.

Significant findings for each mode of inquiry included (1) a taxonomy of perceived dysfunctions in intercultural development assistance; (2) striking parallels between the structure of the NLA's councils and the traditional Kikuyu Kĩama; a strong emphasis on protocol in IOR; a reactive, "noncrisis" management style; an hierarchical and paternal style of personnel management; considerable circumspection concerning presentation of the organization; and (3) suggestions both for Western and African agency personnel seeking more synergistic forms of cooperation.

Methodological findings suggested that: the duration of participant observation of voluntary associations be gauged to organizational life cycles, such as from election to election, rather than a calendrical cycle; extended metaphors as opposed merely to proverbs be studied for cultural themes; and dilemma posing be considered a suitable technique for eliciting ethnographic data.

TO BETHANY, JONATHAN, AND DARLENE

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Writing a research report such as this one is a humbling experience, because it forces one to realize not only how little he knows, but also how much of what he has managed to learn he owes to others. To those who helped shape my research study and, more significantly, me--I owe my deepest appreciation.

First and foremost, I wish to thank the members and associates of the Nakuru Laymen Association for extending to me an invitation to work with them, for allowing me to participate with them in their organizational life, and for sharing their deeper selves with me in friendship. I will always be grateful to the Laymen for the hospitality with which they welcomed me and my family; the generosity they showed in giving of themselves, their time, and their vision; and for the trust they placed in me. I am grateful, too, to the leaders of the Africa Inland Church (AIC) for the privilege of working with the AIC in Nakuru District.

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James F. Ulrich, Jr.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

AGM . . . Annual General Meeting

AIC . . . Africa Inland Church

AIM . . . Africa Inland Mission

DCC . . . District Church Council

FSK . . . Farming Systems Kenya

LTC . . . Laymen Training Centre

NLA . . . Nakuru Laymen Association

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Development planners in national organizations and those in international agencies often have different purposes and different frames of reference not only for the development planning process but also for their relationships with one another. When cultural differences between members of two or more cooperating agencies are great, so too is the potential for dysfunction in communication about, planning for, and management of joint efforts. In the international corporate world, such dysfunction can result in frustration, delays, lost opportunities and lost profits (Brislin 1981:228-270). In the world of multilateral development assistance, other potential consequences of such difficulties are under-utilization and misuse of human and material resources; the undermining of trust among the agencies' staffs, clienteles, and constituencies; and the implementation of ineffective or inappropriate programs.

If planning is seen as a process conditioned by cultural values through socialization, then it is inevitable that development planners working across cultures will have different operational assumptions and purposes in the planning process. The urban-based cultures of academicians and intercultural development practitioners are quite distinct from the culture of a rural people in a particular place--which should be the "true centre of attention and learning" (Chambers 1983:46). The problem can be especially acute when development assistance workers from a more technologically advanced country--such as the United States--attempt to work with leaders of local development organizations located, for example, in rural Africa.

Western approaches to planning are future-oriented, rationalistic and scientific in their demand for explicitness and measurability. Traditional African patterns of thought, by contrast, are set in different time scales, do not separate ideas (such as plans) from people and reality, and are less inclined to reflect critically on established theories and categories (Horton 1970). The size of this gap in approaches to planning varies from situation to situation, but is both real and inescapable nonetheless.

Current conceptions of rural and community development implicitly include aspects of intentionality: development is a process of planned change toward desirable goals. But indigenous leaders and managers of social development may well view the planning process differently than outsiders seeking to lend--also with intentionality--their assistance.

When interactions between local development planners and outside experts or development workers are intercultural, one may expect some dysfunction to occur throughout most, if not all, phases of their association. The "presenting symptoms" of such assumed dysfunction include, but are not limited to, the following:

- difficulties in negotiating forms of partnership, terms of relationship and exchange of personnel;
- lack of information about the recipient organization's program goals; program and personnel needs; available resources; future plans and modes of planning, monitoring, and evaluating organizational programs; and
- misunderstandings over support services to be provided to development assistance workers by the host organization.

No doubt other types of dysfunctions occur in forms of interagency collaboration which are not specifically intercultural in nature. This study is primarily concerned, however, with dysfunctions arising because of differing cultural expectations held by partner agencies for their cooperative relationship and efforts. When intercultural dysfunctions overlap with other assumed sources of dysfunctions (e.g., distance barriers to interorganizational communication), an inclusive--rather than exclusive--view of intercultural problems was adopted.

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

(1) What specific forms of communication and management dysfunctions has a sample of

Western development workers attempting to work with the selected African organization perceived?

(2) What are the central themes in the culture of the organization studied, and how are these themes expressed in the leaders' management and communication activities (especially those which are intercultural in nature)?

(3) How can Western development agency leaders and agents and leaders of indigenous development organizations in Africa minimize dysfunctions due to the intercultural nature of their relationship?

Modes of Inquiry

Corresponding to these three research questions, three modes of inquiry were employed:

(1) formal interviews of individual, Western development assistance workers who worked with the organization studied;

(2) participant observation by the researcher over an extended time; document analysis; selected, directive interviews of informants focussed upon situations involving inter-organizational relations, program planning, personnel management, and organizational development; proverb analysis and dilemma posing; and

(3) formal interviews of leaders of the organization studied.

Purposes of the study

The purpose of each mode of inquiry, respectively, of the research described herein was to:

(1) identify types and sources of communication dysfunction and management disarticulation problems--as perceived by Western development assistance workers in a particular African situation;

(2) describe patterns of planning and organizing indigenous to a particular African organization as the patterns relate to identified communication and management problems; and

(3) identify ways to promote greater intercultural understanding and more effective forms of partnership between Western development assistance workers and members of their host organization in situations sharing features in common with the one studied.

Importance of the Study

Planning is an activity whose assumptions, forms and expected outcomes are all shaped by cultural values and serve socially defined purposes. Westerners take for granted the various aspects of and steps in the planning process such as: problem definition, goal articulation, generation of possible courses of action, evaluation of proposed solutions, selection of a preferred solution, and setting criteria for measuring success. Implicit in such activities are concerns for objectivity, precision, explicitness, efficiency, effectiveness, and progress--all characteristic of a Western, scientific worldview. Non-Westerners also plan, but their activities may be more prominently shaped, for example, by concerns for maintaining good relations among planning participants, for conserving traditional values, and for saving face. Neither approach to planning is inherently better than the other; each is better understood against its own backdrop of cultural values and patterns of behavior.

Of course, not only are the underlying assumptions about, and purposes of, planning thus culturally conditioned, but also the specific behaviors of individuals engaged in planning activities are culturally shaped. The way in which potential solutions are evaluated by Westerners may be by open discussion; how a preferred solution is adopted in the West may be by majority vote. In non-Western societies, such discussions may be held in private, and consensus may be achieved by following the lead of a respected leader. How people view the planning process and how planning is actually accomplished are culturally relative and therefore worthy objects of intercultural study.

Furthermore, when planners from one culture work with planners from another culture, their cooperation is beset by many pitfalls. The outcome of such intercultural efforts are affected by the way in which their relationship has evolved, what roles have been defined for or assigned to the respective actors, the level of mutual trust attained, resistance to an outside change agency and other such factors. Above all these considerations is the inability of members of one culture to foresee in the planning stage undesirable impacts of a proposed program once it is implemented in a foreign culture setting (Salih 1986). The difficulty indigenous planners have in foreseeing undesirable consequences of development programs in their own culture point to a lesson for every external change agent: not only learn the culture in which project impacts will be felt, but also, at the same time, learn the organizational culture and the ways in which plans are formulated and carried out.

Background of the Study

Studies which have dealt with the problem described above and similar problems are almost entirely interdisciplinary in nature. Brief mention of several types of research into this problem area is made here.

Cross-cultural social psychology. The field of cross-cultural psychology recognizes and studies the cultural determinants of behavior. While many of the studies in this field deal with basic psychological processes (e.g., perception, cognition) or developmental psychology (language acquisition, personality development), studies in cross-cultural social psychology prove more relevant--especially those focussing on organizational psychology and behavior. Differences between Western, legal-rational organizations and non-Western organizations have been studied with particular reference to differing interrelationships with organizational members' habits, skills, and cognitive styles (Tannenbaum 1980).

Sociology of organizations. Sociological research on organizations has focussed on a number of aspects of organizations--particularly complex, formal organizations:

organizational leadership and authority, organizational structures, motivational systems, participation patterns, environmental conditions and organizational effectiveness (Knoke and Prensky 1982). Classical organization theories, human relations theories, and open-system or contingency models of organizations--all offer useful tools for organizational analysis, although different theories have decidedly different orientations and applications. The problem studied herein emerges less from a classical approach to organizational structures or a human relations approach to behavior; rather, it is in the open-system approach's study of the interaction between an organization and its environment that problems of organizational dysfunction have been most fruitfully analyzed (Kassem 1977). The open-system approach has not only acknowledged most explicitly the importance of culture as an environmental variable in the study of organizations, but also noted the existence of organizational culture and emphasized the study of salient features of organizational cultures and their effects on organizational outcomes.

Anthropology. Problems of organizational dysfunction have also been studied through anthropological modes of research. Ethnographic analyses of varying types have been used to describe organizational culture, to identify "rules of organizational behavior," and to uncover "native-views" of organizational cultures and subcultures (cf. Pettigrew

1979, Schall 1983, Gregory 1984). Participant observation and unobtrusive measures are primary means by which researchers have entered the realm of organizational culture, though ethnographic researchers are by no means undifferentiated in their assumptions and approaches (Sanday 1979). Culture is recognized not only as something an organization has, but also as something an organization is (Smircich 1983a). Definitions of culture vary among cognitive, symbolic, and structural cultural anthropologists; corresponding to this variation, organizational ethnographies focus on shared knowledge (Goodenough 1971, Agar 1982), systems of shared meanings (Geertz 1973), and organizational expressions of the mind's unconscious operation (Rossi and O'Higgins 1980). In all of these approaches, culture is a root metaphor for organization as a particular form of human expression (Smircich 1983a). Social organizations do not exist independently of the people who create them through patterns of symbolic relationships and meanings. Social interactions, and dysfunctions therein, are products of symbolic expressions arising from specific contexts and bringing to the surface underlying values.

Comparative management. Comparative and cross-cultural research on management examines the behavior of people interacting between and within organizations around the world (Adler et al. 1986:296). Its typically applied focus seeks to help managers understand organizational behavior across cultures and improve organizational effectiveness. A primary concern in comparative management is the nature of the role that culture plays in shaping the behavior of organizational members. Contemporary concerns in comparative management include organizational culture in multinational corporations, interorganizational relations, and cultural synergism.

Specific Points of Inquiry

Case Study Approach

In order to study the problem described above in a way that would contribute both to theory-building and improved understanding for intercultural practitioners, a case study approach was used. In particular, relations between the Nakuru Laymen Association[1] (NLA) of Nakuru, Kenya and selected, Western development assistance workers who had been associated with the NLA provided the focal point of the research.

Although case studies are of limited value in terms of generalizability, they are necessary in the process of

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[1] The official name, according to its Constitution, is "Africa Inland Church Nakuru District Laymen Association," but is abbreviated throughout this report simply as the "NLA." In 1986, the NLA's immediately superior governing body, the District Church Council, changed the NLA's name to "Nakuru Lay People Fellowship." The NLA leaders did not immediately accept the change, however, and later began a process to appeal the decision. The name "Nakuru Laymen Association" (NLA) has been used throughout this report because it is the historic name of the organization by which it is still widely recognized both abroad and within Kenya.

building relevant theory. If it is accepted that voluntary, rural development organizations in Africa have received relatively little attention by social science researchers; that this type of organization is playing a significant role in selected contexts; and that such organizations can benefit from human and material assistance of Western development agency partners--then the case study approach is justified.

The organizational setting. The NLA is a voluntary association of the Africa Inland Church (AIC), Kenya and is under the authority of the AIC's Nakuru District Church Council (DCC). Officially constituted in 1972, the organization is a fellowship of lay leaders of local AIC congregations, primarily from the Nakuru and Njoro Branches within Nakuru District. NLA members have a broad concern for rural community development with a specific focus on smallholder agricultural development and youth technical training.

Members in the association include Directors, who are members of the NLA Planning Council--the executive governing body of the NLA, and all other dues-paying members. The Planning Council is made up of elected officers, appointed members, and ex-officio members. The Planning Council, in turn, has two other councils, or boards, under it: Farming Systems Kenya (FSK) Board and the Laymen Training Centre (LTC) Board. The first of these oversees a church-sponsored agricultural extension program with its own personnel and budget. The LTC Board has oversight of the Laymen Training Centre, an unfinished building complex designed to include: a conference center, dormitories and a dispensary; the Githioro-ini Youth Polytechnic, a training institution patterned after other so-called "village polytechnics" already widespread in Kenya; and a demonstration farm, including a piggery.[2]

Further specific information about the NLA is contained in several documents generated by the organization's members themselves. These are appended to this report as Appendix A, "NLA Self-Description," (including a section entitled "Development of Laymen Training Centre"); Appendix B, "FSK Self-Description"; and Appendix C, "NLA Constitution." An organizational chart of NLA administration and structure appears in Figure 1, "NLA Draft Organizational Chart" (below, p. 90).

Tripartite Research Strategy

A three-pronged approach was used to address the problem of perceived dysfunctions in intercultural development assistance. These consisted of mini-case studies

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[2] During most of the research observation period, the LTC Board delegated management of the demonstration farm to FSK. Since the LTC was not operational, in effect the LTC Board functioned exclusively as the management committee for the Githioro-ini Youth Polytechnic. Nevertheless, the LTC was a distinct entity in the minds of the NLA Directors and was only temporarily identified solely with the Polytechnic.

based on interviews of Western development assistance workers, an ethnographic study of NLA organizational culture, and formal interviews with NLA leaders. They are discussed briefly, in turn, below.

Mini-case studies. The initial mode of research focussed on Western development assistance workers and their perceptions of communication and management dysfunctions in their relationships with the NLA. Western informants were asked how they established contact with the NLA, what forms of communication they had with the NLA, and what difficulties or frustrations they encountered in their sojourn experience working with the NLA (cf. Appendix D). The purpose of these interviews was to identify types of dysfunctions perceived by the Westerners in order to focus on specific aspects of NLA organizational culture in the second, ethnographic mode of inquiry. Findings from the mini-case studies are summarized in Table 2, "Taxonomy of Dysfunctions in Intercultural Cooperation" (below, p. 85).

Ethnographic strategy. Despite the need for "grounded theory" and for refraining from imposing a foreign interpretive framework from the start (Glaser and Strauss 1967), a research strategy which also recognizes the need for clarity and focus may wisely adopt a preliminary framework if it is recognized as rough and revisable (Miles 1979).

For the ethnographic study of NLA organizational culture, the study adopted one such framework to guide the initial inquiry. A model of organizational planning was used in which planning is seen as an activity with identifiable--though not necessarily discrete--stages: problem recognition and definition, goal setting (including specification of criteria to be met by the solution adopted), identification of planning premises, generation of alternate solutions, evaluation of possible solutions, and selection of the best course of action (cf. Koontz 1980:172-177; Filley, House and Kerr 1976:447-450). Another focus of the study was to identify patterns of behavior for each planning stage in the normal course of organizational business, including decisions about program implementation, personnel management, interorganizational relations, and the development of the organization itself.

Some of the specific questions to which answers were sought include the following:

(1) How are problems in any of the areas mentioned above recognized? How are they brought to the group's attention? How is the importance of a particular problem assessed?

(2) How are criteria for acceptable solutions identified? How are goals for the solution of problems prioritized? What time orientation underlies goal setting?

(3) How are environmental constraints and other planning premises identified?

(4) How are alternate solutions generated and proposed?

(5) How are possible solutions critiqued and evaluated? What group dynamics pertain?

(6) How is consensus for a particular course of action obtained? What forms does dissent take and what are its consequences?

(7) How do leaders of the NLA view the planning process itself? Are they conscious of any pre-defined steps in a planning process? What approach do they take to planning nonformal education and rural development activities, and what are the cultural values which underlie that approach?

(8) How do the leaders of the NLA view development? How are these views reflected in the leaders' approaches to planning development activities?

(9) What forms of communication do the NLA leaders use and attend to in different types of planning activities and other organizational matters?

The ethnographic inquiry was also informed through the early completion of the mini-case studies and what they revealed about specific planning, management and communication activities perceived by Westerners to be dysfunctional.

Formal interviews. After the major portion of the ethnographic inquiry had been completed, selected informants were interviewed with respect to the third purpose of the study--to identify ways to promote intercultural understanding and effective cooperation. Specifically, they were asked how Western development agents can adapt their behavior to function more effectively in their host organization. In addition, the NLA informants were asked to suggest ways that leaders such as themselves could minimize dysfunctions in their intercultural contacts (cf. Appendix H, "Schedule for Formal Interviews of NLA Leaders"). Findings from these interviews are summarized in Table 3, "Informant Suggestions to Expatriate Development Workers" (pp. 154-155, below), and Table 4, "Informant Suggestions to Indigenous Development Planners" (p. 156, below).

Population Descriptions

The populations which were studied differed for the several modes of inquiry conducted. For the mini-case studies built around structured interviews, informants were Western development workers who had sojourned in Kenya for the purpose of assisting the NLA or one or more of its members. The population did not include any Western personnel of agencies which entered into various forms of partnership with the NLA but who did not sojourn in Nakuru. Five informants were interviewed of a total population of no more than twenty.

The ethnographic inquiry used as primary informants the members of the NLA elected to the Planning Council or appointed to the subsidiary Boards of either the Laymen Training Centre or Farming Systems Kenya. Secondary informants were the other roughly fifty members of the NLA, plus ex-officio members, such as key AIC Church leaders in Nakuru District.

The majority of primary informants for the ethnographic study were urbanized, educated Kikuyu businessmen or commercial farmers. Most of the secondary informants were Kikuyu and Kalenjin farmers from the rural areas surrounding Nakuru town, although many of these had dual careers in the urban or rural nonfarm economy.

Informants for the third mode of inquiry--formal interviews of NLA leaders--were the same as those in the primary informant population for the ethnographic study.

Assumptions

In order to aid the reader in understanding and interpreting the research methodology and findings reported below, a number of key assumptions which were made in the problem definition stage of the research are overtly stated at this point. An observation which precedes and underlies all of the following assumptions--and which is also noteworthy--is that the researcher and his intended audience are Westerners. The consequences of this fact are numerous. First, what is perceived as a problem or to be dysfunctional by Westerners may or may not be so perceived by non-Westerners. Whether the study will be seen by non-Westerners to be valuable, then, depends on the extent to which they are seeking to understand and collaborate more effectively in development efforts with Western partners. Second, the study followed the canons of Western social science research, not all of which are valued or seen as relevant by non-Westerners. And third, the ethnography was guided by theoretical interests and concerns of Westerners with a view to helping other Westerners understand the organizational culture of an African voluntary association. Had an African conducted the study for an African audience, the findings would have been understandably different due to presumably different concerns and research interests.

The theoretical constructs which were employed in the problem identification above commit the research to follow certain given lines of inquiry within prevailing social science paradigms. For example, whether a cognitive, symbolic, or structural approach to ethnography is emphasized shapes the focus of field observation. This study used an holistic approach to field research (cf. Ouchi and Wilkins 1985) grounded in participant observation but also employing formal interviews, proverb analysis, dilemma posing, and document analysis; the methodology was also semiotic, in part, due to a clear focus on informants' perceptions of their organizational reality expressed in language.

Similarly, whether a classical, open-system, or human relations view of organizations is adopted determines the types of questions asked about the organization studied and the types of phenomena to be observed, for example, in the planning and management of organizational activities, inter-organizational relations, and organizational development. The current study assumed an open-system view of organizations because of its greater suitability to studying intercultural phenomena and their interactions with organizations. Organizations were further viewed in structural-functionalist terms, so that they were assumed to exhibit certain forms and to facilitate the attainment of latent and manifest goals held by their members.

It was <u>not</u> assumed that a proactive approach to goal attainment was necessarily better than a reactive approach, even if the former is seen to be more conducive to synergistic forms of intercultural cooperation than the latter. The perception of dysfunctions in inter-organizational relations by one or more parties was not assumed to reify them for other parties; nevertheless, it was assumed that problem recognition--however articulated--is an essential step in organizational development. Similarly, "effectiveness" in organizing and interagency cooperation was measured against goals held in common by the organizational actors concerned. Organizations are not entirely rational; organizational activities are not necessarily orderly; and organizations--though relatively stable--are constantly in flux (Weick 1969:36ff.).

A final, basic assumption underlying the present study is that communication and management dysfunctions in intercultural development assistance <u>can be mitigated</u>. But they can only be lessened if the personnel involved--both Western and non-Western--are aware of the dynamics at play and are willing to learn from each other and adapt, at least partially, to the cultural patterns of their counterparts. Implicit in this willingness to learn is the ability to learn--or to be taught--new modes of relating across cultural barriers. Hence, the study has wide implications for intercultural educators and cross-cultural trainers as they facilitate the learning and adapting process. Such cross-cultural adaptation usually is assumed to begin at the start of a sojourn in a foreign culture, but even the communications and negotiations which precede such sojourns are subject to dysfunctions stemming from differing cultural meanings attached to planning and organizing functions.

Limitations of the Study

Because of the ethnographic nature of the study, it is necessarily limited in scope. Although the ethnographic description is written primarily for Western readers, it examines only one African organizational culture. The object of the research inquiry is to describe a particular set of cognitive and behavioral phenomena, not to compare them across cultures. It would have been desirable to be able to draw such comparative conclusions at the *etic* level--a term by which Berry (1969, following Pike's [1966] distinction between phonetics and phonemics) characterized transcultural, universal constructs. However, because so little is known about indigenous approaches to organizational planning in the sub-Saharan context (cf. Ahiauzu 1986 and Blunt 1986), the findings of the study at hand are confined to the emic level of analysis, (i.e., derived from characteristics or behaviors internal to one culture).

Another limitation of the research derives from the specific characteristics of the organization studied. The fact that most of the leaders of the NLA spoke English and that several key leaders had international experience has, no doubt, facilitated intercultural cooperation with Westerners. Had the NLA been a less modern organization, one might presume that dysfunctions in intercultural contact would have been greater. Similarly, the relative ethnic homogeneity of NLA members may be presumed to facilitate intercultural cooperation in some ways, although the members of an ethnically heterogenous organization would perhaps be more adept at other forms of intercultural communication and cooperation. Therefore, systemic sources of communication or management dysfunctions in the NLA case generalize only partially to African rural development organizations which are further removed from the international scene or which differ in other significant respects from the NLA.

Another limiting factor of the research reported below stems from the fact that the NLA is a voluntary organization. If one can agree with Knoke and Prensky (1982) that current organizational theories have limited usefulness for voluntary organizations, it is not unreasonable also to assume that different organizational dynamics are at play in voluntary associations from those in corporate businesses. Consequently, the findings below have greater relevance to researchers and practitioners working in voluntary organization settings than in other types of organizations.

These limitations on the generalizability of the research study do not necessarily diminish its worth. To date, few studies using the ethnographic approach have been done in African organizational settings, and, of these, fewer still have been done in voluntary organizations. It is hoped that the research findings reported below will contribute to theory building about voluntary organization dynamics in African settings.

Problem Statement Summary

The problem examined in this research study arose out of a particular context (case), evidenced itself in specific dysfunctions, and was addressed from several, interdisciplinary research bases. The case setting took the Nakuru Laymen Association of Kenya as its center of focus, but included the NLA's broader, extraorganizational relations--both with Kenyan and non-Kenyan organizations and individuals--in its view. Problems that Westerners had in relating to the NLA were not assumed to be *sui generis* but were seen as typical of interactions between other Westerners and organizations similar to the NLA. These included difficulties: in negotiating terms of partnership and exchange of personnel, in getting information about the host organization's program parameters, and in coordinating support services to be provided to sojourners.

Specifically, these and a number of other problems of others were substantiated through interviews of Western development assistance workers who had attempted to work with the NLA. It was assumed that these perceived dysfunctions were largely intercultural in nature. An ethnographic study of the NLA organizational culture was undertaken with a view to uncovering indigenous patterns of planning and organizing and to understanding at what points Western and African approaches to planning for development are in tension. Because the study had an applied focus, leaders of the NLA were interviewed to obtain their suggestions for improving intercultural contact between African organizations such as the NLA and Westerners. These three modes of inquiry (interviews of Westerners, ethnography, and interviews of African organizational leaders) are summarized in Table 1, together with the research questions and purposes which guided each mode of inquiry.

The study was founded upon an interdisciplinary base and drew most heavily from research on the sociology of organizations and from anthropological field research methods. The domains of organizational behavior which were

TABLE 1

RESEARCH QUESTIONS, MODES OF INQUIRY, AND PURPOSES

Research Questions	Modes of Inquiry	Purposes
What specific forms of communication and management dysfunctions has a sample of Western development assistance workers attempting to work with the selected African organization perceived?	Formal interviews of individual Western development assistance workers who worked with the organization studied	To identify types and sources of communication dysfunction and management disarticulation problems--as perceived by Western development assistance workers in a particular African situation
What are the central themes in the culture of the organization studied, and how are these themes expressed in the leaders' (intercultural) management and communication activities?	Participant observation; document analysis; directed, selective interviews of informants; proverb analysis; dilemma posing	To describe patterns of planning and organizing indigenous to a particular African organization as the patterns relate to identified communication and management problems
How can Western development agency leaders and agents and leaders of indigenous development organizations in Africa minimize dysfunctions due to the intercultural nature of their relationship?	Formal interviews of the leaders of the organization studied	To identify ways to promote greater intercultural understanding and more effective forms of partnership between Western development assistance workers and their host organization in situations similar to the one studied

of special interest included: approaches to and assumptions underlying planning and decision making; personnel management; interorganizational relations; and organizational development. Finally, the study sought to identify specific ways in which intercultural cooperation between Western development assistance agencies and African development organizations could be facilitated and become more synergistic in nature.

Definition of Key Terms

In this research report, the following terms will be used in accordance with their definitions given below:

Cultural synergy is a dynamic process of cooperation between two culturally different parties, through which the effects of their combined action are greater than the sum of their individual actions. Cultural synergy entails mutual understanding, learning and adaptation (Moran and Harris 1982:5).

Dysfunctions are observed consequences which lessen or hinder the adaptation or adjustment of a group or organization and which lead to strain, stress and tension on the structural level (Merton 1964:51-53).

Ethnography is "an ambiguous term, representing both a process and a product. The collection of data in the field through observation and interviews is the process, and the reporting of findings in a book or paper is the product" (Hymes 1980:3-8).

Fieldnotes are "the record of an ethnographer's observations, conversations, interpretations, and suggestions for further information to be gathered" (Agar 1980:112).

Intercultural communication occurs whenever a message producer is a member of one culture and a message receiver is a member of another (Porter and Samovar 1976:4).

An organization is a dynamic and open system that is made up of interrelated elements and which takes inputs from the environment, subjects them to some form of transformation process, and produces output (Katz and Kahn 1966).

Organizational culture is "a relatively enduring, interdependent symbolic system of values, beliefs, and assumptions evolving from and imperfectly shared by interacting organizational members that allows them to explain, coordinate, and evaluate behavior and to ascribe common meanings to stimuli encountered in the organizational context" (Schall 1983:557).

Organizational development is "a planned, systematic program initiated by an organization's management, with the aim of making the organization more adaptable to either present or future change, through the use of a variety of methods designed to change knowledge, skills, attitudes, behavior, and structure, and based upon the assumption that organizational effectiveness . . . is enhanced to the extent that the process facilitates the integration of individual and organizational objectives" (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly 1973:342).

Participant observation is "the process in which an investigator establishes and sustains a many-sided and relatively long-term relationship with a human association in its natural setting for the purpose of developing a scientific understanding of that association" (Lofland and Lofland 1984:12).

Planning is the process by which a group defines a concern (problem, need or issue) that is important to it, establishes a goal relative to the concern, and devises a program (series of actions) intended to reach the goal (DeBoer 1970:8).

A sojourner is a person who spends "a significant length of time in another country" (Brislin 1981:8).

CHAPTER TWO

PRECEDENTS IN RESEARCH

The research conducted was founded upon prior research both with respect to the content of the study and to methodology. Concerns for the content of the study were drawn from research on organizations--whether from a sociological, comparative management, or anthropological point of view--and from existing ethnographies of Kikuyu culture. Precedents in research methodology included studies on problems in ethnographic inquiry and data collection techniques.

Research on Organizations

Sociological Foundations

The sociological study of organizations in the twentieth century has yielded many useful insights on the nature, analysis, design and management of organizations. These fall broadly into three schools of thought: classical organization theory, the human relations school, and open-system or contingency theories. Classical organization theory focusses on organizational structures (Blau and Scott 1962) and, by and large, follows a logic of efficiency. The human relations school emphasizes people and is associated with the work of organizational psychologists and other behavioral scientists such as Lewin, Mayo, McGregor, Likert and Argyris. The latter school assumes people want to participate in organizational decision-making and centers on groups as the locus of interpersonal trust and openness; the former school locates the individual within an organizational hierarchy in which authority is transmitted from the top down.

Open-system definitions of organizations represent a synthesis between the earlier two views, accepting many of the findings of previous theories, but are founded on a systems view of organizations: organizations import various inputs from the environment, transform these, and export them back into the larger environment (Katz and Kahn 1966). Most current theories of organizational analysis are based upon the broad features of the open-system model, also called contingency theory, because the "best" way for an organization to achieve its goals is seen to be contingent upon many factors. Contingency theory is especially well suited to examine the nature of intraorganizational and interorganizational conflict and the context of organizations (Kassem 1977)--both of special relevance to the present research study.

Systems theory looks at the many components of organizations and their environments and the way those components interact. Organizational inputs, for example, include the environment itself, resources, the organization's history and strategy; key components in the transformational process are individuals, tasks, formal organizational arrangements and informal organization; organizational outputs can be measured in terms of their goal attainment, resource utilization and adaptability (Nadler and Tushman 1980). Dysfunctions emerge as various components are incongruent and counterproductive within the total system. Bresser and Bishop (1983), in a review of management studies, highlight ways in which formal planning itself can cause intraorganizational contradictions and dysfunctionalities.

Comparative Management Studies

Taking all of the foregoing as background, the field of comparative management has zeroed in on the function of culture--as one of the environmental components of the larger system--in organizational effectiveness. A key question in comparative management is exactly how and in what ways culture affects organizational behavior, organizational effectiveness, and management (Redding and Martyn-Johns 1979). Unfortunately, a number of authors lament that cross-cultural management research in the past twenty-five years has failed to operationalize its definition of culture (Sekaran 1983, Kelley and Worthley 1981, Ajiferuke and Boddewyn 1970). To add to the confusion, culture is variously treated as an independent variable, a constant, a dependent variable, a residual variable, or an intervening variable (Adler 1983). Still the belief persists that culture has an impact on organizations, because cultural norms, values and roles are "embedded in the way organizations develop, organizational structures emerge, and informal patternings of behavior occur" (Sekaran 1983:63).

Concerns for application. The primary burden of comparative management research is applied: How can management understand, respond to and control or manipulate culture in order to improve organizational functioning and effectiveness? Studies which have looked at macro-level variables (such as organizational structure and technology) have concluded that organizations are becoming more and more similar and that culture is becoming a less important variable (Adler 1983). On the other hand, micro-level variables (such as behavior within organizations) are remaining culturally distinct.

The result has been a controversy over the supposed convergence of universal management principles--and thus the waning of culture's importance--versus divergence of cultural influences on organizational functioning (Hofstede 1983). Only recently has the influence of culture on organization been examined with regard to the conditions under which culture is a contingency along with other environmental factors (Adler et al. 1986:302). The call has definitely gone forth for more research of a descriptive nature, so that: models of the interaction between cultural and organizational variables may be further developed; research designs, methods and instruments may be validated; and "cultural maps," identifying similarities and differences across cultural systems, can be developed (Beres and Portwood 1981, Negandhi 1974).

Several other themes in comparative management research should be mentioned briefly before shifting focus elsewhere. Because no organization exists in a vacuum but is one organization among many in its environment, interorganizational relationships have come under study by managers (Gamm 1981, Evan 1978). Although the current state of organizational theory only permits tentative conclusions about the impacts of interorganizational relations on organizational structure and effectiveness (Negandhi 1975, Evan 1976), the analysis of interorganizational relations has been undertaken insofar as they help explain interdependencies among organizations; flows of information and personnel among organizations; organizational identity; and forces impelling organizations to cooperate, compete, or merge with other organizations (Evan 1976:122).

Synergistic approaches. Another recent emphasis in comparative management has been a recognized need for synergism in intercultural approaches to management. A direct application of contingency models of organizational theory, synergism recognizes cultural differences within and across organizations and, based on understanding these differences, seeks to decide how and when to use pluralistic or universalistic forms of management (Moran and Harris 1982). Synergistic research emphasizes the creation of dynamic patterns of intercultural interaction and thus is more an action research approach than a traditional approach to investigation (Adler 1983). Hofstede (1983) indicts most present-day management theories for being ethnocentric; likewise, he calls for more cultural sensitivity in managment theories. He notes the "evident failure of much of the international development assistance of the 60s and 70s" and attributes much of it to the indiscriminate importation of foreign management methods (cf. Moris 1976). Instead, understanding another culture through "organizational anthropology" is necessary to achieving synergistic patterns of interaction (Hofstede 1983:89).

Anthropological Foundations

Anthropologists also have turned their attention to the study of relationships between organizations and culture (Smircich 1983b, Jelenik et al. 1983). Their approaches have varied along with their particular emphases in defining culture (Smircich 1983a, Allaire and Firsirotu 1984). A fundamental distinction has been drawn, however, between the open-systems analytic framework in organizational studies and the study of organizations as culture--not simply organizations having culture (Smircich 1983a:347). Open systems analysis has incorporated the idea of culture and given it prominence both as an internal and environmental variable. But the distinctively anthropological approach is viewing culture as a root metaphor for organization.

Organizations as culture. Instead of comparing organizations to machines or organisms, organizational analysts draw analogies between organization and a much more complex social phenomenon--culture. In developing such analogies, they tend to base their analysis on views of culture drawn from cognitive anthropology and symbolic anthropology. According to cognitive anthropologists, culture consists of shared knowledge. Goodenough (1971:41), the leading proponent of this view, defines culture as whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to other members of the culture. In order to be competent in another culture, one must learn the prevailing standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting in order to act appropriately and to anticipate the actions of others.

Similar to cognitive anthropologists, symbolic anthropologists view culture as a system of shared symbols and meanings (Hallowell 1955, Geertz 1973). The analysis of culture is "not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (Geertz 1973:5-6). Cultural analysis consists of interpreting the "themes" of culture--assumptions, declared or implicit, that orient and stimulate social activity (Opler 1945: 198). The task of anthropology, then, is to show the ways symbols are linked in patterns of meaningful relationship and to demonstrate how they are related to peoples' behavior (Smircich 1983a:350).

Review of case studies. Most empirical research in organizational culture has been done at the micro level and relies almost entirely on qualitative methodologies within a setting of one organization or several subsidiaries of the same corporation. As early as 1965 Margulies, under the direction of Tannenbaum, found a relationship between particular socio-technical environments and employees' value orientations (creativity, achievement, independence). Margulies did not adopt the culture as root metaphor view of organizations, but measured (individual) social-psychological variables and correlated them with other internal variables. Also, he did not make a clear distinction between organizational climate and the shared meanings of organizational culture.

In a similar study, McNeill (1979) defined organizational culture as a system of shared orientations to organizational stimuli. In operationalizing this definition to a particular setting, however, he in effect redefined organizational culture to refer to a group of organizational members who have "similar profiles of elemental cognitive structures." These he measured with a questionnaire developed after extensive interviews with three key informants.

One shortcoming of this approach is that it is effectively impossible to get an "insider's view" of the central themes in organizational culture through a questionnaire. A questionnaire also isolates data gathering from the natural settings of organizational interactions; organizational culture is lived out in the group, not merely reflected upon by participants individually.

Pettigrew's (1979) cross-sectional and historical analyses of the birth and evolution of a private British boarding school demonstrate the need for designing research to fit the particular characteristics of the organization studied. Because the school had had a history of strong charismatic headmasters and was currently undergoing structural change, Pettigrew achieved a longitudinal research design through retrospective data collection (primarily through interviews and documents) coupled with a three-year period of participant observation. Integrating literature on entrepreneurs and symbolism with a focus on social dramas, Pettigrew was able to show how purpose, commitment, and order are generated and maintained in an organization both through the actions of its leaders and through "the amalgam of beliefs, ideology, language, ritual, and myth we collapse into the label of organizational culture" (p. 572).

Other studies also focus on culture as an interpretive framework for sense-making in organizational settings. In a field study, Smith and Simmons (1983) tell how members of an organization came to use a fairy tale to explain their situation. Gregory (1984) used a cross-sectional ethnographic design to describe the way members in several, similar organizations in Silicon Valley view their organizational careers. She identified seven cultural themes that characterized how insiders view their lives: change and progress; luck, risk and uncertainty; material pragmatic success; individualism; meritocracy; youth; and social ethic. Wilkof (1982) studied the organizational culture of a high technology company and observed how organizational culture serves as a mechanism for regulating organizational behavior. Through her descriptive analysis and use of a congruence model of organizational goals, she also was able to assess the impacts of proposed organizational changes on the organizational culture as well as the impacts of the organizational culture on the change efforts.

<u>Negotiated order</u>. In a recent review of the literature on organizational cultures, Fine (1984) compares and contrasts the negotiated order and organizational culture approaches to the study of organizational life. His insightful discussion illuminates a number of significant features of the organizational culture metaphor not yet mentioned. Negotiated order is a metaphor for organization

which views social order as impossible without some form of negotiation (Strauss 1978). Negotiations are patterned and are renewed, revised, and reconstituted over time. Negotiated order is based upon the way people perceive the structure in which negotiations are embedded. Systems of relationships are dependent upon the agreement of their parties and are constructed through a social process. The ultimate organizational variable is the meaning that the environment has for the organizational member (Fine 1984: 243).

The negotiated order and organizational culture metaphors converge in their focus on contextualized meaning and nonrational decision-making in organizations. Organizational culture is seen as one positive force for organizational survival when other dynamics inhibit rational decision making (Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood 1980). Negotiations and organizational culture both impose constraints upon the organization. Although culture (meaning) is created in organizations, the previously existing culture constrains the new meanings that will be accepted by members and still be congruent with the perceived purpose of the organization.

Divergent approaches. A distinction between the two approaches is that negotiated order theorists are more likely to look at the distinctives in the individual's perception of the organization; organizational culture theorists are more interested in shared dominant traditions, although they do not necessarily assume a homogeneous culture (Gregory 1983:366). Also, the two approaches to organizational studies diverge in their emphasis on application. Organizational culture theory has tended to have a more applied focus: the belief that organizational managers have the power to control and direct cultural traditions (Tichy 1982) leads them to change the organizational culture in order to make the organization more effective. As Gregory points out, however, such a "managementcentric" view of organizational culture contributes to the tendency for managers (and organizational researchers) to evaluate the effectiveness of the culture with respect to management goals (1983:362).

Finally, Fine suggests ways to integrate the two approaches (because both emphasize the effects of management on organizational life), and he offers direction for further research. He suggests that organizational culture theorists focus more on how traditions develop: what are the dynamic features of culture that govern the processes by which traditions change and spread?

Another neglected area of research is the interaction among organizational subcultures: how are differences among them negotiated in practice? Fine sees both metaphors as most useful as sensitizing concepts for understanding organizations, rather than as devices for hypothesis generation. To the extent that the negotiated order and organizational culture metaphors permit one to see the familiar in a different light, they give insight into social phenomena in the same way as all social science theorizing and research (1984: 257).

Kikuyu Ethnographies

Another category of data sources relevant to the current study is material written about the NLA "parent culture," Kikuyu. Several ethnographic works on Kikuyu culture exist (Routledge and Routledge 1903, Cagnolo 1933, Lambert 1956, Kenyatta 1965, Gecaga 1972, Kershaw 1972, Leakey 1977-1978), though none of these describes contemporary Kikuyu life. These and other works on Kikuyu proverbs (Barra 1960, Njũrũri 1969, Mathu 1976), concepts of time (Mbiti 1969), and social change (Cavicchi 1977, Gatheru 1966) were used as sources for cultural concepts and themes useful at several points in the data analysis. Because of the secondary nature of these sources, they were treated in much the same manner as one would treat an out-dated road map: they made the researcher aware of features of the cultural landscape which may have affected organizational behaviors within the NLA but which transcended NLA organizational boundaries. However, the past or present existence of phenomena in wider Kikuyu culture was not assumed to imply its existence in NLA organizational culture. In short, such secondary data sources were used to identify and corroborate patterns of organizational behavior observed through other means; appeal to more universal themes will, in the discussion below, help interpret organizational behaviors within the NLA context.

Precedents in Research Methodology

Ethnographic Inquiry

The major discussion below focusses on ethnography and ethnographic techniques such as participant observation and interviewing.

Ethnography is a well established research methodology and owes its origins to early anthropologists such as Malinowski and Boas. It is proper to speak of ethnography as a continuously developing scientific paradigm or domain of interpretations, evolving with respect to method and theory but not basic intent (Sanday 1979:527). That intent, as Malinowski put it, is "to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world" (1922:25).

Ethnoscience. Ethnography always implies a theory of culture. Definitions of culture abound (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952) and so do approaches to ethnography (Smith 1982). The approach to ethnography underlying the study at hand is one derived from ethnoscience, a contemporary trend in American anthropology and related to structuralism (Rossi and O'Higgins 1980). Ethnoscientists regard culture as a system of shared cognitions or of knowledge and beliefs.

Culture is not purely material but it is an organization of material and social phenomena in the minds of people. The human mind generates culture by means of a finite number of rules or an unconscious logic; the aim of the anthropologist, much like that of a grammarian, is to determine what these rules for social exchange are. When the locus of human knowledge is taken to be a single (super) mind, the resulting approach to ethnoscience is encyclopedic in the given domains; by contrast, ethnology treats human knowledge as the result of interacting minds (Werner 1981:185). Ethnoscience is further discussed by Werner et al. (1986) and Goodenough (1971); the ethnographic paradigm and its assumptions are discussed by Sanday (1979), Smith (1982), and Hammersley (1983).

Participant observation is not one ethnographic technique but "a melange of strategies aimed at producing an accurate model of the behaviors of particular people (including the related problems of how people justify their behaviors to themselves and how they describe them to others)" (Harrington 1982:135). Participant observation is in fact a blending of qualitative and quantitative techniques designed to elicit different sorts of data depending on the problem, access to data and theoretical orientation. Other tools may include key informant interviewing, collection of life histories, structured interviews, and questionnaire administration. The combination of participant observation with these related methods permits triangulation and cross-checking of results.

The hallmark of participant observation is extended residence in the social setting studied. The researcher himself is an instrument for understanding; the ethnographer becomes a part of the situation in order to feel what it is like for the people in that situation (Sanday 1979:527). Careful records (fieldnotes) are kept--both of objective descriptions and subjective interpretations--and are subject to data analysis. A conscious effort is made not to impose categories of meaning from the researcher's culture, but to determine the insider's point of view (Spradley 1980)--grounding any emergent theories in empirical data of cultural description (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

Participant observation is more than a data collection method, however, in that it also involves data analysis as part of an iterative process which guides the observer in the selection of which settings to study and what sorts of focussed observations to make. Ordinarily in participant observation, questions subsequent to the initial formulation of the research problem emerge from the interactive process between researcher and data (Bromley and Shupe 1980:191).

Data Collection Techniques

Interviewing. The interview is a form of communication with the specific purpose of obtaining information from an informant. Ethnographic interviewing is distinguished from survey interviewing not by the degree of structure--all interviews are structured by both researcher and informant--but by the degree of standardization (Hammersley 1983:113). Ethnographers do not determine beforehand the questions they want to ask, although they may have a list of issues to be covered. Questions in an ethnographic interview may be directive or non-directive (relatively open-ended), confrontational, or even leading against the likely direction of bias introduced by the question.

Factors affecting interview authenticity have been identified and categorized in relation to interviewer background, interviewee background, the interview setting, and cultural background (Pareek and Rao 1980:154-162). Many of these factors are not major concerns in ethnographic interviews where sufficient trust and intercultural understanding have developed between interviewer and respondent. Issues of particular concern to anthropologists are the desirability of quantification, representativeness, comparability, and specificity of research procedures (Pelto and Pelto 1978:77).

On the conjunction of interviewing and participant observation, Smircich's comments provide a sound rationale for using the two methods together:

> In building a cultural analysis there is a danger in exclusive reliance on verbal data collected via interviews because the researcher may lose sight of the broader view of the context within which to interpret the words of the speaker. Additionally, sole reliance on verbal

> data collected through interviews assumes that the researcher can automatically ask the appropriate questions, those that are most relevant for tapping the experience of a particular group, in most cases an assumption with very little support. For these reasons, participant observation for significant time periods with interviews conducted after some time in the setting is the favored strategy for data gathering (1983b:170-171).

Dilemma posing. The posing of moral dilemmas is an elicitation technique used by Kohlberg (1969, 1971) to study forms of moral reasoning. Kohlberg constructed moral dilemma situations which he used in interviews to elicit reasonings about moral behavior, from which data he theorized universal levels and stages of moral reasoning. Cross-cultural application of this technique led him to express unqualifiedly, "In all cultures we find the same aspects or categories of moral judgment and valuing . . ." (Kohlberg 1971:166). Questions have been raised about the validity of results obtained from using this technique in other cultures (Simpson 1974, Stanton 1976). Most of the objections raised stem from the comparison across cultures of moral reasoning elicited by the dilemma posing method--not from the use of the technique in any one culture. If normative statements are culture-specific, then techniques for measuring moral judgment must show

> . . . a deep awareness and appreciation of variation both in perception and in the systematic patterns and processes which groups develop for the handling of their different values and needs. The interviews, stories, or whatever means of testing used must be sensible, relevant, and realistic in the eyes of the members of each

> society; the scoring manuals or procedures must be shaped to the expectations of each group of human beings toward each other (and the investigators) in the roles defined by those groups (Simpson 1974:101).

Regardless of whether or not one accepts the universality of Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning, Simpson's critique serves as proper warning that in order for valid inferences to be drawn from the use of the dilemma posing technique, careful attention must be given to the particular culture in which it will be used.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Discussed below are, in turn, the methodologies used for the mini-case studies, the ethnographic study, and the structured interviews with NLA members. Chapter Three concludes with a discussion of methodological issues and how these were resolved in the study at hand.

Mini-Case Studies Methodology

The first of the three modes of inquiry pursued in the research study was a set of formal interviews of five Western development assistance workers who sojourned in Nakuru, Kenya while working with the NLA. Each interview formed the basis for a mini-case study; the five mini-case studies are presented in Appendices E-1 through E-5.

Purpose

The general purpose of the mini-case studies was to identify types of communication and management in intercultural relations and to discern in what ways they were perceived to be dysfunctional by Westerners. While a listing of such problems encountered by selected individuals is valuable in itself as instruction or warning to others, the mini-case studies had a further, specific purpose: to provide a focus for the ethnographic study of the NLA. The task of the second mode of inquiry, description of the culture of the African organization studied, was not intended to be encyclopedic, but selective. Thus, the findings from the mini-case studies helped provide the researcher with focal points and selection criteria for narrowing the lens of observation in the larger field study.

Informant Population

The population of potential informants for the mini-case studies was comprised of individuals from the West who had sojourned in Kenya for the purpose of assisting the NLA or any of its members. Such individuals, although considered development workers in the broad sense, included church workers, business consultants and technical experts. Potential informants were identified by networking known members of the population, other agency personnel with organizational linkages to the NLA, and NLA leaders themselves. It was estimated that the total population of potential informants was comprised of no more than twenty individuals.

Selection

Five informants from the specified population were selected for the sample of mini-case studies. The major criterion used in the selection process was the representation of specified channels through which contact was established with the NLA; such divergent types of contact with the NLA included business, professional, institutional, personal, and organizational associations. It was not necessary to select informants for the mini-case studies solely or primarily on the basis of availability. The researcher's own experience was not used as a mini-case study, but a synopsis of his relationship with the NLA is included in Appendix F, "Chronology of Researcher-NLA Relations."

Inquiry Procedure

The researcher interviewed each informant in a structured, but open-ended, manner. The interview questions centered around how the interviewees made contact with the NLA, what communication took place in negotiating the terms of a sojourn in Kenya, and what frustrations the informant experienced in working with the Laymen. The complete interview schedule is contained in Appendix D, "Schedule for Interviews of Western Development Assistance Workers."

Informants were interviewed in person. In order to facilitate data reduction and review, an audiotape of each interview was made--with the permission of the informant. Because the function of the mini-case studies was to provide a wide range of types of dysfunctions in intercultural relations, the methodology used, while not ensuring strict and total comparability of data across interviews, does nevertheless suffice to give the desired variability.

Relation to Research Question

The mini-case study inquiry was guided by this question: What specific forms of communication and management dysfunctions have selected Western development workers attempting to work with the NLA perceived? The questions asked in the interviews (Appendix D) gave the informants opportunity to identify a number of basic types of communication and management dysfunctions that were encountered, given the nature of their intercultural contact with the NLA. Although the mini-case studies yielded only the informants' perceptions as recalled from their past experiences, taken together the data so obtained adequately address the research question and provide specific examples of perceived problem areas in the NLA's intercultural contacts.

Ethnographic Study Methodology

Ethnographic inquiry, like all field research, is unpredictable: contingencies arise during data gathering which can not be fully anticipated in the research design phase. What is presented below in the report on ethnographic research methodology includes an overview of ethnographic methods; a discussion of particular strategies pursued by the researcher in the African field setting; a report of how the inquiry evolved as it was shaped by theoretical interests, initial findings and data anaylsis; and the relation of the methodology to the research question. As discussed in the final section of Chapter Three, the burden of the report is to render the methodology auditable and to insure the soundness of the analysis--given that this type of research is neither replicable nor subject to traditional approaches to data validation.

Overview of Ethnographic Methods

Ethnography based on participant observation is one of many tools used in social science research; it serves certain functions or purposes well, it has appropriate uses, and it has intended results. A comprehensive review of ethnographic methods is not possible here, yet an overview will provide a level of detail necessary to explain what procedures were followed in the study at hand. A fuller discussion of current ethnographic methodology can be found in the literature cited in Chapter Two, pp. 41-45, above.

Purposes of Ethnography

Ethnography is a descriptive tool designed to aid cultural understanding. The process of ethnographic inquiry is guided by two broad purposes which, though pursued simultaneously, are ever in tension: the concern progressively to narrow one's focus to examine cultural details--all the while maintaining a sense of the whole and the broader features of the cultural landscape (Spradley 1980:140).

The narrowing process followed in this study paralleled Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence, which outlines broad procedures for sharpening the focus of inquiry until cultural themes are discovered, then using those themes to relate the parts of a culture to the whole. Key steps in the narrowing process are making descriptive observations, focussed observations, and selected observations.

Processes in Ethnography

The process of describing a culture entails first gathering a wide range of information over a relatively prolonged span of time. The preferred method of study is field or participant observation and requires that the researcher(s) enter a social setting and gather qualitative data through intensive study of people, their knowledge, behavior and material culture. Data gathering and analysis inform and complement each other. What ethnographers learn from the people they study is described in an ethnographic report targeted for a particular audience which presumably is interested in the culture of the people studied.

The ethnographic record. Once a researcher has gained entry to a cultural setting, the process of constructing an ethnographic record begins. In a sense, a researcher who adopts the stance of a participant observer becomes a research instrument: only cultural events (activities, artifacts, speech, documents, informants' responses to the ethnographer, etc.) which are observed or experienced by the researcher can enter the data record. The form in which the data are recorded, however, is a mediated one; the events themselves can not be preserved, but a written record of the researcher's observations, called fieldnotes, can.

Several different kinds of fieldnotes make up the ethnographic record: condensed (immediate, usually summary) accounts of events, expanded accounts (which include verbatim records of participants' words and concrete descriptions of observations), and a fieldwork journal (containing the ethnographer's subjective experiences and record of the research process). The verbal or pictorial data contained in the ethnographic record, then, become objects of study and analysis as the ethnography proceeds with domain analysis, focussed observations and selected observations.

Domain analysis. From descriptive observations recorded in fieldnotes, of which the goal is simply to describe in general terms "what is going on" in the social situations selected for study, a cultural domain analysis is derived. The movement is from observation to meaning; domain analysis examines what meanings participants attach to the social setting. Meanings made explicit by the cover terms participants themselves use are folk domains, while analytic domains use semantic relationships inferred by the researcher; mixed domains include both types of terms. The cultural domains which emerged from descriptive observation of NLA organizational life included types of councils or boards, protocol of intercouncil relations, types of people associated with the NLA, agenda items, ways to present the organization, functions of the council, and steps in running a meeting.

Focussed observations. Ethnographic inquiry proceeds from examination of the general cultural scene to focussed observations of one or a few cultural domains. How one proceeds from the general to the specific depends on one's research interests. In the present study, selection of these domains and subdomains was guided primarily by the theoretical interest in planning, interorganizational relations, and personnel management; in addition, forms of communication, patterns of reaching consensus, and task definition also emerged from the mini-case studies of Westerners as areas of interest.

Selected observations are the smallest focus through which observations are made by which differences among specific cultural categories are sought. In order to identify and distinguish between individual cultural categories or phenomena, the researcher makes selected observations comparing and contrasting, often repeatedly, the attributes of similar cultural elements. To do this, the ethnographer frequently elicits data from informants by asking questions or posing choices. For example, in the current study, the researcher wanted to distinguish between activities which were--and those which were not--considered waging a 'campaign' for one's ideas outside a council. In order to elicit distinctions of this type, informants were presented with a dilemma, asked how they would respond in that situation, and asked why. Data so obtained helped illuminate a dimension of contrast between cultural elements not well understood before the selected observation was made.

Cultural themes. The process of ethnography does not end once cultural inventories have been made through descriptive, focussed and selected observations; the parts of the whole cultural scene must be related not only to each other but also to the whole. The challenge of ethnography is to discover salient cultural themes which do, in fact, provide specific points of integration for the parts into the whole and at the same time which convey a sense of the whole. Spradley's discussion of cultural themes is relevant here:

> Every culture, and every cultural scene, is more than a jumble of parts. It consists of a system of meaning that is integrated into some kind of larger pattern. Many other anthropologists have sought to capture this larger pattern with such concepts as values, value-orientations, core values, core symbols, premises, ethos, eidos, world view, and cognitive orientation (1980:141).

<u>Products of Ethnographic Research</u>

No formula can prescribe the precise shape of a report based on ethnographic field research. A good report will address the two broad purposes of ethnography: to describe particulars while retaining a sense of the whole. Ethnographic reports, then, should contain cultural details, accounts of specific cultural domains, and even incidents which exemplify significant domains. Yet reports of ethnographic research must also unify and place the parts within the whole by using organizing domains and by tying two or more domains together with common themes. The blended effect, then, should yield some sense of the "native point of view," an empathetic reading of how the study's participants give meaning to their world, and in the case of the NLA, to organizing.

<u>Target audience</u>. Writing an ethnographic report requires selecting an audience and fitting one's message to that audience. Targeting an audience, then, provides an important means by which the reporting process is delimited. To report cultural features both similar to, and different from, the audience's cultural background is challenging: one must avoid boring the audience with long, detailed descriptions of what is already familiar and/or of no interest to them, yet provide enough common ground so that cultural differences are perceived as meaningful and not merely exotic or bizarre.

The audience for which this report is written consists of Western researchers and practitioners who are concerned with intercultural development assistance, especially in Africa. For the sake of communication, the author has had to translate cultural data from an African setting to one framed in Western categories, all the while taking care not to impose foreign categories on primary data. Only a small fraction of all the data collected is contained in the report of findings below; the rest has been abstracted to support conclusions stated at higher levels of generality. Making such artful choices of what to include, what to exclude, and when to sum up is an inherent part of the ethnographic reporting process.

Strategies Pursued

In addition to the general methods described above, the research at hand was also guided by particular strategies and constraints. For example, many social settings are relevant to the ethnographic study of one research problem and, in the present case, the culture of a particular organization. Ethnographers not only must develop a tentative strategy for selecting the settings most likely to prove fruitful in fulfilling the purposes of the research, but they must also operate within the constraints of time, travel costs, availability of documents, and access to informants. In ethnographic research, it is expected that initial findings may lead the researcher to redefine the problem, to alter research strategy, and seek out different settings in which to investigate the problem (Hammersley 1983:40). The particular strategies adopted at the outset of the research are described below. How the research strategy evolved in the light of actual field experiences is discussed in the subsequent section, "Direction of Inquiry" (below, pp. 69-74).

Researcher Entry and Role

The researcher sojourned in Nakuru from January 1985 to June 1987. Prior to his arrival, the NLA had specifically requested Africa Inland Mission (AIM International) to assign the researcher, whom they had met some seven years previously, to work with them. In the request procedure, both the Nakuru District and Regional Church Councils were involved. Ultimately, the researcher was assigned to Nakuru DCC for general church work. After his arrival, his specific duties were formulated by the NLA Planning Council and ratified by the DCC. He remained accountable to the DCC throughout his sojourn and performed other duties not related to the NLA in addition to those fulfilled in conjunction with the NLA. He performed a wide variety of tasks for the NLA, although he was never given a written job description. He was officially recognized as an assistant to the Recording Secretary of the NLA; hence his attendance at any and all meetings, including executive sessions, was never questioned (to his knowledge).[3] See Appendix F, "Chronology of Researcher-NLA Relations," for a more detailed history of the researcher's relationship with the NLA.

The nature of the researcher's previous contact with NLA members and his official role in the NLA during the data gathering phase of the research are significant factors affecting both his ease of entry and degree of access to observation settings; these, in turn, directly affected the quality of data available to him. Because he was viewed primarily as a partner and participant in organizational efforts, rather than as an observer or researcher, NLA members treated him accordingly. On only one occasion was he ever physically excluded from a discussion; subsequent observations showed that, given the context, this was normal.

Discussions frequently slipped from Swahili to Kikuyu (the latter not as well understood by the researcher as the former), and, invariably, when one member called the switch to the others' attention, all would return to speaking Swahili--sometimes with brief apology to the researcher. These and other factors in the history of the relationship between the researcher and NLA members indicate that neither

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[3] A motion was made in mid-1986 to give the researcher the title of 'Office Manager,' but the members could not agree on the definition of 'office,' and the matter was dropped for lack of consensus.

restrictions in access to data nor conscious attempts to conceal or distort posed significant limitations in the data gathering process.[4]

Observation Settings

In conducting participant observation, no individual researcher can consider every social contact a formal observation period; boundaries must be set even if the observer has minimal nonresearch obligations (Bogdan 1972:37, 52-53). In the study at hand, therefore, the researcher treated as observation periods the following settings:

- regular and special meetings of the NLA Planning Council, Laymen Training Centre Board, and Farming Systems Kenya Board;[5]

- regular and special meetings of executive and other subcommittees;

- joint meetings between NLA members and DCC representatives;

- public or private events sponsored by the NLA (such as general meetings, farewell parties, and special church services); and

- job-related contacts between the researcher and leaders of the NLA--including phone calls, discussions over coffee, and consultations

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[4] See also the further discussion of access and relation to informants under "Methodological Findings," pp. 164-167, in Chapter Four, below.

[5] In the twenty-eight months of the research observation period, the researcher attended over seventy meetings of the three councils named.

regarding job procedures.[6]

Informal gatherings of NLA leaders were not always relevant to the study of NLA organizational culture, because many of the NLA's leaders had leadership roles in other organizations as well. The researcher treated such informal situations as observation periods, especially in cases where several key informants were present and the NLA or its activities came under discussion.

Informants

Primary informants consisted of elected members and office bearers of any of the three Laymen boards (Planning Council, Laymen Training Centre Board, and Farming Systems Kenya Board). These did not change during the researcher's entire sojourn and included precisely nine men and one woman. Obviously, membership on the three boards overlapped considerably, with the same individuals wearing different 'hats' on different boards.

Secondary informants included appointed, ex-officio or invited members of the three boards and any other active members or employees of the NLA, including expatriates

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[6] The primary language employed in all of the settings listed above was Swahili--except for the FSK Board meetings, which were regularly conducted in English. Kikuyu and, to a lesser extent, English were also used intermittently in predominantly Swahili meetings. A greater proportion of job-related contacts between the researcher and individual informants was facilitated by English, because the likelihood of all parties being fluent in English rose as the number of individuals involved declined.

working with the NLA in whatever capacity. Secondary informants numbered anywhere from twelve to twenty at any one time. The NLA officially had many more members--perhaps fifty others--who at one time had paid a membership fee.[7] All these were inactive, however, during the research observation period--despite many long discussions by NLA leaders of how to 'reactivate' the membership.

Data Gathering

The ethnographic record was constructed with fieldnotes taken during participant observation of organizational events and encounters, documents, fieldnotes recording selected observations of informal interviews, and fieldnotes recording informants' responses to elicitation techniques.

Fieldnotes

Throughout the study, the researcher made written records of observations, conversations, meetings and events relevant to the research purposes. Note-taking in public was done--depending on the circumstances--as unobtrusively as possible. For example, after chance encounters with primary informants in which significant ethnographic content was revealed, a written record was made from the researcher's own recollections later in the day. During official meetings of the NLA, however, the researcher took notes openly,

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[7] Apparently at one time (in 1983?) many people joined the NLA in order to qualify for aid.

recording not only agenda and procedures in "minute-like" fashion, but also noting seating arrangements, physical surroundings, interaction patterns, interpersonal and emotional behaviors, linguistic data, as well as the researcher's own subjective interpretations.

In general, the researcher believed that the NLA members approved of his overt note-taking as being highly consistent with the stance of a cross-cultural learner, not to mention the researcher's other role as an administrative assistant who needed to know the details of most decisions made. Tape recordings were not used in ethnographic data collection lest informants feel threatened by such a permanent record of their views and either guard their remarks unnaturally or be forced to trust unnecessarily the researcher to restrict access to the material.

Documents

In addition to data from human informants, the researcher also examined documentary evidence available to him. All of these were organizational records such as the NLA Constitution, meeting minutes, correspondence files, newsletters, project proposals and memos. Copies of documents intended for the public, such as organizational newsletters and the NLA Constitution, were collected, and photocopies of other items containing relevant material were made. Some source criticism was necessary particularly for project proposals, since some of these had been written by expatriates and did not necessarily reflect a consensus of NLA member opinions; in fact, during the research period several funding proposals were drafted and sent to donors without full endorsement of the NLA Planning Council.

Data obtained from such sources were treated in a manner similar to data recorded from human informants: they helped shape descriptive, focussed and (less frequently) selected observations. In several cases, written documents raised questions or issues that could be pursued with focussed or selected observations using human informants.

Informal Interviews

Ethnographic researchers also use data obtained in ways other than participant observation in natural settings. The researcher informally interviewed NLA informants throughout the sojourn period; this occurred in natural--that is, not pre-arranged or designated as interviews--settings where the informants felt comfortable, such as in their homes, vehicles or offices, or at a coffeehouse. Informants were asked specific questions pertaining to focussed and selected observations of the ethnographic study. The researcher often had to wait for an appropriate opportunity before asking such questions and also had to be sensitive to the informants' reactions to the researcher's act of asking questions. For example, an informant might infer criticism or lack of acceptance merely from the question. At several points, the researcher had to emphasize his role (and hence motives for asking questions) as a cross-cultural learner, and on other occasions, he had to refrain from changing the subject or asking questions altogether; his role as participant required him to observe social conventions, such as listening to and respecting elders.

Elicitation Techniques

Selected observations require detailed comparisons and contrasts between and among attributes of, rationale for, or uses of cultural phenomena. Just as interviewing informants can help elicit information needed to make such comparisons, other techniques, such as dyadic or triadic contrast questions, serve the same purpose. By confirming such native distinctions between similar elements in a cultural domain, the ethnographer completes the process of analyzing cultural domains.

Frequently asking why two things are different yields little or no special cultural insight. Informants do not know why two objects differ in <u>form</u>, any more than they know why two grammatical structures in their language are different: the difference has no meaning to them.

On the other hand, clarifying <u>functions</u> of objects or rationale for a course of action over and against an alternative course of action can sometimes reveal significant beliefs and values of informants. Precisely this level of analysis enables the researcher to uncover cultural themes which transcend a single cultural domain and add appreciably to an outsider's understanding of the culture. Such cultural themes can be made explicit in folk sayings or proverbs, but usually remain tacit--at the assumed but unstated level of knowledge. The current study attempted to make use of two elicitation techniques in the process of identifying themes in NLA organizational culture.

Proverb analysis. Underlying the first elicitation technique is the recognition that proverbs are an important feature of Kikuyu life (Mathu 1976) and, in general, "an index to accepted canons of (African) thought and action" (Herskovits 1961:453). In the ethnographic record, careful note was made of the use of proverbs in the social settings studied. Making such records, however, was not without its problems. Often proverbs were stated only in Kikuyu, with no translation offered. The researcher's proficiency in Kikuyu was not sufficient to enable him always to recognize a proverb as such, let alone record its content. In effect, only proverbs stated in, or translated into, Swahili could be recorded. At an appropriate time, key informants were asked to explain selected proverbs and to illustrate how they pertained to particular organizational tasks or problems when the meaning and relevance of the proverb were not already obvious.

Dilemma posing. The second elicitation technique was borrowed from research on the developmental stages of moral reasoning (Kohlberg 1969) and may be termed "dilemma posing." The process involved constructing a series of scenarios which potentially forced a decision involving one or more issues or problems within the NLA. Informants were interviewed and asked to give both their opinions on the appropriate course of action and the reasoning process underlying those opinions. Such dilemma posing can help make explicit unstated assumptions which underlie behavior and constitute major and minor themes within NLA organizational culture.

In the study at hand, five such dilemmas were developed, each addressing a key theme in the organizational culture of the NLA or an issue in intercultural relations identified earlier in the ethnographic process. The five dilemmas were then posed to several primary informants in structured interview situations. The five dilemmas focussed on: task specification, supervision, protocol, honoring the council, and consensus. (The full text of the dilemmas is contained in Appendix G, "Dilemmas Posed to Informants.")

By probing for the reasons why the informant answered as he did, the researcher hoped to uncover tacit assumptions about appropriate forms of personnel management, inter-organizational relations, and consensus. Recognizing the difference between such assumptions and manifest or espoused values (Hofstede 1980-1981, Schein 1984), data gained in such a manner was cross-checked not only among informants but, where possible, against observed behaviors. No separate report of findings is made below in Chapter Four on data gathered by the two elicitation techniques, but a discussion of their usefulness as research methods is given (below, pp. 168-171).

Data analysis

Data from the ethnographic record were analyzed systematically and continuously from the beginning of the researcher's sojourn. First, individual fieldnote entries were coded with descriptors likely to become elements in taxonomic analyses of domains. For example, a fieldnote entry describing an informant's views on 'partnership' with Western agencies reflecting a perceived imbalance in the relationship and mentioning the possibility of an exchange of personnel was coded with the descriptors "inter-organizational relations," "views of Westerners," "partnership," "patronage," and "personnel."

At various intervals, tentative taxonomies were constructed by reviewing all fieldnotes collected up to that point and cross-referencing the fieldnotes with the domain analyses. Fieldnote entries were not copied elsewhere, but were indexed by date of occurrence, identities of informants, the relevant board or council, and a brief abstract or summary of the point(s) relevant to the domain under construction.

This process continued, although as the research focus narrowed, not all domains continued to be analyzed to the same level of specificity. Later in the study domains were merged under other, organizing domains. On occasion, the name of a domain changed when it became clear that the informants viewed the phenomena in those slightly different terms. For example, "interorganizational relations" became "following protocol," since this was the more dominant concern of the study participants.

The researcher also composed memos on selected topics. These were early attempts to sum up data collected to date, to organize isolated occurrences into patterns of behavior, and to propose some tentative generalizations. These developed unevenly, with some analyses proving subsequently to be more valid than others.

Direction of Inquiry

The ethnographic process ia a selective one: it is neither possible nor desirable to attend equally to all phenomena in the cultural scene. Ethnographic researchers must consciously choose to narrow their focus based on personal interest, suggestions from informants, theoretical interests, or strategic concerns for social action (Spradley 1980:105-106). Yet care must be taken to document the evolution of the process itself in order to interpret any findings claimed. Any report of such an evolving methodology can not be totally exhaustive; yet sufficient detail is required to enable fair assessment of the appropriateness of the methodological process, at least at every major turn, to the research questions as well as in support of reported findings. The theoretical interests which guided the ethnographic process are described here; the criteria for narrowing the ethnographic focus and procedures for corroboration of data are discussed in a later portion of this section.

Theoretical Interests

The research problem formulation was grounded in concerns for understanding and mitigating assumed dysfunctions in intercultural development assistance and for fostering cultural synergy in joint efforts. Those concerns were expressed in terms of Western theoretical approaches to management and communication. For example, planning was assumed to have an identifiable sequence of steps, including: problem recognition and definition, goal setting, identification of planning premises, generation of alternate solutions, and selection of the best course of action. Those and other assumptions were necessary, but they were also held somewhat tentatively in recognition that planning in an African context would have a different presentation.

Trying to fit cultural data gathered in the field research period into pre-defined Western categories subverts the aims of ethnographic research and does not help one truly to understand the "native point of view." To illustrate, again, with the example of steps in planning, the ethnographic analysis below will show that planning in the NLA context was largely, though not entirely, reactive and evidenced a noncrisis orientation to events (see below, pp. 105-106). Therefore, problems were not identified as such because: nearly every agenda item was a problem (or "case"); goals were not stated explicitly, but included implicitly to dispose of or manage the problem according to overriding concerns for following protocol and maintaining the organization's face; and consensus on a solution, though technically perhaps unanimous, was still loose--often frustrating implementation.

Similarly, the initial research design embodied concerns for personnel management, interorganizational relations, organizational development and program planning, implementation and evaluation. These manifest concerns were helpful in focussing the ethnographic inquiry, yet they too were considered tentative categories during the search for functionally equivalent, native cultural domains.

Mini-Case Studies Concerns

Several other, strategic concerns emerged from the data gathered from the Western informants who were interviewed. Some of those interviewed noted problems in communicating with the NLA effectively: not knowing with whom to correspond, not being able to get information on living conditions, and language difficulties. The Westerners were also frustrated by NLA consensus patterns; several mentioned that they had difficulty discerning group consensus or that no one person served as interpreter of the group's will. Also a significant finding of the mini-case studies was the lack of desired specificity in task definition: many of the Western informants were unsure of what they were to be doing--some even until well into their sojourn.

All of these concerns identified in the initial phase of the research study (see Table 2, p. 85, below) helped the researcher attend to specific types of individual behavior and areas of organizational activity. For example, careful note was made whenever NLA Planning Council members discussed or revealed their attitudes toward Westerners, or whenever job descriptions were mentioned.

Initial Domain Analysis

During the ethnographic data gathering process, the researcher began to identify cultural domains in the organizational life of the NLA. After an initial period of approximately four months the domains became more well defined; later, they could be grouped under other, organizing domains. Some of the domains identified at first included kinds of councils, meeting places, kinds of agenda items, kinds of people associated with the NLA, types of council activities, ways to relate to other organizations and councils, ways to raise money, things to spend money on, sequences of activity within meetings, types of written communication, reasons for maintaining projects, ways to evaluate the actions of others, time frames of agenda items, and kinds of religious expression.

In light of the research purposes and the theoretical and strategic interests mentioned above, not all the domains were fruitful grounds for further focussed inquiry. Conscious choices were made not to pursue further data gathering in and analysis of several domains initially identified. The choices were not arbitrary, but were guided by the theoretical interests outlined above, including those interests emerging from the mini-case studies.

Corroboration of Analysis

An inherent danger in ethnographic research is over-reliance on one particular method of inquiry with no independent means for verifying that data collected are a valid reflection of social and cultural reality. Participant observation can yield biased results if data--and preliminary analyses of data--are not checked by other means. Use of informant interviews, elicitation techniques, and observation of behavior (as a check on verbal self-reports) were all incorporated into the current study in order to provide means for verifying data.

Several examples of how the researcher checked and corroborated data and data analyses will be described. Early in the sojourn period, it seemed that none of the NLA members or employees wanted to take responsibility for decisions that needed to be made. However, after repeated observations of apparent avoidance behaviors, it became clear that individuals placed responsibility for decisions in the relevant council or board. Responsibility (and authority) were vested in the council, so there was no need (and some risk involved) for individuals to take matters into their own hands. The tentative analysis was reformulated after an iterative process of observation, and the resulting perception of responsibility resident in the council showed instead that individuals were actually honoring or showing deference for the council by their avoidance behavior.

Observation of behavior is especially important when informants deviate from group norms. A tacit rule may not be discovered by a foreign observer until someone breaks it. Also, procedures for dealing with rule-breakers stated by informants may differ from how rule-breakers are actually treated. For example, the NLA Constitution stipulates that disagreements among members will be resolved in accordance with a cited Biblical procedure involving confrontation; in practice, disagreements were sometimes resolved through the use of intermediaries or otherwise not resolved at all.

Relation to Research Question

To the extent that ethnographic inquiry is able to explore organizational cultural domains, such as planning and interorganizational relations, the study helps identify verbal behaviors that go into planning and managing interorganizational relations. Cultural themes of the NLA organization help identify assumptions which shape the planning process.

Methodology for Formal Interviews

Purpose

The final mode of inquiry in the research study sought to identify ways to promote greater intercultural understanding and more effective forms of partnership between Westerners and African rural development organizations. The content of the suggestions obtained was by no means exhaustive, and the process focussed entirely on only one half of the partnership equation: ways that Africans feel they and Westerners can adapt.

Population

The population of data sources for the information to be gathered was the same as the primary informants for the ethnographic inquiry, described above (p. 61): selected leaders of the NLA.

Informant Selection

In order to keep the sample size manageable, only five members of the population were interviewed. The major criterion governing their selection was degree of international experience, with travel experience and sojourning in the West primary indicators of international experience. After the fact, it appeared that this criterion may have been irrelevant; some of the informants judged to have the most international experience lacked special insight into the problem, while others who had little or no international exposure had quite trenchant comments.

Inquiry Procedure

Formal, structured interviews comprised the methodology for the third mode of inquiry. Interviewees were asked in advance to participate; they were told that others would also be interviewed; they were informed about the general purpose of the interview; and confidentiality was assured. During the interviews with both primary and secondary informants, data reduction was accomplished through note taking. The interviews were not tape recorded.

Development of interview schedule. Two test interviews were conducted with secondary informants of the ethnographic study in order to enable the researcher to clarify and refine both the presentation of information about the findings to date and the questions to be asked. Data so obtained were not excluded from the final summary given in Table 3, "Informant Suggestions to Expatriate Development Workers," and Table 4, "Informant Suggestions to Indigenous Development Planners" (pp. 154-155 and 156, respectively, below).

Interview protocol. During the interviews, the researcher summarized the preliminary findings from the first two modes of inquiry; he listed some of the perceived dysfunctions that Westerners experienced in their contacts with the NLA, and he illustrated some of the key themes in the organizational culture of the NLA. The latter were descriptive in nature, and the researcher made it clear that the NLA was not "at fault" for the dysfunctions perceived by Westerners.[8] Rather, the fact that Westerners do not understand the organizational culture of the NLA and other organizations like it was emphasized, and the interviewees were then asked to suggest things that Westerners should know or behavior adaptations they might make. Finally, interviewees were asked ways that either individuals or the NLA might adapt to make intercultural cooperation more effective. Translation of the words used in the two questions is as follows:

(1) Can you suggest things which Westerners should know about the Laymen and how you function, so that they can enter in smoothly and work well with all of you?

   (a) For example, suppose someone were coming to take my place. What would you want to tell him before he gets here?

   (b) What are some ways that the person should adapt after he gets here?

(2) What are some things the Laymen could do differently to help volunteers adjust to the NLA and to work well together with the NLA?

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[8] A translation of the information given by the researcher to interviewees is contained in Appendix H, "Schedule for Formal Interviews of NLA Leaders."

Potential for organizational change. Because the nature of the entire study could have been of value to the NLA leaders in planning for organizational change in the direction of greater intercultural cooperation, the researcher hoped that individual interviewees would see the benefit of--and indicate a desire for--a larger group discussion of the study's findings. None of the informants voiced such a need,[9] however, and perhaps, based on findings reported below concerning reactive vs. proactive planning, this is not surprising.

Relation to Research Question

The data obtained from the third mode of inquiry are directly relevant to the research question--how both Western development agents and leaders of indigenous organizations in Africa can minimize dysfunctions in their relationship. Although the data do not give Westerners' answers to the same question, they help fill in a substantial gap in Westerners' understanding of organizational dynamics and culture in voluntary, rural development organizations in Africa. It is precisely this understanding of the "native point of view" that is prerequisite to synergistic functioning in intercultural contexts.

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[9] One interviewee did suggest that the researcher contact other Westerners who had worked with the NLA and give joint recommendations to the NLA for improving intercultural relations and overall organizational effectiveness.

Methodological Issues

Discussed below are a number of issues pertaining to the research methods described above.

Research Time Parameters

The timing of the various phases of the research methodology was not carried out as planned; several modifications had to me made, it was felt, for good reasons. Anthropologists (cf. Fortes 1963, Hicks 1984) doing field-based observation in agrarian societies have noted that from twelve to fifteen months is a reasonable, minimal length of time in which the observer can first become adjusted to his new surroundings and then observe what regular events occur in the full cycle of a year.

Organizational cycles. Organizations--even those which are based upon agricultural or rural development activities --do not necessarily have an annual cycle in which all significant, planned events are likely to occur. One such significant event in the life of an organization is the election of officers and, in general, the transition in leadership of the organization (cf. Weber 1946, Gouldner 1950). Although according to its Constitution the NLA should have held elections in mid-1985, elections kept being postponed until after the research period ended in mid-1987. The recurrent postponement led the researcher to extend the ethnographic observation period until it was apparent that the elections were, in fact, indefinitely postponed.

Research clearance. Another temporal factor which necessitated the extension of the research period was a delay by the Kenya Government in granting the researcher official research clearance. Although he did engage in participant observation activities before obtaining research clearance, he felt it unwise to engage in any obtrusive measures, such as the formal interviews of mode three, until clearance was granted in February 1987. The interviews of NLA leaders, then, were conducted between 3 February and 2 June, 1987.

Social and Ethical Issues

Participant observers can not maintain neutral roles in the society they are studying, no matter how much they strive for objectivity. Rather than aim for some form of social marginality that obviates the need to commit one's loyalties (Vidich 1969), a participant observer must be close to the social interactions in which the meanings he seeks to uncover are rooted. Assuming the role of learner, establishing rapport and building trust are all essential to "empathetic ethnography" (Smircich 1983b:166).

In conducting the study at hand, the researcher saw no contradiction between active social involvement (even to the extent of having an official role in the organization studied) and the role of researcher. The activities of the researcher in the proposed study could have lead the NLA leaders to greater self-understanding with the potential for organizational change. The fact that the researcher was so involved in a change process does not automatically impugn the validity of the data obtained.

Data Reliability and Validity

Traditional concerns for reliability and validity of quantitative data are in many respects inapplicable in qualitative data collection (Miles 1979:596). For example, in order for an observer to gain an in-depth understanding of a social situation, it may be necessary to ask unique questions of different informants; validity is thus enhanced but at the expense of reliability. Although fieldwork is especially well suited to studying processes of social change, researchers themselves are susceptible to changes in social perception over time--compounding the problem of validity (Vidich 1969).

Making qualitative research "auditable," "confirmable," and "credible," is perhaps more relevant than making it reliable and valid in the usual sense (Guba 1979). Verification of field data can not be attended to after data collection; data analysis done in the field must be used to alter research design in order to verify data as much as possible. Using a variety of data collection tools and cross-checking results obtained from observation and recorded in field notes are essential to establishing data accuracy (Sanday 1979:528).

If traditional concerns for reliability and validity are somewhat misplaced in ethnographic research, Smircich suggests more meaningful criteria for judging the utility of research results:

> The grounds for evaluation of research espoused by the positivist tradition are not appropriate to organizational inquiry. Networks of shared meaning do not lend themselves to study by methods of detachment and objectivity. Instead, the researcher is "scientific" in that the collection and reporting of data are done systematically, with care and discipline. Evaluation rests not on criteria of objectivity or coherence, but on the integrity, the soundness, of the analysis. How well does it capture the experience of that group? How well does it allow others to know the meanings for social action held by the people in that setting? How well is our understanding of social life beyond this particular setting enhanced? These questions provide the important reference points against which the utility of the research is to be judged (1983b:165).

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The data gathered by the three modes of inquiry described in Chapter Three are analyzed and reported below. First, findings from the mini-case studies are presented. The major portion of Chapter Four is comprised of the ethnographic description of NLA organizational culture. The ethnographic findings are presented in a descriptive essay, the major elements of which include: explications of cultural domains and subdomains; conclusions about NLA members' views and expectations for organizational behavior; incidents which illustrate those conclusions; and themes which tie two or more domains together. Next, findings from the formal interviews with NLA leaders are presented. Finally, findings from the research methodologies employed in the study are discussed.

Findings from the Mini-Case Studies

The verbal data on the audiotape records of the interviews with five Western development assistance workers were first reduced to written case notes. Then the written case notes and review of audiotapes were used to produce a narrative summary of each individual case. These are contained in Appendices E-1 through E-5.

In addition, responses to the open-ended questions in the structured interviews (see Appendix D, "Schedule for Interviews of Western Development Assistance Workers") were used to construct a typology of perceived dysfunctions in the intercultural contacts between the interviewees and the NLA. The typology so obtained is contained in Table 2, "Taxonomy of Dysfunctions in Intercultural Cooperation." In order to build this typology, which is in no way an exhaustive taxonomy, comparisons and contrasts between individual interview data were made. In addition, one item, collected in the ethnographic portion of data gathering from a Western development worker not interviewed, pertained to perceived dysfunctions in intercultural relations and so has been included in Table 2.

The taxonomy of perceived dysfunctions (Table 2) reveals that a majority of Western sojourners' problems arose after arrival in the field and included communication difficulties, perceived deficiencies in personnel management, and differences in values and ideals. Communication problems cited included language and cultural differences but also indicate that the Westerners did not know how to discern the consensus of the various NLA councils they worked with. Frustrations and ambiguities surrounding task specification--or lack thereof--were the central concern in

TABLE 2

TAXONOMY OF DYSFUNCTIONS IN INTERCULTURAL COOPERATION

<u>Pre-Arrival Problems</u>

not knowing with whom to communicate
lack of role definition
difficulty in getting specific information on living conditions

<u>Arrival Problems</u>

not being met on arrival
confusion in arrangements for transportation to local area

<u>Post-Arrival Problems</u>

Perceived communication dysfunctions:

interruption of meetings and subsequent failure to resolve issues relevant to task specification
misunderstandings due to language barriers
difficulty in getting to know individuals (because of cultural differences)
inability to discern group consensus (no one voice serving as interpreter of group intentions)
ambiguity over hosts' desire for extension of sojourner's work contract

Perceived deficiences in personnel management:

lack of designated liaison person
lack of job description, not being told what to do
lack of host involvment, not taking responsibility for expatriates' work
lack of post-service evaluation

Perceived differences in values and ideals:

different attitudes toward finances
different views of development
general lack of cohesiveness among group members
disillusionment due to discrepancy between reality
and idealism of previous communication

the area of personnel management. Informants also related their deeper concerns about and, in some cases, disillusionments over differences between themselves and the Laymen in values and ideals. As was noted above in Chapter Three (pp. 71-72), these perceived dysfunctions fed into the ethnographic inquiry and helped the researcher focus observation on specific behaviors relevant to them.

Ethnographic Findings

Introduction

Before the findings from the ethnographic inquiry are presented, it should be emphasized that the analysis of data is not a distinct stage of ethnographic research. Rather, data analysis

> . . . begins in the pre-fieldwork phase, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continues into the process of writing up. Formally, it starts to take shape in analytic notes and memoranda; informally it is embodied in the ethnographer's ideas, hunches, and emergent concepts (Hammersley 1983:174).

Just as the analysis of data feeds into the process of research design, data collection is guided strategically by the developing theory. This dialectical relationship between theory building and data collection is a key feature of Glaser and Strauss' (1967) "grounded theorizing."

In the ethnographic study of the NLA, data were derived from several sources, the major one being field observation notes which were recorded systematically throughout the researcher's sojourn. The fieldnotes included observations made not only through unobtrusive means but also from the responses to the elicitation techniques described in Chapter Three (on pp. 65-68). Organizational documents comprised another data source; these were subjected to the same type of verbal data analysis as fieldnotes, though each document's credibility, source and relevance were considered separately.

Description of NLA Organizational Culture

The NLA organizational culture is described below in terms of five organizing domains: the council (**chama**[10]), intercouncil protocol, situation management, personnel management, and presentation of the organization. Cultural themes, which are not treated separately but are integrated into the discussion in recurring fashion, include honoring or respecting the council, staying within bounds or limits, playing the part of patron, and preserving face. Tensions

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[10] In the text of this research report, cover terms (actual words or phrases used by informants) have been reported in accordance with these conventions: An English cover term (i.e., spoken by the informant in English) is enclosed in single quotation marks. An English phrase or sentence enclosed in double quotation marks gives the researcher's translation of a foreign language original. In some cases, key Swahili cover terms are also given and enclosed in parentheses. Swahili cover terms are printed in boldface text; Kikuyu words are printed in boldface and also underlined. Thus, when an English phrase is not enclosed in single quotes but is followed in parentheses by a foreign language phrase, only the latter is actually the cover term used by informants. In some cases, cover terms appear in more than one language. Translations of foreign words as used by informants and/or as they occur in the broader East African context are given in the Glossaries, pp. 189-193.

between being time-oriented and event-oriented and between crisis management and noncrisis management--which, to some extent, constitute cultural contradictions--are also presented.

The Council (**Chama**)

Anthropological studies of broader Kikuyu society have noted the historical importance of the **kĩama** or council of elders (Swahili: **chama**) in governance and social control (Kenyatta 1965, Leakey 1977-78). The following notations from Kershaw illustrate a number of salient points about the role of the **kĩama** in traditional Kikuyu life:

> Within the territorial unit the **kĩama** were the real authority in Kikuyu society, a localized authority, based primarily in the senior **kĩama** of the older men. Their strength of coercion was in the demand of unanimity of decision, which did not ultimately allow dissent. Their adaptability was in the opportunity for all men to aspire to membership and in the making of all decisions on an ad hoc basis, as interpretations of general ideas within a specific set of circumstances.
>
> . . . (If a man) decided to defy the **kĩama** he would move out of the jurisdiction of the **kĩama** involved and go somewhere else.
>
> . . . The **kĩama** did not make laws in the strict sense; no decision they made had the force of precedent, nor was any decision binding for the future.
>
> . . . No appeal could be made to a higher **kĩama**, unless it could be shown that the particular **kĩama** had not had jurisdiction in the first place . . . (1972:94-95).

In actual fact, several different grades of councils, corresponding to grades of elders and geographic divisions, handled civil cases arising from within their respective jurisdictions (Kenyatta 1965:187). Although each **kĩama** had a senior elder who represented the entire **kĩama** to a higher **kĩama**, power was vested in the **kĩama**--not in the individual leaders (ibid.).[11]

Administrative structure. The administrative structure of the NLA and its relation to the Councils of the Africa Inland Church are not unlike the traditional Kikuyu hierarchy of councils. Figure 1 is extracted from an organizational chart drafted by the NLA for use in clarifying extraorganizational and intraorganizational relations; it shows the Planning Council of the NLA with two subsidiary Boards, one governing the LTC and the other FSK.[12] The NLA, in turn, is accountable to the DCC of the AIC, which, in turn, is under the Regional Church Council, which reports to the Central Church Council (**Baraza Kuu**) of the AIC Kenya. While each council elects its own officers and delegates to higher councils, members have no power vested in them as individuals.

Structural arrangements between and among organizations affect the cultures of those entities; in the case of the NLA, the **chama** was a major (if not the major) cultural

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[11] Individual governing officials installed by the British colonial government, such as provincial and district commissioners, district officers, chiefs, sub-chiefs and headmen were juxtaposed over and against the indigenous Kikuyu system of councils.

[12] FSK and the LTC were variously referred to as the two hands (**mikono**), children (**watoto**) and departments (**idara**) of the Planning Council.

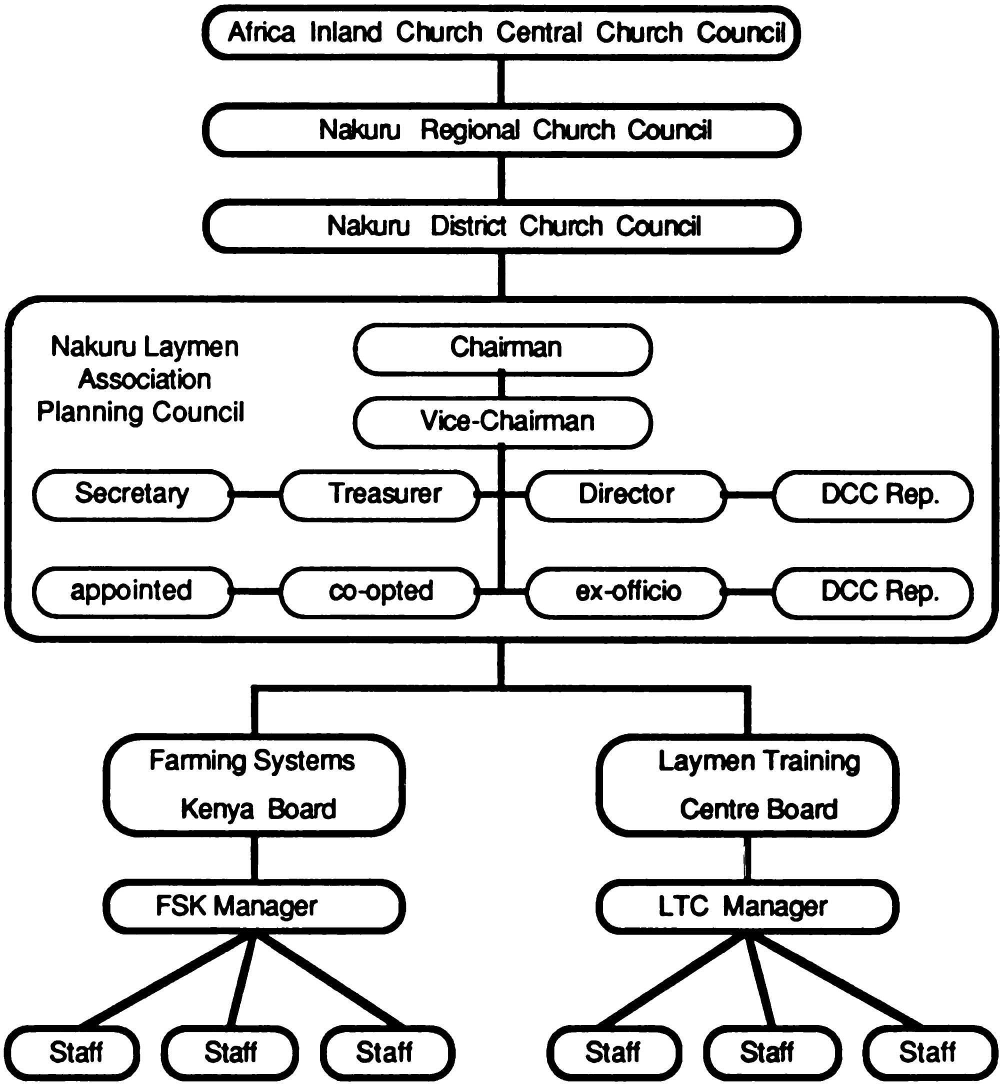

FIGURE 1

NLA DRAFT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

construct which shaped most other events in the organization. Each of the NLA's three boards or councils (**vyama**) required certain behaviors of its members; indeed these requirements or expectations were articulated frequently and exhibited at every meeting of each board. Above all, each **chama** commanded respect; members expected other members to honor their commitments--not to the other individuals, but to the group, to the **chama**. Respect for the council (**kuheshimu chama**), then, was a major cultural theme pervading the domain of the **chama** itself.

In most cases, respect for a **chama** was demonstrated vis-à-vis a planned meeting of the council members. Of course, expected behaviors occurring outside of meetings were also subject to discussion, but were most frequently noted during meetings.

Meetings of a council or board were either 'regular' (**mkutano wa kawaida**) or 'special' (**mkutano maalum**). Although meetings of all three NLA councils were regularly scheduled on at least a monthly basis, what determined whether a particular meeting was regular or special was its agenda. Regular meetings required a review of minutes from previous meetings (often a lengthy process in itself), whereas special meetings could deal only with certain pre-determined agenda items and did not necessitate a review of previous minutes.

Both regular and special meetings were scheduled for particular dates, times and places. Advance notice and reminders were usually sent in writing to all members only when the meeting schedule deviated from the conventional norm of date or place, as happened, for example, when a public holiday fell on the usual meeting day, such as the first Monday of the month.

Planning Council and LTC Board meetings rarely began at the scheduled time.[13] It was not unusual for meetings to begin one hour after the agreed upon time, or, on occasion, two hours later. The reasons for such delays were perhaps circumstantial as much as cultural. When meetings were held in Nakuru Town, many members arrived on time; then, upon seeing that no one else or just a few others had arrived, they went off on short errands around town. As each would check back at the meeting site at different times, they would miss the others and go off again to do one more errand. Eventually some people would have to wait for other people. The researcher expected to find older people less willing to wait for younger people, as younger persons would be expected to wait out of respect for age; this was not entirely the case, however. It seemed that those men who were local businessmen tended to go about attending to their

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[13] The FSK Board had a standing rule that a meeting would automatically be postponed if a quorum had not arrived within ten minutes of the scheduled starting time. On the whole, this device worked well--that is, relatively few meetings were actually postponed due to tardiness.

affairs and wait to be telephoned or sent for before they finally came to stay. Board members who lived and worked outside of town also had errands to do, but once these were finished, tended to congregate for the start of the meeting. One middle-aged member regularly came at or near the scheduled starting time and waited for the others; his stated personal convictions were simply that he believed it was wrong to keep others waiting.

Studies in African culture have noted differences between Western orientations to chronological time and punctuality in particular and the typically African orientation to successions of events (Akiiki 1980). Thus, in Africa an event starts when people get there, not necessarily at a predetermined time. In the urban setting of Nakuru Town, however, Western influences with respect to attitudes toward time and punctuality were evident and prevalent. When public events such as fund-raising meetings or weddings were announced, the starting time was often clearly indicated to be either Western time (**saa ya kizungu**) or African time (**saa ya kiafrika**), sometimes called "sun time." In church circles, an ever lively topic of conversation was whether being late for an appointment or meeting was a sin (**dhambi**) or merely showed a lack of manners (**kosa, kukosa adabu**). The NLA members also exhibited a certain ambiguity in their orientation toward meeting times. All of the NLA Planning Council members owned and wore wrist watches. At NLA meetings, complaints about others being late were repeatedly--and forcefully--voiced. Yet the late starts continued and were tolerated.

Once members began to gather, a decision had to be reached whether a 'quorum' existed. Meetings could be convened without a quorum, but no official decisions could be made; the preferred choice was to postpone (**kuahirisha**) the meeting, (sometimes referred to as "breaking" [**kuvunja**] the **chama**). Either the chairman or vice-chairman was always present to make the decision. What constituted a quorum differed in different people's minds. The question once came under discussion late in the researcher's sojourn period; general consensus had it that a quorum is one more than half of the official members of a council. This definition was not rigorously applied, however, especially because certain ex-officio members came very infrequently. At other times, new ex-officio members had not yet been appointed, yet some members believed the old ones should still be included in the total. Despite this lack of unanimity, there was never any argument about whether the members present for a given meeting did or did not constitute a quorum; again, the desision of the chairman or vice-chairman was accepted by all.

<u>Order of business</u>. Meetings were always opened and closed with a spontaneous prayer spoken by one of the members as called upon by the chairman or acting chair.

First order of business was always to read and amend the minutes of the previous regular meeting and/or any special meetings held since the last regular meeting. Minutes were recorded in longhand by the recording secretary in a 'minute book.' Members repeatedly requested that these be typed and distributed prior to the coming meeting, but this was actually done less than half the time. Minutes were corrected not infrequently, and the acting chair signed his approval in the minute book at that point in the meeting.

The next order of business in regular meetings was invariably 'matters arising' from the minutes (**mambo kutokana na muhtasari, yaliyotokea kwa muhtasari**). In practice, these tended to be the focus of the entire meeting, because members generally had something more to say about nearly everything. Often specific agenda items were carried repeatedly in the minutes from meeting to meeting, so that current discussion was a rehash of a rehash with no action being taken; other than completed events, no decision was ever really final--no discussion was permanently closed. On several occasions, members recommended that each minute be assigned to an individual to follow up, so that in subsequent meetings he or she could simply bring a report on new developments. This suggestion for 'streamlining' meetings, which recognized a dysfunction in the group's ability to progress, was never implemented.

New agenda items, although often mentioned briefly at the outset of a meeting, were left for discussion until well into the meeting. Occasionally at the start of a meeting, the chairman would set a time by which the meeting should be concluded, depending on various members' schedules or an impending lunch hour[14] (which signalled the closing of banks and shops--and a corresponding restriction on getting more errands done). Invariably consideration of new business would begin just before the expected end of the meeting; the meeting would be extended for the sake of discussion, but everyone felt pressured to conclude matters and adjourn. The net effect of these circumstances and meeting patterns, in the researcher's opinion, was to reinforce the NLA's essentially reactive management style.

This conclusion is supported in several other ways and led the researcher to identify the NLA's reactive situation management as a major cultural domain (described below, pp. 105ff.). The times when the chairman or secretary came to a regular meeting with a list of new items for discussion, though not rare or uncommon, were not the rule. When new agenda items were identified, they were usually of a reactive (and sometimes crisis) nature--events which had transpired since the last meeting which required a response from the NLA. Articulation of the Laymen's vision and goals

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[14] Observed as a standard rule by shopkeepers and offices from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

for the future was rare, even when discussing the rationale for projects at hand. Even the agenda at special meetings were matters requiring reaction from the NLA. Forward-looking proposals arose out of needs to remedy existing problems (or meet a limited financial need), rather than to take a bold step into the future.

Respecting the council. A salient theme in the organizational culture of the NLA was evidenced particularly in meetings: showing respect for or honoring the council (**kuheshimu chama**). Ways in which respect for the council and, in turn, the council's officers, was shown abounded. For example, decorum in meetings was preserved by adherence to unwritten rules such as:

- respect the chair[15] to open and close the meeting;
- respect the chair to open and close discussion;
- respect the chair to give the floor;
- respect the chair to rule remarks extraneous;
- respect the chair by asking permission to leave the room;
- respect other members' right to state their opinions; and
- respect the council's decisions and abide by them.

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[15] Or acting chair. All indications were that respect was accorded to the position rather than merely the person holding the position: on two occasions when the chairman left the room, the vice-chairman physically occupied the seat vacated by the chairman. Once, when the chairman, vice-chairman, and recording secretary were all temporarily out of the room, the researcher was appointed acting chair--and was accorded respect correspondingly.

Other behaviors also evidenced respect for the council. Members were expected to send an apology for a planned absence (in writing or orally via another member); members who failed to do so could be listed in the minutes as 'absent without apology' (**wasioomba msamaha**). Council members could invite guests to meetings, but they had to abide by the decisions of the council (especially the chair) for welcoming and excusing the guests. (In other words, non-members had to respect the fact that the council was neither open to the public nor even to the NLA general membership.)

Members were also expected to refrain from waging a private 'campaign' among other council members outside the meeting in an effort to influence decisions made in the meeting. Several informants admitted such campaigns are becoming more accepted, but still disapprove of them. Canvassing others or using others as a sounding board for one's own untested ideas was allowable, even recommended, by all informants queried on the matter. Members should especially not campaign for their ideas among outsiders, (i.e., nonmembers). One informant labeled this a form of accusing (**kushtaki**) the council which undermined (**kulegeza**) the 'integrity' of and respect (**heshima**) for the council. The chairman also demonstrated respect for the council when he informed other members of executive decisions which had to be made in their absence.

Another unwritten rule of the council pertained to the sharing of information among council members. In one particular case, a long letter from a Westerner pertaining to a disagreement between two parties within the Planning Council was sent to NLA officers with a copy to the other party concerned. The officers were obviously reluctant to deal with the matter and found subtle ways to keep the Council from hearing the letter in its entirety and discussing it. The concerned member kept pressing to have the letter read (aloud) in its entirety[16] on the grounds that all other correspondence was always presented to members in full[17] so that all council members could discuss the matter in an informed manner. A similar treatment was given to a recorded audio message sent by a Westerner, until finally the taped letter was played. The implication of these incidents is that no individual on a council can rightly deprive another council member of available information; officers--out of respect for the council--must not infringe on the prerogative of the council to render fully informed decisions.

The council also had the power to restrict non-members' access to privy information. Once, during an interview with

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[16] And finally prevailed--nearly one year after the letter was originally received.

[17] Council members were free at any time to read any correspondence received by the NLA, kept separately in a 'correspondence file.' Still, the proper treatment of the matter was to have the letter read aloud during a meeting.

an employee of the NLA, members began discussing the financial straits of the organization. After the employee left, the chairman reproved the members for discussing what was obviously a sensitive issue in front of a nonmember. Even the Manager of the NLA Polytechnic was excluded from a discussion of his own job description after he was hired.

Intercouncil Protocol

A significant finding of the research study was the identification and explication of a major cultural domain: namely, the observation of 'protocol' and following of 'channels' in extracouncil and intercouncil relations. Communication between a council and an outside party or council (including any subsidiary council [board] or committee) took the form of sending or receiving either agenda or human representatives. In short, agenda must be sent or received in proper order through proper channels. In general, when communicating with other entities in a hierarchical organization (such as the AIC), messages are sent properly either to an immediate superior or immediate subordinate individual or body; dealing directly between counterparts in parallel organizations or with parties removed by more than one level in the hierarchy bypasses (**kurukia**) and undermines the authority of (and hence respect for) intervening parties and is deemed inappropriate.

For example, the researcher was once asked by a subsidiary board of the NLA Planning Council to collaborate on a project with a counterpart in another subsidiary board. When the other party was contacted, however, he refused to be involved until the request came through the proper 'channels'--i.e., vertically from his superior, not laterally from a counterpart. When posed with a dilemma over what the proper course of action would be if they felt an NLA employee were committing gross errors in his job, several informants first replied with the question, "me as whom?" In other words, official position determines the steps one can choose and conditions the steps one does choose.

Informants also distinguished between official (**kichama**) concerns of the council and unofficial matters. Correspondence was held up if not addressed properly, using correct names and titles. In one case a letter of a personal nature from a Westerner was read to an entire council because it was addressed to the 'chairman,' and so was deemed to be official.[18] In another case, a church committee officially decided to ignore a letter because the sender had overstepped his authority in offering, on behalf of a superior body, thanks and congratulations for a job well done! Part of the rationale was that the inferior committee had not sent its official report of the activity for which it was responsible to the superior body and so, even though

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[18] Special note was made of the fact that this (typed) letter was not signed, as would have been expected in an official letter; still the matter was deemed a council affair.

the author of the letter was himself a participant in the activity, the superior body had no officially informed basis for its gratitude.

In another instance where a council did not have time to approve a report to send to its governing body, an informant remarked that it was better not to send a report at all than to send a report one was 'unsure of'--i.e., one that had not been officially approved. Another draft report had to be 'chewed and digested' before being released. Action on another NLA council matter was delayed because an official report of another committee's decisions had not been received; all the while, several members present knew (and had told the others present) what decisions the other committee had made. But the official report--either written minutes or a representative whose official duties gave him authority to speak on behalf of the other council--had not been received, so action was postponed.[19]

A most illuminating confirmation of the necessity of following organizational protocol came in one informant's statement of a rule during a general discussion of relations between the NLA and the DCC, its immediately superior governing body. From the discussion emerged several actions

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[19] In an organization with a hierarchy of boards (such as the AIC), it could take six to twelve months to send one agenda item from the bottom to the top and to receive an official report back. Also, higher boards only met quarterly or semi-annually, so if a delay occurred at any point, the whole process was extended.

that the NLA had taken which were perceived by the DCC to have been outside the NLA's sphere of authority. The oldest and most respected elder present analyzed the situation in the following manner, foreshadowing how the DCC would discipline the NLA for overstepping its bounds without the sanction of the DCC:

> "In the (AIC) Church, when you do something--no matter how small nor how good--without the permission (**ruhusa**) of the person in charge (**mwenye kuhusika**), that thing will become a stick (**fimbo**) with which you will be beaten; it is only a matter of time until he has opportunity to grab hold of it and use it against you."

Several observations on the above quotation are relevant to the discussion of protocol in inter-organizational and extra-organizational affairs. First, the term "person in charge" (also translatable as "the one concerned") is a technical term frequently heard in informal speech throughout Kenyan society to refer to the unique individual who officially has administrative authority in a particular matter. Second, the context indicated by the beating with a (walking) stick is quite probably that of parent/child relationship; thus, the purpose of the beating is to discipline and teach--in order to prevent recurrence of the wayward behavior. Third, the role of the superior (parent) official is to <u>wait</u> for the proper opportunity. The researcher, who also attended DCC and joint NLA-DCC meetings, observed that the DCC did not go out of its way to curtail what it perceived to be the NLA's usurpation of authority. Rather, the strategy was to wait until opportunity presented itself: when the NLA came to the DCC needing its help in other matters. Finally, the result of the beating (**pigo**), at least in the resolution of power struggles observed by the researcher, tended to be more punitive than rehabilitative. Even if something good admittedly had been done, it had to be stopped in order that respect for the higher council be preserved. It proved exceedingly difficult for the DCC merely to reconstruct or redirect the NLA's efforts which extended beyond acceptable limits.

In sum, then, the **chama** is an institution with powers greater than those of any individual member, yet which operates within finite boundaries or limits (**mipaka**). When a council relates to another council within the same hierarchy, the integrity and honor of each council must be observed and preserved through formal, official actions. Lateral communication between councils and their members is only informal. Transgression beyond prescribed boundaries is held in check and may be punished by a superior council when it has the opportunity, and generally not before.

Management of Events

The preceding sections were concerned with structural characteristics of the **chama**, but, needless to say, the **chama** also fulfilled specific functions. A major cultural domain emerging from the ethnography can be called event or situation management and pertains to the functioning of the **chama**. Structure and function do interact, yet in the case of the traditional Kikuyu **kĩama**, whose authority was wholly ascribed, not derived, and whose structural attributes largely determined the shape of functions performed, function is clearly a secondary, if not discrete, concern. This section and the next, on personnel management, describe what the various NLA councils did and how they did it.

Noncrisis orientation. It has already been intimated that the management style of the NLA Planning Council was reactive, not proactive. This is confirmed through a review of literature on value orientations to time (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck 1961:13-15), African concepts of time, and approaches to planning. Mbiti (1969) writes that African thought conceptualizes time only in terms of the past and present eras; a future event is meaningful only insofar as it is "immediate and certain that people have almost experienced it" (p. 28). He analyzes Kikuyu verb tenses in particular and notes that future tenses only cover a period of about six months and certainly less that two years in the future at most (p. 23). Only as a result of Western modernizing influences are Africans "discovering the future dimensions of time," and the transition is not a smooth one (p. 35).

With such a view of the future--that only events most imminent or needs most pressing are entertained--it is not surprising that leaders of the NLA would exhibit a reactive management style. This outlook has also been called a noncrisis orientation, in contradistinction to the more typically Western crisis or proactive outlook (Lingenfelter and Mayers 1986). The comparison is made, for example, between how Westerners prepare for a typhoon (by planned readiness for any contingency, careful monitoring, and swift reaction to earliest warnings) and how the Micronesian Yapese respond selectively only when they experience the first impacts of the storm (pp. 69-75). They were, in a sense, waiting for events to come to them. Also characteristic of a noncrisis orientation are: a downplaying of the possibility of a crisis, a focus on actual experience, a delaying of taking action, and seeking ad hoc solutions from multiple available options (ibid.).

Agenda. As the agenda of the traditional Kikuyu kĩama consisted of various cases (cira) or civil disputes brought to it, so the agenda of the NLA were largely of external origin rather than generated from within. Council meetings had, of course, standing agenda items such as the opening; reading, correcting and approving the minutes; matters arising; new business; date, time and place of next meeting; and closing. Notably absent from the list are reports from standing committees; these would have saved much repetition and given a greater sense of cohesiveness in the overall administration of the Laymen's major projects, namely the

LTC and FSK. Reports were occasionally requested, but they were rarely if ever written or prepared beforehand.

The manner in which new business items were placed on the agenda was almost entirely ad hoc. At any point in any discussion of any matter, any member was free to request that a particular topic or issue be put as a (future) agenda item (**weka ajenda**). Sometimes, in fact, those suggestions were followed up and placed on the agenda in future meetings. Frequently they simply were forgotten. It seemed a convenient way to recognize a matter was problematic and significant, but either too far afield to be dealt with at the moment or too controversial to be dealt with at all. The chairman and recording secretary usually kept track of such items and other pressing concerns and then formulated the agenda for each meeting separately, again on an ad hoc basis. Frequently, a short summary of new business agenda would be related to members while waiting for the meeting to begin, or just after the start of the meeting as if to say, "let's hurry through the minutes and matters arising, because we have such and such to deal with." All this was in the absence of a printed agenda.

Types of agenda which comprised the matters arising and new business are presented in Appendix I, "Types of Meeting Agenda." Items in the outline are divided according to source (of external or internal origin) and grouped by type of agenda. Categories in Appendix I are not discrete; for example, items relating to expatriates may also have involved reports or correspondence. Matters pertaining to the general membership are classed as an internal affair, yet could almost be considered external because the gap between the Planning Council members and nonmembers was so wide there were no other official transactions between the two groups. The categories then are merely analytic and presented for the sake of parsimony.

In general, when considering matters pertaining to external affairs, the Planning Council tended to show more concern for face-saving measures. On most in-house matters,[20] the Planning Council members spoke more freely among themselves without apparent attempts to calculate others' reactions. So prominent were concerns for presentation of the organization when dealing with external agencies, however, that this aspect of NLA organizational life is considered a distinct cultural domain and is discussed below under "Presentation of the Organization" (pp. 139-152). Also, matters pertaining to personnel (both national employees and expatriate volunteers) are discussed separately under "Management of Personnel" (pp. 125-139, below).

Decision-making style. As each agenda item was raised, the acting chair opened discussion on it. The goal of the

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[20] Apart from interpersonal conflicts and employee performance reviews.

discussion was to dispose of the case (agenda item) at hand so that the meeting could proceed. Agenda were disposed either by postponement (in cases where a decision did not need to be made immediately), report (when no action was required), or group decision. The decision making process most common in the NLA was what Olsson (1985:10) calls vocal assessment, where the chair assessed "opinion on the basis of the dynamics of vocal participation within the group." Voting took place only once in two and one-half years, although most informants responded to the dilemma on consensus (in Appendix G) by saying they would use a vote to resolve an impasse if necessary. Also uncommon was the more intense, corporate effort to resolve or fully incorporate conflicting points of view, described by Ogilvy (1977:125-126) as "an emotionally charged atmosphere in which all of one's sensitivities are tuned to the gradual uncovering of the group's will."

As for interaction patterns, respected (i.e., older) group opinion leaders tended to give their opinions later in the course of discussing any one matter; although their recommendations were not always adopted by the group, others were reluctant to oppose them directly, choosing instead to use circumlocutions or to wait for other speakers to intervene before stating their disagreement. Discussion, then, tended to be a cataloguing of ideas rather than a point-for-point interchange or debate--more of a patchwork of ideas than a multi-party conversation with a traceable thought line. If the chairman perceived that members were in sufficient agreement--no matter how loose the consensus--he could sum up (while still being open to further discussion) and/or simply proceed to the next item on the agenda.

Correspondence and reports. Much of the business of the NLA arose from written documents either received from other agencies or created by the NLA for other agencies. A separate 'correspondence file' (folder) of documents received was kept for each council, in addition to a 'minute book,' personnel files, and other NLA-generated documents.

One might have assumed that--similar to Kenyan society at large--most significant communication in the NLA was oral. However, in the NLA case, a good deal of oral communication had its genesis in written documents. All members of the NLA Planning Council could read Swahili and Kikuyu, and most could read English. Although the researcher and the Recording Secretary were the only members ever to take written notes during meetings, members repeatedly complained that they were not supplied with written copies of the minutes to read. When minutes were distributed, however, few members ever brought them to subsequent meetings--even to the meeting in which they were to be read and approved. Despite this, one senior elder remarked that "it is indeed written documents which lead the council" (**maandishi ndiyo yanayoongoza chama**).

Letters were almost always read to the entire council and their contents discussed by all present. Usually salient points of a response, if needed, were mentioned, and the Secretary[21] was left to reply or follow up the matter. In the case of one controversial letter, a subcommittee was appointed to discuss a response,[22] although the matter eventually wound up again in the full Planning Council.

Reports to external agencies were considered official documents that needed approval of the Planning Council before release. Usually when the Planning Council recognized the need to send a report to another body, it delegated the matter to the Secretary or, on a few occasions, to a subcommittee made up of representatives from the council(s) submitting the report. Members were free to mention items for specific inclusion in reports or to suggest ways to phrase certain matters deemed delicate, but they expected to see a written draft before it was officially released. Once a draft report was typed, duplicated, and presented to the council for review, it was always approved without change, though usually after some discussion.

Internal reports from one NLA council to another were strictly informal. Usually the FSK or LTC Managers presented their reports to their own Board orally,

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[21] I.e., an elected officer of the Planning Council, who may have enlisted the help of a clerk/typist.

[22] Clearly with the intention of avoiding controversy in the full Council.

sometimes using written notes or outlines to guide them. These Managers, considered employees,[23] never gave reports to the Planning Council; rather, the Chairmen of the subsidiary Boards represented them--both their Managers and their entire Boards, respectively--to the Planning Council. Reports from these representatives were requested and given only irregularly and never in writing.

Finances. Management of financial resources in any culture is closely tied to economic constraints, historical influences, social norms, and cultural values and beliefs about people, things, time and money. It would be impossible to identify accurately the influences of each of these components in the NLA's financial practices; nevertheless, some speculation may help provide a broader, cultural backdrop against which to understand specific actions.

Kenya's economy is primarily based on agriculture, and, although several of the founding NLA members were successful businessmen, all owned farms; at least three had farms over fifty acres. The NLA as an organization initiated an agricultural project in order to provide income for salaries and other operating costs. One cannot prove that the Kenyan agricultural economy was the context for their fiscal planning, but it is not unlikely. A revealing metaphor for (the potential for) income generation of the NLA Polytechnic

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[23] As opposed to 'Directors,' a term reserved for elected members of the Planning Council. See also the footnote on p. 122 and the text on p. 127, below.

was voiced repeatedly: "the school is a cow, not a bull--it will give milk (i.e., profit); even if it's a Boran,[24] it will still produce a little milk."

The Kikuyu are undoubtedly Kenya's most affluent ethnic group, a people who pride themselves on being modern. With modernization has come individualism and weakening social bonds to fellow Kikuyu outside the immediate and extended family. The NLA members recognized a growing gap between rich and poor in Kenya due to broad socio-economic changes. Their goals for promoting rural development primarily included job formation (through the LTC) and increased productivity for smallholders (through FSK).

"The Laymen have no money" (**Laymen hawana pesa**) was a frequent refrain uttered by Planning Council members especially on occasions when reviewing requests or expectations for help from individuals or groups outside the Laymen. Despite the fact that most of the Planning Council members belonged to the Kenyan middle class and had sizeable assets, no persuasive argument ever prevailed against "we (Laymen) have no money" when used, not infrequently, as an excuse for their inability to fund their own or other projects or as a rationale for seeking funds externally.

How did the NLA go about meeting its goals, especially those which involved major capital outlays? Forms of aid

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[24] A breed of cattle better suited to semiarid conditions and so yielding less milk.

(educational, technical, and/or financial) were largely top-down in nature, despite the Kenyan national commitment to a self-help philosophy (**harambee**). Various forms of patronage also are prevalent in Kenya, with local elites and politicians trying to endear themselves to their constituents and to be seen as a bringer of development (**maendeleo**)--largely a euphemism for capitally-funded projects of various types.[25] No doubt Westerners are also cast as potential patrons; one informant remarked that with the White man (**mzungu**) is the expectation that he will bring money. Perhaps the Laymen, too, saw themselves as patrons of the people they were trying to help--at least they wanted the (AIC) Church to be seen as a benefactor.

Not to be overlooked in this context are the close ties a number of the Laymen founders had with Christian missionaries;[26] NLA efforts to provide services (health care, vocational training) to rural people on one site may reflect a mission-station mentality. Certainly their vision was broad and ambitious. It is important to bear in mind this broader view--not only of significant socio-cultural influences on the Laymen but also their overall goals--when considering micromangement of money and needs for financing.

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[25] But cf. Wallis (1978).

[26] At least two Planning Council members grew up on a mission station.

Income generation within the NLA was almost always tied to specific needs and so fits the general pattern of reactive planning. However, perhaps in this area as in no other, a deliberate attempt was made to formulate an overall strategy. At least ten different alternative fund-raising schemes were itemized[27] and evaluated; some were discarded immediately, but others were adopted as part of a loosely coordinated plan. Follow-through was generally weak, and, in two years' time, only one of the ten ideas had been implemented, although several others were still being pursued. Cash flow problems were always severe. Frequently members of the Planning Council were assessed on the spot a small sum, usually 100 shillings (roughly six U.S. dollars) or less, for immediate needs; naturally, some concern arose as to the disincentive this practice posed for attendance at meetings.

Membership in the NLA was kept current through annual dues. Most people who had joined the Laymen at one point in time or another--except for a core of about a dozen persons, including Planning Council members--were not current in the

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[27] These included solicitation of donations from NLA members; eliciting pledges for donations from members; a mini-**harambee** (public fund-raising meeting); Polytechnic workshop contracts; holding a donor-sponsored walk; selling shares in the Polytechnic; holding a raffle; showing films in rural churches and charging admission; soliciting donations for particular tools and materials for the Polytechnic; solicitation of Nakuru businessmen, civic groups and the general public. Funding proposals for specific projects were also sent to potential donors on occasion.

payment of annual dues. More than once this gave rise to discussion about how to 'reactivate' (and "to awaken," **kuamusha**) the membership. Sending letters and reminders proved fruitless; attempts by core members to visit inactive members were equally in vain. Despite repeated appeals by the researcher and one or two others to try to involve inactive members in NLA activities in a meaningful way and so to offer them something in return for their dues, little interest was shown in such qualitative participation.

The only effective means of income generation that the NLA tried was submitting funding proposals to international development agencies. Of six to ten proposals generated in the past ten years, two resulted in major grants, both for funding of the FSK program. Actual writing of proposals was left to younger NLA members and employees who had studied at universities in the West, sometimes aided by expatriate volunteers. A few of the proposals were initiated by these younger, educated Kenyans, but the elders understood the usefulness of formal proposals and at times identified the need for them. During the researcher's sojourn, the Planning Council clarified a previously ambiguous policy and stipulated that all subsequent proposals (even for FSK or the LTC) must be approved by the Planning Council prior to submission to donors.

The approval of such proposals was no easier a process than any other decision made by the Planning Council.

Obviously, fulfillment of the terms of a proposal entailed numerous commitments in personnel, time, and resources. The Laymen were reticent, however, to commit themselves on a contingency basis in such matters.[28] When the proposal authors, usually an appointed subcommittee made up of younger Kenyans and expatriates, tried to get consensus on specific details of a plan, such as those concerning capital outlays or sequencing of project phases, the elder Planning Council members seemed unwilling to take time to discuss such commitments and their implications at length. One remarked once that "we should go ahead (and submit the proposal), but if we see later it won't work, we won't accept the money."

In another case, a proposal was written and submitted with full realization that the proposed schedule of work was impossible; it was assumed from the outset that only part of the project proposed could be completed and that a revised proposal would be necessary to secure additional funding. Apparently a proposal was not viewed as binding in any but the grossest terms; it simply was another attempt to meet an immediate need. Whatever part a proposal played in long-range planning, it was open to revision in the future.

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[28] When FSK Board members questioned why grant money had to be kept in an interest-free bank account under the terms of a donor contract, one informant responded that the Laymen did not want to be 'enslaved' by donors.

When reflecting on proposals that had been brought to them in the past by Westerners for joint ventures, one informant said the partner "really went fast; I told him we go slow." He went on to express the fear that something was being pushed on them without their having time to think through all the implications. Another fear, based on the recognition that sometimes projects do have to be altered on site in the middle of the implementation phase, was that the Western partners would come to inspect the project and raise embarrassing questions about what had been done. Historically, the NLA had embarked upon at least one major project, funded initially from external sources, which failed quite visibly; undoubtedly their reluctance to move quickly on other project proposals stemmed in part from fear of embarrassment due to failure.

The religious faith of the NLA members also kept them hoping for breakthroughs in funding, perhaps especially so in times of severe financial straits (as occurred, for example, when the Polytechnic was threatened with closure). Some members felt, however, that waiting for a godsend in the form of grant money from the Government or a private agency was foolish and realistically saw that chances for outside funding were slim.

Spending of funds by the Planning Council was directly dependent on income generation efforts: as soon as money came in, it was spent on the particular needs which prompted the search for funds to begin with. Although, according to the NLA Constitution (Appendix C), all disbursements were to be made by check, few ever were, because income was so closely related to needs it was pointless to deposit the money in the NLA's bank account. Receipts were issued for donations (which were sometimes recorded in meeting minutes) and payments, but no record of spending was kept. No budget was drawn up by the Planning Council during the two and one-half years the researcher was affiliated with the NLA.

It should be noted that the Laymen were familiar with Western accounting practices; several of them had their own accountants working for them in their businesses. FSK did have a full-time accountant who prepared periodic reports as required by a Western donor agency. The Planning Council and FSK and LTC Boards each had a separate treasurer, but, in the cases of the Planning Council and LTC, they performed no visible function. Bookkeeping at the Polytechnic was at one point handled by a student; even when the Manager took over, the bookkeeping functions, record keeping, and reporting were not carried out systematically.

Organizational development. A small but significant portion of agenda items in the NLA Planning Council meetings pertained to broad concerns for organizational development. Comments frequently were made which indicated recognition of a need or dysfunction in the organization itself, its processes, the functions of its members, or its policies.

Despite general agreement on the nature of the problems, however, few changes were actually implemented during the research observation period. One special meeting was held solely for the purpose of self-evaluation, but, despite the frankness and apparent good faith of all who attended, no recommendations for change were ever formulated.

The need for clarification of the lines of authority, channels of communication, and limitations (**mipaka**) of power arose retrospectively, in particular, after several employees overstepped the bounds of behavior acceptable to the Planning Council. Specifically, these actions included spending money without approval and representing the NLA without authority to outside agencies. The Planning Council requested its Secretary to draft an organizational chart (presented, in part, in Figure 1, "NLA Draft Organizational Chart," p. 90) and position descriptions for each Planning Council office holder. Comments made at the time indicated the need to 'coordinate' efforts, to re-think the organization's goals, and to promote unity. When the requested drafts were presented, they evoked much discussion, even of details such as where solid or broken lines should be placed. Still, no formal action was taken, and, later, when the chart again came under review, one member lamented in general that no one tried to implement anything. In actual fact, the discussions themselves probably did provide the needed clarifications, so ratification of the documents was no longer felt to be an immediate necessity.

Official policies of the NLA were, on occasion, seen to be in need of amendment. The NLA Constitution itself was out of date and technically rendered the NLA anachronistic, because the administrative district (i.e., Nakuru District) of the AIC under which the NLA Constitution had been ratified was subsequently divided; the NLA Constitution had never been amended to reflect the change. Other matters pertaining to Government requirements, legal documents, and legal liability arose and were handled when circumstances appeared to require it. Again, management of organizational policy tended to be reactive in nature.[29]

The organizational processes followed by the NLA were criticized openly as deficient by the Planning Council members. They blamed the lack of good 'administration' when the failure to type, duplicate, and distribute minutes in a timely manner was noted. The tendancy to review the minutes ad infinitum (**kurudia milele**) and not follow through on minuted decisions were cited not infrequently.[30] Members

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[29] A great sense of urgency prevailed when the FSK Board sought to clarify the legal status of FSK. The immediate threat which precipitated such concern was phrased in various ways: 'if we get into trouble,' 'if anything happens,' 'if the Government intervenes,' and 'before it's clarified by the court if anything goes wrong.'

[30] Complaints of vague and cursory minutes idiosyncratic to the Recording Secretary were frequent. Often when the minutes were read, someone who was actually present for the discussion had to amplify for others. Steps

lamented the lack of a budget and financial reports.

The lack of a full-time, paid Director[31] during the researcher's sojourn can at best only be a partial explanation for the Planning Council's inabilities to meet its own expectations for smooth functioning. Actions which subverted the authority of a council, such as removing a signatory's name from a bank account without his knowledge or individuals trying to change a council's decision after the fact, were denounced; clearly, such perceived dysfunctions go far beyond mere administrative deficiences.

Only on one occasion during the researcher's sojourn did evaluative material from an external source come under consideration by the Planning Council. A summer volunteer from the U.S. submitted a summative report with recommendations to the Laymen. The long document was read in its entirety. One officer exhorted all to take the suggestions seriously. Another member, who had worked closely with the volunteer, suggested a separate meeting be held so that he could give more emphasis to certain points. Another proposed

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for action on a matter were often summed up simply with "it should be followed up" (**ifuatiwe**).

[31] The term 'Director' was ambiguous as used by the NLA. One reference was to elected and/or founding members of the Planning Council (see below, p. 127, for further definition. Here, however, the term refers to a single individual hired to oversee and coordinate the efforts of FSK, the LTC, other future departments not yet created, and even the Planning Council itself. The first such Director resigned in December 1984; during the entire research observation period the position was vacant.

that Planning Council members should just read it privately and apply it individually. Finally, the Chairman said it would be discussed at a future meeting. However, neither the report nor its recommendations was ever mentioned again.

Criticism of other Planning Council members or employees was tolerated when deemed necessary and well-founded. One member was singled out for slacking off in his commitment (**ulegevu**) to the Laymen due to his other affairs (**shughuli**). It was recommended that two or three other members be sent to him officially (**kichama**) "to wake him up"; the delegates were never appointed, however.

One would not expect personal criticism to be voiced much less planned for in a face-preserving society; nevertheless, the NLA Planning Council members did recognize the need for evaluation and devoted one entire meeting to a group self-appraisal. In recognizing the validity of evaluation and the need for periodic review, several informants made comments such as:

> "just as you're bound to make mistakes in planning a wedding, so we're inevitably going to make mistakes (in our projects) because it's the first time we've ever done this";
>
> "we need to keep on evaluating ourselves to make sure we're on target"; and
>
> "we have to learn from our mistakes (**makosa**) lest we repeat them (**tusiyarudie**)."

One member remarked that 'the spirit of the Laymen' had disappeared and "we're just conducting so much business" (without making progress toward fulfilling the Laymen's original vision). When it was suggested that, because most members were burned out due to many years of uninterrupted voluntary service, they--or even the entire organization--should take a 'sabbatical rest,' the response was rather that all needed to intensify their efforts and enthusiasm (**kutia bidii na moto**).

A special meeting was called for the purpose of group self-review (**kujirudia**), and, as another put it, "to inspect each another (**kukaguana**)." At the opening of the meeting, the acting chairman announced "we've come to 'evaluate' ourselves," then set a tentative adjournment time only fifty minutes hence. The first activity was collectively to list 'points' to discuss; the topics identified included, in order: unity (**umoja**) of the Laymen, their financial pledges, their relationship with the AIC Church, their relationship with the general NLA membership, their offerings or gifts (**matoleo**),[32] and the departments (**idara**) of the NLA (that is, FSK and the LTC).

In the subsequent discussion, only the first item--unity--was addressed. Impediments to unity were identified, such as focus on tasks rather than relationships, cliques within the core group, and perceived disparities in wealth.

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[32] These do not appear to differ substantially from the item concerning pledges already mentioned; perhaps the aspect of generosity--above and beyond the obligatory--was being stressed.

The members concluded by agreeing to respect others more and to be more careful not to offend others; none of the other points on the agenda came under subsequent review.

In short, then, organizational development was frustrated by the same reactive, noncrisis approach to planning that thwarted other organizational efforts at administration, communication, and resource generation. Problems of organizational dysfunction were only dealt with when they could be neglected no longer. Treatment was superficial and incomplete, insuring that the same root problems would surface again later. So much energy went into maintaining the internal functions and cohesion of the organization that the impacts of external, organizational outputs were significantly diminished.

Management of Personnel

The NLA Planning Council managed its personnel and its organizational affairs in generally similar ways: matters arising in both domains were handled, by and large, on a reactive, case-by-case basis. While the domains thus overlap, they also merit separate consideration becuase of the human dimension of personnel management. Planning Council members had ongoing, contractual relations with their employees and exhibited a paternal stance toward both employees and volunteers as well. The distinction between the two domains is admittedly analytic; no indication was given that the two sets of concerns fell in separate categories in the informants' minds, and agenda items from both domains were addressed one after the other in the same meeting.

Recruitment. The NLA had no standard procedures for recruitment of employees. In one department, vacancies were published in a national newspaper, and board members interviewed and selected candidates to be hired. In another department, the board chairman acted independently of the board in recruiting and (recommending for) hiring a relative of a prominent church leader; no other candidates were considered for the position. Another employee was recruited through personal acquaintance; again, he was the sole candidate interviewed. Ethnicity did not seem to be a major consideration; the NLA hired three employees from minority ethnic groups during the research period.

Expatriates were rarely, if ever, recruited. Initiative almost invariably was taken by the Westerners who had heard of the NLA from one source or another. Once a request was made by the expatriate or an external agency for placement, the Planning Council considered its need and gave or refused permission. In the one case of which the researcher is aware in which volunteers were refused, the reason given was that the NLA could not manage their talents properly because they already had (too great) "a load (**mzigo**) of other people" (Westerners). On another occasion, an informant noted that it was not easy to 'absorb' Whites if the Laymen themselves were not united.

The NLA was able to request expatriate volunteers for specific jobs through the AIC national staffing board; the possibility of doing this, however, was raised only once, and because the need was not immediately felt, no action was taken. The NLA had experienced problems in the past with volunteers who came under their own sponsorship and so encouraged private individuals to affiliate with Africa Inland Mission before coming. (Additional findings about relations between the Laymen and expatriates may be found in Appendix J, "Informants' Views of Westerners.")

Role distinctions. Planning Council members made a conscious distinction between themselves, the 'Directors,' and employees (**wafanyakazi**). Directors were the elected members of the Planning Council, including officers, chosen by the general membership by election held at an annual general meeting. Appointed, ex-officio and co-opted members were not generally referred to as directors; hence the term denoted an historic and substantial interest in the NLA. It was possible for a director to be hired as an employee, but during the researcher's sojourn this did not occur.

Except for the managers of FSK and the LTC, employees did not attend board meetings unless invited for a particular reason. The two managers served as recording secretaries for their respective Boards; neither attended

Planning Council meetings. Terms of employment were set by the subsidiary boards which also had the power to hire and fire; in the case of hiring a department manager, however, the Planning Council was consulted in the one instance when this occurred.

Volunteers were considered in most cases as unpaid employees. During the research observation period, both expatriates and a Kenyan on leave from studies abroad served with the NLA as volunteers. Their job tasks were authorized by the relevant board, and they were supervised by the departmental manager.[33] The researcher was perhaps something of an exception to this rule, because he was accountable to the Nakuru DCC, the NLA's superior authority, and was assigned by the DCC to work with the NLA. He was treated much as other appointed members to the Planning Council. Any other status he held was only incidental to the functions he served, such as being assistant to the Recording Secretary. Only one other expatriate, who had had a long and substantial interest in the Laymen, was ever a member of the Planning Council; he was; although never elected to an office, probably considered by most to be one of the NLA's directors--indicating that degree of involvement was ultimately more significant than having an elected status on the Planning Council.

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[33] Gone are the days when expatriates worked autonomously, free from supervision by national leaders in the AIC Kenya.

Board members tended to view employees, including the two departmental managers, officially. Once, one board chairman noted that a report should be signed as coming from 'The Manager,' using the title rather than the incumbent's name. The cover term 'hats' (**kofia**) was used to distinguish among multiple roles assumed by the same person; one manager who filled several roles internal and external to the NLA frequently reminded board members which hat he was wearing when speaking at different points in the same meeting. When informants were presented with a hypothetical dilemma concerning the responsibilities of a board member toward an erring employee, a frequent reply was first to clarify the official relationship between the two parties.

Board members recognized their social responsibilities to their employees--and their own liability--even if they could not always pay salaries on time. The relation of father to child was a metaphor useful for responding to a variety of situations ranging from disciplinary action to staff development. For example, certain actions of a particular employee were seen as foolish and immature, but they were largely excused on the grounds of his youth: "if he were an elder (**mzee**), he would not have made those mistakes." When discussing 'staff development,'[34] board

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[34] Strangely, the term was used only to refer to various forms of remuneration; training and professional development did not come under consideration even when suggested.

members referred to parental duty--including giving employees incentives for saving their earnings. Board members also refrained from talking about their lack of finances in front of employees, since "a child gets scared if he hears his father has no money."

Task definition. The NLA did exercise control of its personnel through task specification; nevertheless, they did so with some difficulty and not without ambiguity. Need for a 'job description' for all employees and volunteers was unquestioned, though job descriptions (especially for short-term volunteers) were not always written down.

No set pattern for the creation of a person's job description prevailed. One departmental manager wrote job descriptions before the positions were filled, regardless of whether it was for an employee or volunteer. On several occasions, a subcommittee of the Planning Council was formed to write a job description. At least one volunteer sent his own tentative list of duties, which was then discussed before his arrival by the relevant board. On another occasion, a board member registered surprise over the suggestion that a person could write his own (tentative) job description, saying it should be approved (and presumably drafted) by the relevant council first.

Job descriptions could be altered, but were rarely amended through a formal board action; supervisor and employee simply came to a mutual understanding which may or may not have been recorded. For most job descriptions, the starting point was the work itself needing to be done, not the abilities of the employee. The job description of some volunteers, however, was altered in light of their experience and expressed interests.

Explicit specification of employee powers to spend money was recognized as important, and moreso after one worker incurred unauthorized debts. Board members realized that managers had to have executive authority to carry out board decisions which entailed disbursement of funds, but they also saw the need for predefined constraints. One such constraint was that at least one other board member had to sign all bank checks. Other constraints were placed in written job descriptions in the form of contingencies; for example, the employee could only spend a certain amount outside budgeted allowances without approval of his chairman.

Job descriptions for employees were drawn up almost immediately upon employment. With volunteers, however, there was no great hurry to put anything in writing. Perhaps this arose from a desire on the part of the Laymen to get to know expatriate volunteers before committing themselves officially.

Perhaps more significant than the who, when, and how of formulating a job description was why job descriptions seemed so problematic for the Laymen. Certainly the board members themselves, with possibly one or two exceptions, were unaccustomed to writing detailed and potentially complex documents. One former employee--held in high regard by the Laymen--reported that board members were offended when he asked for a job description; he perceived a sense of threat on their part, as if he might 'sue'[35] them over any unmet conditions of his employment. In another case, a board member stated that a job description is "our shield (**ngao**)" (protection) from future redress by the employee.[36] These concerns highlight the importance of mutual trust for the Laymen in their employer-employee relationships, particularly for employees at the managerial level or above; conversely, if such delicate negotiations of role expectations--whether articulated formally or informally--failed, fear and distrust would prevail in at least some members' minds throughout the term of employment.

Other identifiable tasks were expected of employees and volunteers, though not specified in writing. The

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[35] It was not clear from the context whether the informant was referring to a legal suit or simply an interpersonal conflict.

[36] A job description for a paid employee was accompanied by an official 'Letter of Appointment' outlining the contractual terms of employment; both documents were signed by the employee and a representative of the board. Furthermore, discussions about hiring and firing took place on occasion with explicit reference to the Ministry of Labour and the legal liability of the NLA in the event of a dispute. A remark heard on another occasion to the effect that employment records must be extremely accurate "since we may need them even four years from now," underscores the perceived tenuousness of such agreements.

departmental manager was free at any time to give employees special duties not explicitly stated in their job descriptions. Employees were expected to fulfill these functions such as running errands or delivering messages to other parties. Standard office procedures (e.g., for use of vehicles or office equipment) were set and to be followed. Each manager had an office, and employees were expected to respect the managers' desires for privacy.

Planning Council members, perhaps because of their paternal mode of relating to employees, had the implicit understanding that workers and volunteers would be loyal to the NLA in all their dealings. This expectation was evidenced when an incident involving two employee's perceived disloyalty arose. The two used NLA facilities to earn money to repay a loan made to the NLA by a former manager. When it surfaced that receipts with an official NLA stamp were being issued but that payment was being made directly to the third party, the two were accused of undermining the success of their department. When questioning the two employees, the board chairman used, in the form of a question, this analogy:

> "Suppose I brought my cows to graze on your land (**shamba**), but you never saw any of the milk; then later I came to you and asked you to pay the salary of my shepherd (**mchungaji**)--what would you say?"

This extended metaphor, the logic of which seemed irrefutable at the time, proved to be a powerful example of the social construction of reality which largely determined the course of subsequent events.

Another expectation implicit in terms of employment and job responsibilities concerned terminal duties. Upon completion of one's services, it was expected that the worker 'hand over' any files, keys, properties or accounts held in possession as part of his or her employment with the NLA.[37] Expatriate volunteers were especially blamed for leaving 'loose ends' after they leave. As one informant explained, 'some of us are slow thinkers, so you (Westerners) don't run ahead of us (without involving us in the process as you go along): then things fall apart when you leave.' Such 'handing over' is viewed as an official act and should be planned together with the departing employee's immediate supervisor, not independently with a successor.

Demonstrating in an even broader sense a desire for closure, one Planning Council officer was prevented for over a year from resigning his post because his job was viewed as unfinished. As another member explained, "a boy cannot resign from tending his father's goats while they are still in the woods (**msituni**)--first he has to get them back home safely; only then he can resign."

Supervision. The cover term used for oversight of personnel was **kusimamia**. The primary meaning of **kusimamia** is

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[37] Similar expectations were held for those leaving employment in the Nakuru DCC of the AIC.

to stand over, and hence to watch over, the activities of subordinates. Day to day supervision of the NLA's employees was left entirely to the managers of the two departments. Even the board chairmen refrained from getting involved in matters pertaining to employees unless called upon to do so by their manager. The only personnel cases in which an entire board was involved were matters pertaining to hiring, remuneration, discipline, and firing.

Any discussion of the management styles of the two managers would risk reporting what was merely idiosyncratic to the individuals. However, both did view their roles in hierarchical terms; they reported to their respective boards, and their employees reported to them and were under their authority. They expected employees to support them by implementing their decisions, and they realized that lack of such support had a direct impact on service to their clientele.

One employee reported to the researcher that the manager 'jumped on' the employee when the latter made an attempt to hasten the manager to take a particular action. This and several similar incidents raise the question of whether subordinates are free to offer suggestions to their superiors, and if so, to what extent. Cross-cultural research on power distance[38] and other cultural aspects of

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[38] Hofstede (1980:72) defines power distance as "the difference between the extent to which (a boss) can determine the behavior of (a subordinate) and the extent to

management indicates that subordinates may be less free to approach their superiors on some matters in other African contexts[39] than in the U.S. and some European nations (Hofstede 1980); the present study had insufficient data to confirm high power distance in the NLA setting.

A second meaning implicit in **kusimamia** is "to stand up for"[40] another. The NLA's managers, then, stood up for their employees and represented them to their respective boards. This representative aspect of management was very much a characteristic of the NLA's hierarchical structure. The Polytechnic manager brought requests from his staff and students to the LTC Board for consideration; he then represented the Board when relaying the Board's decisions back to students and employees. In effect, then, the supervisors (managers) were mediators who diffused the threat of face-to-face encounters between a board and its employees. Similarly, the board chairmen represented their board members to the Planning Council.[41]

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which (a subordinate) can determine the behavior of (a boss)."

[39] The only African country for which Hofstede cites data on power distance is South Africa.

[40] Or "to stand in place of." **Kuakilisha** ("to represent") was also used in these contexts.

[41] Worth noting is the function such representation plays in an economy of face: subordinates who were accused of mistakes while fulfilling the directives of a supervisor or their board were saved from personal disgrace because it is the supervisor or group (board) that was at fault.

Board members did discuss the expectations they had of managers, who functioned as recording secretaries at board meetings. One informant said that it is up to the manager to bring everything (especially anything controversial) to the board (**chama**); it is not up to the board continually to review his activities (**kumrudia**). If the manager has done something outside (the authority of) the board, he will fail (**ataanguka**). "The shield (**ngao**) of every person--the manager, the members, even the chairman--is the board (**chama**) itself." If the manager informs the board about a matter and they (the board members) keep quiet, they are responsible. Advice given to a new manager included admonitions "to hide himself" (**kujificha**) in the board and to work closely with his chairman, informing him of everything and involving the chairman as much as possible.

This view of management--by which managers discerned and executed their board's wishes with little authority vested in themselves[42]--was not without its problems. First, it made for frequent and lengthy board meetings at which every decision and action of a manager could potentially come under review. When board members were divided on a particular issue, managers had trouble knowing what action to implement. Even if the board attained some form of loose consensus, individual board members would approach the

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[42] The only executive authority managers had was that specifically granted to them in their job descriptions.

manager privately to discuss matters on their own personal agenda; a manager could quickly get himself into trouble by following one member's advice without referring the matter back to the entire board. Further, a board chairman could have heavy demands placed on his time if his manager consulted with him on every matter of potential importance. Finally, the managers themselves--particularly those with training in or exposure to Western management techniques--were frustrated with their own lack of power to execute anything other than board decisions, with the slow pace at which things moved through the hierarchy, and with the high risk of innovation.[43]

Discipline. Board members occasionally discussed cases in which disipline (i.e., behavior correction) of a supervisor or employee was required. Matters requiring discipline included alleged disloyalty, mishandling of money, and overstepping one's authority. Such matters were invariably introduced into discussion at meetings by a board member (usually other than the manager) and not presented beforehand in a list of agenda. Discussion usually began with a vague reference to the identity of the offending party and a few identifying particulars of the case.[44] When

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[43] Cf. also Moris (1976:416-419).

[44] If others present failed to attend to these initial remarks and/or were otherwise unfamiliar with such details of the case as may have been presented, it could prove quite difficult subsequently to guess with any certainty the identity of the offending party.

an employee was once criticized, discussion of what to do proceeded in hushed tones with oblique references to "the one who erred" (**aliyekosea**).[45] Steps to be taken to resolve a matter requiring discipline varied from a vague declaration that the party "should be seen" (**aonwe**--i.e., be talked to), to appointing delegates to go and confront the person, to summoning the employee to a future board meeting.[46] For most minor matters, no follow up report of action taken was given in subsequent meetings.

Presentation of the Organization

A final, major domain of the organizational culture of the NLA described in this report is the presentation of the organization itself. The domain is an analytic one, reflecting the researcher's observations of NLA actions and expressed concerns; in other words; the research informants themselves did not explicitly distinguish between activities characterized by a concern for appearance and other actions not so characterized. Nonetheless, particularly in inter-organizational relations, attempts to enhance the

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[45] A similar situation arose in a church committee where an offending party was present but was only referred to in the anonymous third person. When someone subsequently asked him a question directly about the matter, he vehemently challenged the questioner's right to single any one individual out for cross-examination; in other words, he had broken an unwritten rule that would have such criticism levied in a strictly impersonal way.

[46] In another incident which went beyond internal discipline, a board authorized its chairman to report several employees to the police.

organizational image of the NLA were noticeably evident if not dominant.

Before findings are presented, some discussion of relevant theory and terminology is in order. _Face_ has been defined as the social value a person claims for himself or herself by the line--the view of the situation and evaluation of participants--others assume he or she has taken (Goffman 1967:5-9). Similarly, in the case of a group of individuals, face can be thought of as the social value the group members claim for the group by the stance or position others assume the group has taken.

If a social transaction sustains an image of the group that its members have long taken for granted, they will probably have few feelings about the matter. If the face is better than expected, the group members feel good. If their expectations are not fulfilled, they will _lose face_ and feel bad or hurt. To _save face_ is to sustain an impression for others that face has not been lost (ibid.).

Through study of social encounters, some rules of behavior regarding face have been identified:

(1) Individuals are expected to act so as to maintain both their own and their group's face--in other words, they exhibit _self-respect_;

(2) People act so as to maintain the face of others according to some _standard of considerateness_. For example, they show deference--actions by which acceptance and respect are conveyed--to status superordinates, equals and subordinates through appropriate (but differing) salutations,

invitations, compliments and services (Goffman 1967:56-76);

(3) Social actors avoid face loss by avoiding contacts in which threats to their face are likely to occur (ibid.:15-18); and

(4) Embarrassing incidents are further prevented through the art of impression management, including the following group defense mechanisms:

 (a) Loyalty--avoidance of betrayal of group secrets whether from self-interest, principle, or lack of discretion, and discipline--exercise of self-control to suppress true feelings in order to support the expressive status quo established by the group's performance; and

 (b) Circumspection--preparation for contingencies or rehearsal of roles in order to exploit opportunities (idem 1959:208-228).

The foregoing summary of theoretical analyses of face and face saving serves as a conceptual framework for presentation of findings relevant to NLA face-saving measures.

NLA self-respect. That NLA members had a great deal of respect for the organization itself is evidenced most strongly by the sheer quantity of energies poured voluntarily into NLA maintenance and output functions. Their stated organizational purposes included assistance to the poor, increased productivity of small-scale farms, youth vocational training, and health care for families--all tasks which are socially acceptable and admired in present day Kenya. In addition, the NLA was legitimated by its parent body, the DCC of the AIC, which approved the NLA's official charter, its Constitution. The NLA published newsletters, distributed locally and abroad, which celebrated the group's members and their accomplishments. Clearly the Planning Council members adopted a line which commanded a great deal of respect not only from outsiders, including the NLA's detractors, but from its own members as well.

A set of activities which enhanced the Laymen's self-respect was the 'sponsorship' (**kudhamini**) of Kenyan students to attend universities abroad. The Laymen claimed to have assisted at least seven and possibly ten or more young people to pursue higher education overseas--an opportunity highly prized in Kenyan society at large. Although one prominent church leader could state that "if the Laymen have been injured (that is, if their reputation, or face, has suffered among church members in general) by anything--it's the matter of sending students overseas."[47] The Laymen were nonetheless proud of these efforts and at one point held a reunion party for several returned sponsorees. Another dimension to this practice was the popular assumption that such sponsorship involved huge monetary grants for tuition and airfares--a notion which the Laymen did little to

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[47] This was said presumably because the manner in which the students were selected was perceived to have been politicized.

dispel.[48] In actual fact, the NLA's assistance largely took the form of providing a needed guarantee of return airfare for sojourning students should they be unable to continue financing their own studies.

Respect for others' face. NLA Planning Council members recognized standards for giving face to superordinates, status equals and subordinates. Members realized the NLA was under the DCC and that they were officially accountable to their parent body. They endeavored to give reports and answer specific questions when asked by the DCC; periodic failures to give reports resulted more from lack of administration than from disrespect. On one occasion, when plans were being made for the Bishop of the AIC to come and view the NLA's projects, Planning Council members showed deference to the DCC by planning to emphasize to the Bishop that the Laymen's activities were in essence a work of the greater DCC.[49]

Similarly, the NLA corresponded through acceptable channels (see pp. 100-104 above) with other individuals and organizations in ways which showed respect for them. When a

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[48] Several of the sponsored students did hold public fund-raising meetings to help defray the financial burden away from their families.

[49] Even when the NLA Planning Council discussed how it could escape from the control of the Nakuru DCC and be placed under the Nakuru Regional Church Council--and so be able to establish branches of the NLA in the Region's two other districts--it was always understood that the only way to proceed was by petition to and through the Nakuru DCC.

donor group requested data on a project it had helped to fund, the NLA replied in a timely manner. When a Planning Council member's son died, other members responded jointly--a manner which conveyed group respect--in sending condolances; simply letting individuals respond on their own was inadequate. A wedding gift to an employee was jointly purchased, fulfilling a perceived social obligation on the part of the employer.

Planning Council members showed respect to employees in fulfilling other contractual obligations, including paying them on time. When payroll payments were late or other debts were incurred, it was recognized by all as a loss of face or shame (**aibu**) for the NLA. When employee discipline was required, Planning Council members used face-preserving measures, including the sending of intermediaries.

Avoidance behaviors. Not surprisingly, Planning Council members avoided controversial issues and matters which were potentially embarrassing to them. Several cases of post-ponement of delicate agenda or delegation of sensitive matters to subcommittees have already been reported (cf. pp. 99-100, 111 above). Also occurring during the research period was the protracted avoidance by the Planning Council of convening an 'annual general meeting' ('AGM'). Although the NLA Constitution stipulated that an AGM be held every year, none was held for twenty-six consecutive months of the research period, following the general meeting held in April 1985.[50]

What was the perceived threat to the NLA's image feared by Planning Council members in connection with an AGM? In 1984, an AGM was deemed a success by all, not least because it was attended by the President of Kenya and his entourage of local politicians and civil servants. It was a hard act to follow by any standard; an April 1985 AGM saw modest attendance even if judged by the NLA's own (out-dated) membership rolls. One member subsequently denied that the 1985 meeting was in fact an AGM, instead calling it merely a "day of prayer." A plan to invite the AIC Bishop to an AGM was aborted, since, as one informant put it, "we'd be ashamed if the Bishop were there and it (the meeting) failed."

Planning Council members had good grounds for fearing that few if any of the general members would come to an AGM. Membership had swelled above sixty when the Laymen were giving out cows as part of a development project in late 1983, but few members remained current in paying annual dues. One member queried "Do we really have members"[51] (who

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[50] In fact, a second general meeting was scheduled for 1985 in November: it was postponed for the entire nineteen months remaining in the research period.

[51] On two occasions when this question was raised, other members present drew a parallel to a famous incident in the history of Kenya's Parliament when an M.P. once asked "Is KANU (Kenya's national political party) alive?"--and was subsequently detained. In effect, the Planning Council

will come to a general meeting)? Others stressed at various points in time the need "to know" their members. Long discussions were held as to how to 're-activate' these members, which was largely a euphemism for how to get them to pay their back dues. Yet the one thing they did not want to do was to remind members of their outstanding dues (**madeni**--literally "debts"): that would be tantamount "to showing a cow the rope" (with which she was to be tied).

Another set of avoidance behaviors emerged from discussions about ownership of the youth training polytechnic founded by the NLA. Consideration was made over many months whether to involve members of the local community on the school's management committee or for the NLA to retain full control.[52] Eventually, the Planning Council realized that the DCC must be involved in the decision, and so, even though the NLA had not achieved complete consensus on its own, the matter was taken out of the Laymen's hands. Throughout the deliberations, however, one fear resurfaced many times: the loss of control by the NLA over the school, with a corresponding loss in the Laymen's (and the AIC's) image as benefactors to the

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member was asking, "Is the NLA alive?"--and was mildly censured for his remark.

[52] Although getting community participation was a prerequisite to receiving financial assistance from the Kenya Government, the central issue remained one of control--not funding, representation, nor even participation in development.

community. Leaders from both the NLA and from the DCC insisted that the Polytechnic should be known as an AIC school. They feared cooptation by local politicians who might try to use the school as a 'platform' from which to appeal to their constituency (cf. Wallis 1978). The avoidance behavior taken was a refusal to "turn the school over to" (**shule ipokezwe na**) the community lest the NLA--and the AIC--lose control over it. A parabolic metaphor of "the Arab and the camel" was cited which summed up their reluctance:

> An Arab set up his tent in order to get out of the rain. His camel asked if he could put his head in the tent to keep it from getting wet. When the Arab agreed and the camel had put his head in the tent, the camel then asked, in turn, to put his shoulder, his foot, and his back in the tent. In the end, the camel wound up in the tent and the Arab was left out in the rain.

(Note: It seemed to the researcher that the informants acted generally as if, for the sake of image, to keep on doing something started previously--if well intentioned and without obvious deleterious consequences--was better than stopping or doing nothing. The avoidance behavior observed in such instances is a reticence, once a posture has been assumed, to stop maintaining one's face. The NLA evidenced great reluctance to close its Polytechnic until circumstances forced its closure shortly after the researcher's sojourn period ended. One informant reflected on differences between African and Western avoidance behaviors when faced with the failure of a project or business concern:

> You Westerners see the end of something coming and plan for it. You lay off your employees abruptly well in advance--even giving them severence pay. We Africans hang on until the very end, until every shilling is spent, so that finally the owner owes the employees back pay and even the typewriters are attached [by the court]. Then immediately after a business fails, the manager or owner goes out, borrows a lot of money and buys a new car so he can drive around [and impress his friends]. He surely won't go to the market to sell vegetables.

The NLA members also, in general, avoided starting what could possibly fail. As one manager said, 'we don't do what we can't do well.' Postponement of the AGM was the prime example of this type of avoidance. Another instance of avoidance occurred when attempts to carry out an annual project [**kitendo cha mwaka**]--in past years, a volunteer effort to assist in church building construction--were eventually dropped because members perceived it could not go well. Other proposed projects were usually not started for lack of funds primarily, and possibly for fear of failure secondarily--although the two causes are related. These observations are stated, for lack of other supporting data, not as conclusions but for corroboration or refutation by future research.)

Group loyalty and discipline. Insistence on loyalty to the group--and the avoidance of betraying group secrets or weaknesses--is part of impression management. Within the

NLA, which in years prior to the research period had enjoyed a greater degree of group cohesiveness, the issue of loyalty in maintaining the group's image occasionally surfaced. When one member expressed privately to several Planning Council officers his opinion that the NLA Polytechnic should be closed to avoid piling up further debts, he was told by one of them not to repeat this suggestion to anyone lest others be discouraged. Later, when the LTC Board was planning for a meeting between the NLA and community leaders in order to engender local support for the school, it was decided that the school's debts and other liabilities should not be fully revealed until a smaller subcommittee of the joint group be formed. Another breach of loyalty was perceived to have occurred when a member sent to a third party a copy of a controversial letter written to the Planning Council. Other similar actions and statements which threatened to uncover the NLA's nakedness (**uchi**) to outsiders were dealt with firmly.

Circumspection. No less a part of maintaining one's face is careful attention to circumstances and planning for possible consequences for one's image. Although NLA Planning Council members could not control all the outcomes of events they planned, they were able to plan proactively their public relations. They developed specific plans for how to get the President of Kenya and the Bishop of the AIC to visit (on separate occasions) the LTC, and they prepared for 'points' (i.e., salient observations or concerns) to be presented to each of them. They suggested that specific individuals be assigned particular 'points' so that through such careful orchestration the maximum effect be achieved: the hearer would be impressed and lend his favor and support in the future.

Similarly, in cultivating relations with partner organizations abroad, the Planning Council recognized the need to respond in a timely manner ("to hit the nail while it's hot") to overtures made to it by their overseas counterparts "so that this desire (for partnership) does not cool in their hearts." Obviously having a good image abroad was understood to be requisite to getting financial assistance. One informant told the researcher[53] that a certain Planning Council member was very good at 'public relations,' especially at getting funds from overseas--for which he was admired by all; but that he was not above distorting the truth[54] about the NLA for the sake of maintaining a good image.

Circumspection entails calculating the effects of one's actions on one's image; yet such calculations do not always conform to a rationale readily discernible by cultural

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[53] And voluntarily gave the researcher permission to quote him.

[54] Phrases used included telling 'lies' and to 'swindle,' although the latter was clarified to exclude any allegation of fiscal impropriety.

outsiders. To a Westerner, a building which remains in an unfinished state for years on end signals a failure to plan carefully at the outset of a project--or the misappropriation of funds. The Laymen had one such structure, conspicuously incomplete for a period of more than six years, and the phenomenon was not uncommon in church building projects in general. When asked about this, two informants, who were also on building committees for their local churches, explained that after an initial fund-raising effort--usually an **harambee** meeting, leaders "need to show people what they have done with their money" (i.e., before they will give more). In other words, raising a building to the wall plate is designed to demonstrate good stewardship--and the need for people to give toward completion of the roof.

The Laymen also recognized another image problem they had and sought to manage it. On at least two occasions reference was made to a popular perception that the NLA was comprised of "two brothers and their relatives."[55] The threat to their image was real, as the Laymen would like to have appealed to a broad spectrum of lay people throughout the more-than-sixty local AIC congregations in Nakuru District. The context in which these discussions arose

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[55] In fact, three of the study's primary informants included a sister, brother, and brother-in-law. At least two more Planning Council members were related (albeit distantly) to each other and the three by marriage.

included plans for the AGM and, more specifically, elections. It was clearly the hope of Planning Council members that getting a good cross-section of the general membership to vote in elections, whether or not a significant turnover in leadership would result, would have as a consequence breaking the image of the Laymen as a fraternity.

Findings from Interviews of NLA Members

The third mode of inquiry employed in the research study at hand consisted of formal interviews with seven Kenyan informants. Only two questions were asked, but both focussed on improved intercultural cooperation in development activities, and both sought opinions of the African leaders themselves--not expatriates (cf. pp. 76-77, above and Appendix H, "Schedule for Formal Interviews of NLA Leaders"). Answers to the first question consisted of suggestions the NLA members had to Westerners for effective cross-cultural partnership. The second question gave the informants an opportunity to express opinions about how their organization could work better with expatriate volunteers. Data from the formal interviews consisted entirely of written notes taken during the interviews. Summaries of primary data gathered in response to the two questions are contained in Tables 3 and 4, respectively. A discussion of the responses to each of the two questions follows.

Suggestions for Westerners

Several themes dominated the responses to the first of the two questions (Table 3, "Informant Suggestions to Expatriate Development Workers"). Among these were the concerns that Westerners understand the history and structure of the organization they will be working with and recognize that the organization is still developing and maturing. They should know the place of the organization within its hierarchy and any organizational constraints that may apply (e.g., jurisdiction, finances, personnel). Also heavily emphasized were attitudinal recommendations: Westerners should be humble, adopting the stance of a learner; refrain from early or uninformed criticism; accept people; and be patient when they encounter frustrations, allowing time to solve problems. Specific behaviors cited included asking questions, involving people in one's work, seeking to transcend class differences, and clarifying the use of one's own funds (for organizational needs). No specific recommendations were made regarding technical competence or professional preparation, although this omission may simply have been due to the general nature of the question posed.

TABLE 3

INFORMANT SUGGESTIONS TO EXPATRIATE DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

(Note: the following suggestions for Western development assistance workers were given in response to Interview Question (1) [in Appendix H]. Several informants said that their comments applied not only to Westerners but also to any cultural outsider--African or otherwise--coming to work with the NLA.)

The Laymen are developing and growing in maturity; they are still loose--despite their good press.

Know the history of the group and how it evolved.

Know that the Laymen are under the church and seek to promote the desires of the church--not individuals. If one goes outside the aegis of the church, it will jump on you.

Previously articulated strategies are still being developed and refined.

Understand that the Laymen are limited in funds and financial resources; expect that they will not match Western standards. Westerners may be tempted to use their own funds, but the terms may not be understood by all: everything should be above the table and discussed. Don't think you can influence people with your money--you won't fool people. Accept African generosity.

Africans are not stupid--they have their own knowledge. Meet people as they are and accept them. Never look down on people or show any sign of pride. Don't pretend to be humble--it will always reveal itself.

Be a learner: observe, listen, and ask questions. Don't immediately point out shortcomings and areas where change is needed, or ask why things are the way they are (which communicates a lack of acceptance). Be a servant--don't impose your ideas. When giving opinions, communicate clearly that you are not correcting others' mistakes or being critical. Ask questions or make recommendations.

Understand the structure of the AIC--that its governing bodies operate as a council (**chama**): everything must be taken to the **chama**. The **chama** is made up of illiterates and degreed people; some will have no experience dealing with Whites, others will have much. Relations with the DCC are

Table 3 (cont'd.)

often problematic because of the frequent turnover in membership of the DCC.

Understand the group's objectives and the specific area of operations you will be working in.

You have to digest what comes, realizing that it takes time to solve problems.

Take time to learn who to talk to, to whom to go to get help.

Recognize class differences and perceived class differences which can hinder relationships. It's up to the (perceived) higher class to make the effort to come down. Try to cross over cultural barriers, yet without making a fool of yourself.

First understand our abilities--through dialogue; only then can you help push us toward our goals.

Work with people--not for them. Help them do for themselves. If you work for people, there will be a gap when you leave. Involve others in your work--don't do it alone. Burdens have to be shared.

Suggestions for African Leaders

The recommendations that informants would have made to their own leaders for better cooperation with Western volunteers (Table 4, "Informant Suggestions to Indigenous Development Planners") were neither as numerous nor as broad as those directed to Westerners. In sum, interviewees recognized a need for better overall planning of work responsibilities and how these fit in a total program plan. Writing job descriptions, keeping volunteers informed, and close supervision were all cited. A key recognition was the need for a designated liaison with Westerners who can

TABLE 4

INFORMANT SUGGESTIONS TO INDIGENOUS DEVELOPMENT PLANNERS

(Note: the following suggestions for leaders of organizations such as the NLA were given by informants in response to Interview Question (2) [in Appendix H].)

Have better planning, management and supervision: you need to have a comprehensive plan for the whole program.

Plan for how to use expatriates: write job descriptions for them. When they come, they can ask further about what they don't understand; job descriptions can be altered. Identify the specific area where and when the expatriate will be employed; keep them informed through the proper channels. You need to be keen to say no (don't come) when you don't need a volunteer.

Plan for an expatriate's housing needs relative to the individual's needs.

You need to have a full time director, liaison or coordinator who can implement board decisions relating to expatriates; the person should have power to make decisions, but within limits.

The group needs to have an effective leader.

The group needs to build unity.

speak for the African leadership group with authority. Such a person would have limited powers to implement board decisions requiring commitments of personnel. Also noted was the need for unity among organizational leaders--a reflection of a particular need felt to be hampering the NLA's efforts to work with cultural outsiders.

Integrative Summary

The findings from each of the three modes of inquiry presented above interrelate. Each of the three phases of the research study addressed different aspects of the same problem--each from a different frame of reference. What follows in this section is an attempt to place the major findings already reported above in a common context, to unify meanings uncovered in each of the modes of inquiry, and to provide in synoptic fashion (and at a higher level of abstration) a coherent description of dysfunctions in intercultural development assistance in the NLA case.

NLA Organizational Dynamics

The ethnographic description above presented a static, "snapshot" view of salient features in the organizational culture of the NLA as observed over a finite segment of time. Yet the organization itself is ongoing and dynamic, constantly interacting with its natural and social environment and being changed by it. Furthermore, the parts of the whole interact with each other and interconnect to form a complex, integrated organism. It is this complex, dynamic organization that has interacted with Western development agents over time in ways perceived by Westerners to be dysfunctional. Why has this been so? What observations from all the foregoing help explain the reasons for these dysfunctions? What clues does the NLA organizational culture hold for how Westerners and African leaders of rural community development can form synergistic partnerships?

To begin with, basic features of the NLA bear some reflection. The essential structure of the NLA is a hierarchy of councils (Figure 1, p. 90). Each council functions in ways strikingly similar to the traditional Kikuyu governing body, the **kĩama**: power resides in the group, not in individuals; agenda are brought to the council on a case-by-case basis; information is shared by all council members who participate jointly in decision-making; and council members decide each case on an ad hoc basis. The council commands the respect of all. In addition, in the NLA case, written records--especially minutes--guide the councils' activities.

Within the hierarchy of councils, jurisdiction prevails--and preserves order. Superordinate councils discipline subordinate councils for perceived transgressions of lines of authority. Relations among councils follow defined protocols which proceed through official channels and which exclude lateral communication between counterparts. Elected chairmen and hired managers manage staff activities in their official capacities as representatives of the council; they also represent concerns of the staff upward to the relevant council. An economy of face protects individuals from embarrassment due to personal mistakes: the council absorbs the blame. Relations between council members and employees are benevolent and paternal in nature.

Management by individuals and by councils is largely reactive: most agenda items originate either in external sources or in crises of the moment. Organizational leaders are able to conceptualize broad, far-reaching plans for the future, but--in a context where future availability of resources is uncertain--little energy is devoted to articulation and implementation of plans for any but the most pressing of needs. Organizational development is a concern, but--without immediately demonstrable benefits--it is set aside for other, more urgent matters.

The resolution of conflicts internal and external to the NLA consumes large amounts of members' energies--with the result that program outputs suffer. Nevertheless, maintaining the good image of the Laymen is an important goal to which members also devote forethought and effort. They avoid situations potentially embarrassing to the organization; they expect loyalty of themselves and their employees, and they discipline members who threaten to expose the group's nakedness; and they take positive steps to enhance their image at home and abroad.

The tension between image and substance is only one of several contradictions observed in NLA organizational culture. A focus on _tasks_ essential to the NLA's ongoing projects has to be balanced against concerns for _person_ and _position_. Members are event-oriented _and_ time-oriented. Western-influenced managers have to operate under the prevailing reactive management style of the council. And desires to get community participation in program delivery are carefully worked out to preserve NLA control and status as benefactor.

Intercultural Tensions

Even without the intervention of cultural outsiders, the Laymen operate in a delicately balanced social system. What happens when Westerners--operating on the basis of different assumptions and with only partial understanding of the NLA--present an agenda for joint effort with the Laymen? Several concerns, which can be stated in the form of questions, emerge: Who are the outsiders and what are their motives? Will they fit in with what the Laymen are doing? Will the benefits of associating with them outweigh the costs? _Not_ of immediate concern are job descriptions, housing arrangements, and management of ongoing relationships with the parties involved.

It is not difficult to understand these priorities, how they differ from Westerners', and why they contribute to perceived dysfunctions in intercultural contact. In the African cultural setting, what outsiders can do depends upon who they are and how they conduct themselves:

- Do they respect Africans and their ways of doing things? If not, they may be quite disruptive to the organization.
- Do they conduct themselves with dignity and command the respect of others? If not, they may be a liability to the image of the organization that its leaders are trying to maintain.
- Will they submit to the authority of a council and stay within the council's jurisdictional bounds? If not, they may produce a great flurry of activity the lasting effects of which will dissipate rapidly--for lack of relevance to the organizational context--upon their departure.

The Westerners value their time and money and want to be sure a sojourn will produce worthy, tangible results. The Africans may be reluctant to guarantee any such outcome for fear of (the embarrassment of) failure. They do, however, value highly sincere friendships with Whites--friendships not predicated upon an agenda or timetable. To Westerners, individuals who function in various roles within an organization are means to short-term ends; to people who live their whole lives in that unique social setting, those role bearers are power brokers whose disfavor they can ill afford to incur. Westerners want to be good stewards of their abilities; Africans steward their relationships to maintain social harmony and personal dignity. Westerners need to do something in order to be somebody; Africans express who they are in the things they do--and do not do. Although such differences may manifest themselves subtly, their implications are far-reaching and impacts far-felt.

Toward Resolution

The ideas that leaders of African organizations have for improving their relations with Westerners are an important step in the right direction. Better organizing, planning, communicating, staffing and managing--not necessarily according to Western patterns--will improve their capacity to work effectively with cultural outsiders. The fact remains that as long as Africans are hosts and Westerners their guests, the latter must accommodate themselves to their hosts' goals, patterns of organizing, and culture. The onus is on the visitors--who in some ways have invited themselves--to learn all they can about their host organization, its history and structure. Then, and only then, can the door to meaningful negotiations over terms of relationship be opened.

But is that the most one can hope for? Will synergistic forms of partnership result if one party accommodates itself to the other? The cross-cultural management consultants say no. They say (cf. Moran and Harris 1982) both parties must step outside themselves and seek to understand the other's frames of meaning. Expecting visitors to "fit in" is ethnocentric and puts a strong bias in favor of the status quo. Much of the potential for dynamic interaction, creativity, and program revitalization is lost when the best of ideas and talents of one group of people are subverted to what is assumed to be "the way things are (and must be) done around here." But more along these lines comes in Chapter Five.

Methodological Findings

In this the concluding section of Chapter Four, research methods employed in the study are discussed with several questions in mind: What special problems, if any, were encountered in the use of particular research methodologies? Did methodological problems significantly bias data gathered in the study? What lessons are relevant to other researchers who may wish to use the methodologies in field research in similar settings? The particular methodologies discussed below are participant observation, proverb analysis, and dilemma posing.

On Participant Observation

Problems encountered in use of a participant observation research strategy were minimal, and to a large extent, subjective; in other words, another researcher might have had fewer or more difficulties and perceived the problems differently. Nevertheless, several identifiable tensions felt during the participant observation period can be discussed.

Access. Of foremost consideration in ethnographic inquiry is the accessibility of data to the researcher. Gaining access to and gathering data on social phenomena are not value-free, apolitical, neutral activities. People operating within the sphere of an information-rich society or university in the West do not appreciate adequately social, political, and economic factors which govern the generation, transmission, use and storage of knowledge. Being in a particular social setting and observing public behaviors are not sufficient means to learning about that setting and knowing what meanings other actors assign to their activities. In rural Africa, there are some things which one can never know--simply because of who one is. Personal variables over which a researcher has no control--gender, race, country of origin, ethnicity, age, marital status--can severely limit his or her access to data.

In the study at hand, the researcher felt he had relative ease in entering the social setting and experienced no major impediments in establishing relationships. Nevertheless, the nature of the relationships he did establish was conditioned by who he was as perceived by his informants. Because the researcher wanted to observe the NLA Planning Council members and the ways its organizational culture exhibited itself in program planning, inter-organization relations, management and communication, he chose to align himself more closely with Planning Council members than with NLA technical staff and other employees. Perhaps if the researcher had been fifteen years older and had had four or five additional children he could have established and held closer personal relationships with most of the Planning Council members, in turn, giving him opportunity to interact more freely with them on a wider range of life issues.[56] On the other hand, had the researcher wanted to identify more closely with NLA employees, he probably should have been five years younger with no children, unmarried, or both.

It is difficult if not impossible to say what different data might have been accessed and how the findings would have been altered if the researcher's relationships with informants had been qualitatively different from what they were. Perhaps it would have been easier to ask questions of informants without fearing that the question itself would be interpreted as a critique of valued ideas or cherished practices. Possibly informants themselves would have discussed more freely their perceptions of the Laymen, their work and problems. Certainly data so gathered would

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[56] As it was, the researcher tended to be viewed as an **mzee kijana** (a junior elder), rather than a full-fledged **mzee** (a term denoting high esteem and generally reserved for middle-aged married men). That informants were conscious of how the researcher conducted himself publicly in this regard was reflected, for example, in one remark that "an <u>mzee</u> does not ride a bicycle" (i.e., in town--several Planning Council members admitted having and riding a bicycle on their rural farms). Still he was definitely called **<u>mũthuuri</u>** (Kikuyu for married man) and not **<u>mwanake</u>** (unmarried male youth).

have yielded richer and deeper insights into Kikuyu and NLA organizational culture. Yet the overall shape and substance of the organizational culture should not have differed from the description contained in this research report--given the level of access the researcher did enjoy, the quality of data gathered, and the consistency of the data analysis with further data gathering.

Relationship to informants. Recently anthropologists have given a growing amount of attention to explicating the ethnographic process (Agar 1980, Honigmann 1976, Spradley 1980, Whitehead and Conaway 1986). Others have noted the tensions felt in working with informants and treating them not as objects of research and sources of data, but as actors and principal subjects of their own social development. Tension enters in, however, both when the researcher is placed in the superior position of controller of the research and when the researcher must be dependent on his informants for the knowledge they can provide (Abbott 1982).

One tension experienced along these lines stemmed from what the researcher perceived to be paternalistic attitudes and officious conduct of informants--both Kenyan and expatriate--toward him. The researcher felt that requesting assistance of these individuals, asking for an interview, or at times asking simple questions would only reinforce their (perceived) condescending behavior. What was desired was a mutual relationship where the researcher also had opportunity to share his ideas and return material favors--in the interest of long-term, working relationships more consistent with the role of program participant and partner. It took choosing to be patient, accepting and humble in order to balance the researcher's own need to gather data--by depending on others, on the one hand, with his need to save his own face--by being autonomous of them, on the other hand. Such choices were not easy, and every researcher has to weigh a variety of factors in his or her own unique and complex setting.

Duration of observation. Expectations for the length of time needed to complete the ethnographic portion of the study were not met, for reasons cited above (pp. 79-80). Concerns of other ethnographers for immersion in the cultural setting for an optimum period of time (usually from twelve to eighteen months) are well taken: beyond that the researcher may either develop over-rapport with his informants (Miller 1969, Hyden 1974) or may not gain by a significant measure in gathering quality data (Hicks 1984).

In the study of the culture of a voluntary organization, however, perhaps a case should be made for gauging the field research observation period not in calendar months but in time units more relevant to the frequency of observational settings. For example, NLA board members met formally for perhaps an average of fourteen to eighteen hours per month; other observation periods (cf. pp. 60-61, above) might bring the total to around thirty hours per month. On what basis can this part-time participant observation[57] be compared to the full-time field research of an ethnographer making observations in a full range of social settings? Perhaps a tentative answer is that slightly more than one full organizational cycle (e.g., from elections to elections) is an optimal observation period for voluntary organizations, just as the annual cycle of life in a natural field setting is appropriately one year.

On Proverb Analysis

Use of a particular elicitation technique is sometimes appropriate in ethnographic work, especially for selected observations needed to confirm preliminary data analysis. Thus, it was felt that attending to the use of proverbs among Kikuyu informants could prove a fruitful tool for eliciting particular kinds of data. Unfortunately, this did not meet all expectations, and some tentative explanation may prove useful to others.

First, Kikuyu proverbs tend to be esoteric[58] and

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[57] Given that the culture of a voluntary organization is imbedded in a larger cultural context--which is also of observational concern.

[58] Kikuyu informants described expatriates who knew and could cite Kikuyu proverbs appropriately as knowing "deep" or "inner" (Swahili: **kindani**) Kikuyu. Further, many proverbs make reference to traditional rituals no longer in common practice.

require extreme facility in the language. Second, usage of proverbs themselves tended to be aphoristic: informants tended to use proverbs almost as punctuation marks--to support a conclusion previously stated in discourse and hence to close discussion on it. Most frequently they were pithy sayings which had no apparent, deeper meaning: for example, "he who looks for mistakes will find them"; "too many buffaloes do not make for good soup"; "it is the one sitting under the tree who knows what (i.e., whom!) the army ants are eating"; "when the truth stands up, falsehood stands its distance (**hujitenga**)"; and "don't look a gift horse in the mouth." Third, the use of proverbs may be idiosyncratic. In the NLA case, one informant used the vast majority of all proverbs recorded.

Finally, the line between what are proverbs, figures of speech and extended metaphors can be too tightly drawn. Published collections of Kikuyu proverbs (Barra 1960, Mathu 1976, Njũrũri 1969) focus exclusively on the more classic form of proverb. Yet the researcher noted that it was the more extended metaphors[58] which were pregnant with meaning. Good communicators in Africa speak pictorially, and one powerful figure of speech is worth more than a thousand words of rational discourse.

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[58] Cf. the citations on pp. 103, 113, 133, and 147, above, and Pondy (1983).

On Dilemma Posing

Another elicitation technique used in the study was the posing to informants of selectively constructed cultural dilemmas (cf. above, pp. 66-68, and Appendix G, "Dilemmas Posed to Informants"). On the whole, the data so obtained were quite helpful in meeting the need for corroboration of prior data analysis and in uncovering salient themes in NLA organizational culture. Yet use of the technique was not without its difficulties.

Construction of the dilemmas proved to be a formidable task. Once cultural domains had been tentatively identified, the researcher selected five domains most relevant to the previously identified theoretical interests; around these he sought to pose meaningful dilemmas having the potential for further data revelation and elucidation of cultural themes. The chief difficulty in doing this was hitting upon the right level of abstraction so that multiple answers were theoretically possible; all the while, the dilemmas had to be specific enough that they were plausible in the NLA context. While answers to the dilemmas showed a fair range of variety, most informants seemed to find most of the dilemmas facile: responses were usually quick and definitive.

Again, the impact that posing such dilemmas can have on the relation between researcher and informants must be stressed. The observations that Blunt (1983) makes on the use and limitations of structured interviews in Africa also pertain to directive techniques of data gathering:

> In Africa . . . often subjects are unaccustomed to the formality of the question and answer of a structured interview and are made to feel uncomfortable by it. Also, age differences between the interviewer and the subject may make it difficult to conduct a formal interview: older men in particular may resent being closely questioned by a young researcher. Better results are often achieved, therefore, when the subject is allowed to pass on his experiences to the interviewer--in much the same way as an elder might have dispensed advice or opinion in the traditional setting. In a sense, therefore, the unstructured interview inverts the status relationship of the structured interview and poses little or no threat to the self-esteem of the person being interviewed (p. 29).

Still, it is not at all clear how to raise a question, as in a formal interview, or how to pose a dilemma in order better to understand without also appearing to be questioning prudence or even authority. This is especially true in authoritative cultures characterized by high power distance (Hofstede 1980): to question is to challenge. Expatriates may be given an extra measure of tolerance, yet this can not and should not be taken for granted. The use of dilemma posing in high power distance contexts, then, is problematic. The researcher must be doubly sure of what he is communicating by his queries and must insure that the bridges of trust in the relationship are strong enough to bear the weight of potential miscommunications.

Summary

Significant findings presented in Chapter Four have included: a taxonomy of perceived dysfunctions in intercultural development assistance; striking parallels between the structure of the NLA's councils and the traditional Kikuyu *kĩama*; a strong emphasis on protocol in interorganizational relations; a reactive, noncrisis management style; an hierarchical and paternal style of personnel management; considerable circumspection concerning presentation of the organization; and suggestions both for Western and African agency personnel seeking more synergistic forms of cooperation.

Methodological findings suggest that: the duration of participant observation in studying voluntary associations be gauged to organizational life cycles--such as from election to election--rather than to a calendrical cycle; extended metaphors (as opposed, for example, merely to proverbs) be studied for cultural themes; and dilemma posing be considered a suitable technique for eliciting ethnographic data from informants.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The outcomes of the study described above are several. Specific dysfunctions perceived by Westerners lending intercultural development assistance have been documented. Salient points of the organizational culture of an African voluntary association as they relate to intercultural cooperation have been presented, and a synopsis of organizational life in an indigenous rural development agency has been given. Concrete suggestions made by African rural development planners to Western development assistance workers were gathered and presented above. Beyond these products of the research, however, a number of important conclusions with implications for practitioners and researchers may be drawn.

Conclusions

The research study confirmed the major assumptions which shaped the problem formulation and research design: namely that Western development agents do perceive dysfunctions in key areas of communication, personnel management, and development planning; that modes of planning and relating to other organizations indigenous to an African development organization are significantly different from those of Westerners and can be identified; and that leaders of an African organization who have had substantial contact with Westerners can suggest credible means by which intercultural cooperation can be enhanced. Further, participant observation--given researcher entry to relevant social settings--over an extended time period, coupled with interviews later in the sojourn, was shown to be a fruitful strategy for data gathering.

African development planners have different concerns than their Western agency counterparts. In the case study described in this report, the organizational leaders evidenced their concern for preserving the integrity of the group decision-making unit, the **chama**. They operated within a hierarchical context and so endeavored to maintain the given social order by following a definite inter-organizational protocol. They planned proactively how their organization was to present itself, and they sought to enhance their own role as a patron in their community. They acted paternally toward their employees and volunteer partners. Such concerns, while not unique to Africans, are clustered in a way that differs significantly from the relative priorities given to them by Western organizational leaders.

That the leaders of the African organization studied had specific recommendations to make to sojourning development workers from the West is a reminder to Western planners of intercultural development efforts that care needs to be taken to structure negotiations and plans for cooperation in ways which are sensitive to different cultural patterns of organizing. Western personnel should understand that their own priorities and concerns for efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, objectivity, proactive planning, demonstrable impact, equity, and/or structural transformation are culturally relevant and may not be shared or even appreciated by their planning partners. Synergistic intercultural cooperation is possible, but only when partner agencies are committed to understanding each other and adapting their own behaviors in appropriate ways (Moran and Harris 1982). These and other implications for practitioners are discussed below.

Implications

Because the ethnographic study contributes to understanding African rural development organizations, their modes of planning, patterns of interorganizational relations, and cultural bases, personnel in Western development agencies--including planners, administrators, field workers, and intercultural trainers--will find the recommendations below relevant. In addition, some aspects of the research may be of incidental interest to businessmen, management consultants, and diplomats.[60] It is further hoped that leaders of African rural development agencies--both public and private--will find the study valuable as a whole because it demonstrates the concern Westerners do have to work synergistically and the need Westerners have for mutual understanding and cooperation with their African partners. The Kenyan Government and governments of other African countries will also find the research findings relevant insofar as they view international development assistance to nongovernmental and private voluntary organizations to be important and beneficial to their own efforts to promote rural community development in their respective countries.

Policy-level implications. A first relevant point is that the articulation of perceived communication and management dysfunctions should alert Western and African agency personnel to specific potential pitfalls in planning and negotiating intercultural cooperation. And second, the ethnography should reveal to Western readers an

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[60] It is quite possible, for example, that the emphases observed in the NLA on following proper channels in interorganizational relations and on the official position of organizational actors are extant in Kenyan society at large, including the civil service and government. The President of Kenya, for example, when criticizing the manner in which the Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Africa conducted a disruptive visit to Kenya in January 1987, cited the failure to follow proper channels and stated that Kenya did not (officially) "recognise such a fellow because he did not represent the American administration" (Daily Nation, 23 January, 1987, p. 1)--as it did the U.S. Secretary of State, who had just completed an official state visit to Kenya.

organizational worldview which rests upon cultural values and assumptions different from their own: such description is an invitation not only to understand modes of planning and organizing indigenous to their African counterparts, but also to contrast those processes with their own and to anticipate proactively potential dysfunctions in intercultural relations.

Specifically, for example, correspondence with African agency personnel should go through proper channels, use official titles and forms of address based on the internal structure and hierarchy of the group, and avoid issues which may be controversial or divisive to the group. Expectations for task specification relevant to Western personnel, for dedicated use of project funds, for implementation of project plans and schedules, and for consensus in joint efforts may need to be examined and/or adjusted to suit terms agreeable to African personnel.

Deeper--and perhaps more troublesome--differences between Westerners and Africans must also be addressed. To what extent, for example, can the concern of a Western development agency for grass roots participation in project planning, implementation and evaluation--with attendant popular empowerment--be reconciled with local organizational leaders' concerns for maintaining control and their own status as patrons of the community?[61]

Alternatively, how can a view held by a national or international agency for long range planning for locally-led rural development be passed on to a local organization whose members have a predominantly reactive management style? To further complicate matters, local leaders may present a forward-looking image to outsiders in the hopes of securing financial aid; yet after money is transferred, organizational leaders revert to noncrisis approaches to problem solving--spending for imminently felt needs--only to come back seeking further aid later. Individual donor agencies may make a genuine attempt to avoid creating organizational dependency, yet lack access to historical and other data which would demonstrate a manifest pattern of dependency in a particular instance. Clearly, the formation of partnerships with voluntary rural development organizations must be undertaken with care and caution, clear communication of goals and intents, trust-building and mutual self-revelation, and flexibility in approach.

As all members of the partnership equation work toward the success of their joint venture, they must bear in mind that their collaboration is a joint activity. True synergy will be enhanced to the extent that both vision and

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[61] "Even when some international agencies appeal for local participation, there are always limits to what the rural people themselves can do about their destiny, aspirations and vision of development" (Salih 1986:83) and cf. Reilly (1987) and Ngau (1987).

ownership of the common effort are shared. This is difficult in a context where African leaders are seeking to assert their independent control in a post-colonial era and where governments are proprietary about national development. For example, under what circumstances can local agency leaders think globally and, in a spirit of interdependence, come to view a project's outcome as not exclusively their own? Western partners also have a stake in the total enterprise, yet they are not free to state their claim openly because of an adverse political climate. Genuine dialogue, beginning with a mutual sharing and shaping of a joint vision, must be established and maintained as a foundation for sustained partnership.

Implications for administrators. Going beyond the policy level, agency administrators need to plan appropriately for structural linkages between cooperating partners. Particular sensitivity must be shown for the organizational structure and hierarchy of the local voluntary association. Will linkages with a lower unit in the hierarchy cause disruptions between and among other units in the hierarchy? In the NLA case, for example, the DCC clearly viewed partnerships forged between the Laymen and outside agencies with suspicion, distrust and some jealousy.

Administration of sojourning Western personnel should also be carefully negotiated and structured: Which agencies are responsible for recruitment, placement, orientation and training, support, supervision and evaluation? And, more importantly, if breakdowns in administration occur once a project has begun or after expatriate volunteers are in place, which agency will cover for the other, and with what effects on the partnership?

It may be tempting for Western agency administrators to assume their African counterparts are so familiar with Western approaches to management that negotiating, planning, and administering a joint project will all go smoothly. Even comparative management researchers who subscribe to a convergence theory of cultures--the notion that as technology spreads and telecommunications link distant corners of the globe, differences between diverse cultures are diminishing--recognize that the most profound cultural differences will continue to exist especially among informal organizations (Adler et al. 1986:303). Westerners should not mistakenly assume simply that because their African counterparts exhibit modern or Western organizational behaviors, their organizational culture is also similar to the Western agency's culture.[62]

Implications for sojourners. Development assistance workers who attempt to work with voluntary rural development associations in Africa and trainers of such personnel will

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[62] Also, Smith (1987) advances the view that cultural adaptation is a major limiting factor on the pace of development change.

also find the study relevant in a number of ways. First, the perceived dysfunctions of the Westerners interviewed in the mini-case studies (Table 2, "Taxonomy of Dysfunctions in Intercultural Cooperation," above, p. 85) serve as a warning of the types of frustrations or problems which may be in store.

If at all possible, an advance reconnaissance visit is recommended, not only because it allows the sojourner to visualize the setting, but also because it gives African leaders a chance to meet the worker face to face, to get to know him or her, and to plan effective forms of partnership based on personal knowledge so gained. Unfortunately, when Western personnel do plan such an advance visit, it is often hurried and driven by concerns for orientation to the national culture, infrastructure and economy. Again, if possible, volunteers should stay in the locality for up to a full month, visiting in the homes of organizational leaders, attending social functions, listening to the concerns of members of the organization's clientele, and being introduced at an official meeting of the local partner agency. Special inquiry should be made into the organization's structure and hierarchy, with the volunteer identifying people in key leadership positions both in the partner agency and in other agencies in the organizational hierarchy. Such an informal visit has the added advantage that the outsider is viewed informally as a visitor--not formally as an affiliate or employee; thus, relations are eased, questions less threatening, and a common base of values, ideas, and experiences can be established on which to build a formal relationship in the future.

Before their departure for the field, cross-cultural development workers can prepare themselves for the possible frustrations of not having specified tasks to perform, of being treated as a child and hence not as respected or as listened to as other members of the culture, of not knowing how to discern group consensus, and of not having the level of supervision or job-related feedback they would desire. Westerners accustomed to low power distance[63] in supervisory relationships may have to prepare themselves for a different role as a subordinate in a high power distance context; a strategy of "strategic silence" is advised, whereby the volunteer, who has valid observations, realizes he or she is not the proper person to voice such concerns in that culture and chooses wisely and in accordance with an overall change strategy his or her audience, topics and occasions for speaking out.[64] Beyond these practical suggestions, the research methodology used itself points to an effective strategy both for learning how to function appropriately

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[63] See pp. 135-136, above.

[64] Other suggestions for attitudes and behaviors conducive to effective intercultural cooperation are listed in Table 3, "Informant Suggestions to Expatriate Development Workers," above, pp. 154-155.

within the organizational culture of the host group and for coping with frustrations caused by an inability to understand why people behave the way they do.

Implications for intercultural trainers. Trainers of cross-cultural workers must also take note of the findings reported above, particularly observing salient features of the organizational culture in the case described. It is not enough to orient volunteers to a national culture or even to prepare workers for the social conventions of a particular ethnic group. Overall effectiveness in a particular organizational setting is related not simply to one's language facility, technical competence and intercultural interpersonal skills, but also to one's ability to identify key structural variables in the host organization, to observe patterns of interaction and to adapt one's behaviors accordingly. For example, giving one's loyalties to subordinate leaders who are more like the Westerner (i.e., task-oriented and time-oriented, proactive thinkers and planners, fluent speakers of English or French, and innovative) may pose severe threats to older, less Western, but ultimately more powerful organizational leaders. Finding out who "the people in charge" (cf. p. 103, above) are, paying one's respects to them, and working under their auspices--no matter how difficult or slow-going--may well have more long-lasting and less disruptive impacts than following the conventional change agency tactic of aligning with early adopters and looking for a spread effect. Unless cross-cultural trainers have specific knowledge about their trainee's host organization, its structure and culture, basic training in ethnographic skills will almost certainly be necessary.

Implications for African leaders. African agency personnel were not identified as part of the audience to whom this report is addressed (above, pp. 56-57). They can, however, benefit in several ways from the study's findings, provided that their organizational culture permits them to adapt their organizational behavior proactively. This is not an unreasonable assumption, even if the organization's general approach to planning is of a non-crisis, reactive nature: the findings above show, for example, that the NLA was able to plan proactively especially when the perceived benefits of doing so directly support important organizational goals.

African leaders can mitigate some of the dysfunctions Western sojourners feel if they choose to. They can learn about themselves from cultural outsiders if their worldview is not a highly ethnocentric one. If and when African leaders plan for organizational development, they can recognize that sensitive foreigners can contribute meaningfully, and they can choose to involve them in the process. If long-range planning is seen as an important means to attaining other organizational goals, perhaps

Westerners can be asked to help facilitate the planning process. Of course, this does not mean that expatriates will take over these functions which must be integral to the organization's entire mission. Certain types of planning, such as project impact assessment, must have input from cultural insiders, but also can benefit greatly from collaborative efforts between nationals and expatriates.

Finally, African leaders can implement some of the suggestions given in Table 4, "Informant Suggestions to Indigenous Development Planners" (p. 158, above), including the recommendation to appoint one person as a liaison with expatriates, if appropriate.

These recommendations both to Western and African agency personnel can offer a practical starting point for synergistic cooperation. To the extent that one or both of the parties do not understand the cultural relativity of their own assumptions and modes of organizing, appreciate their partners' organizational culture, and adapt their own behaviors accordingly, the potential for dynamic synergism will be limited. On the other hand, by promoting mutual understanding and mutual learning between cooperating organizational actors, the findings of this study can help promote trust between agency personnel; reduce wasted time and material resources; smooth the adjustment process for sojourning development agents working with agents in a foreign culture; and ultimately implement programs that can be effectively administered through synergistic intercultural cooperation.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study also has implications for other researchers studying African voluntary organizations. Of particular interest are the obvious questions about the etiology of a small, rural, voluntary association such as the NLA which is nonetheless highly formal and, to a surprising extent, bureaucratic. What historical and/or social-psychological influences of early missionaries and/or the colonial experience, of the juxtaposition of Western administrative forms on traditional patterns of African social organization, and of other modernizing factors were significant in bringing about the current state of affairs?[65] Also, to what extent do other nongovernmental organizations in Kenya and other African countries share salient features of NLA organizational culture? And how can local organizations shaped predominantly by members of one ethnic group be encouraged to overcome ethnocentrism and to

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[65] Of particular interest is the question of how the Nakuru Laymen came to rely so heavily on written materials (see above, pp. 110ff.). On this, a possible line of inquiry might parallel Comaroff's investigation of the role of literacy in the process of socioeconomic differentiation among the Tswana of southern Africa. She notes how literacy (promoted by missionaries) became an avenue of resistance against traditional authority and enabled the South African state to bureaucratize significant aspects of local power-relations (1985:36, 140-145).

cooperate synergistically with national and international partner agencies?

Further research is also needed on reactive and proactive orientations to organizational planning. What contextual factors shape an organization's management style? Perhaps a typology of contingencies affecting a group's approach(es) to planning would show, in certain circumstances, that Africans do evidence a crisis approach to planning and, alternatively, that Westerners do exhibit a noncrisis approach to planning in given situations. Further, to what extent is a reactive, noncrisis approach to management and planning in African rural development organizations--if prevalent--a major, limiting factor in national development? And what types of planning style 'fit' between two or more cooperating--but culturally divergent--organizations optimally foster synergism? This last question was outside the focus of the current study because it requires examining the organizational cultures of multiple agencies--not just studying one organization's culture and the perceptions of selected individuals external to the organization.

Additional research is also indicated in areas outside the focus of the present study or in which the study had insufficient data to support a firm conclusion. These include the relation between power distance and other organizational dynamics in African voluntary organizations, in African corporations and in African public administration; the prevalence of well-defined, interorganizational protocols within other organizational hierarchies in Africa; the relation between traditional, group-based patterns of leadership and individual leadership in rural Africa; and effective, indigenous means for promoting synergistic intercultural cooperation. The lessons learned about participant observation and use of two elicitation techniques (pp. 163-171, above) provide useful suggestions to other ethnographers. And finally, observations about an optimal range for the duration of fieldwork in voluntary organizations (pp. 167-168, above) bear consideration and further reflection by other researchers.

GLOSSARIES

GLOSSARY OF SWAHILI TERMS

adabu n. manners, politeness

aibu n. shame, disgrace

ajenda n. (English) agenda

chama n. council or board (pl. **vyama**)

dhambi n. sin, sins

fimbo n. walking stick

harambee adj. self-help; n. a public fund-raising meeting; vb. let's all pull together (the Kenyan national slogan)

heshima n. honor, respect

hujitenga vb. (always, customarily) separates oneself

idara n. (s. or pl.) division(s), department(s)

ipokeswe na (lit.) it should be caused to be received by

jamaa n. family, community

kichama adv., officially; in accordance with the (requirements of a) **chama**

kijana n. young person; adj. pertaining to yesterday

kitendo cha mwaka n. annual project, (lit. deed of the year)

kofia n. (s. or pl.) hat, hats; (fig.) role, roles

kosa n. mistake, error (pl. **makosa**)

kuahirisha vb. to postpone, put off

kuakilisha vb. to represent

kuamusha vb. to rouse, awaken

kudhamini vb. to sponsor

kuheshimu vb. to honor, respect

kuhusika v.i. to be concerned, affected, or involved

kujifanya vb. to pretend, put on airs

kujificha vb. to hide oneself

kujirudia vb. to examine or review oneself or oneselves

kukaguana vb. to inspect or evaluate one another

kukaribia vb. to come near to, approach

kukosa adabu vb. to lack manners, to be rude

kukosea vb. to err against (someone), to go astray (from a certain point)

kulaki vb. to go out to meet (an arriving guest) in order to escort back

kulegeza vb. to loosen, cause to be slack

kumletea vb. to bring to, for, or upon him or her

kumrudia vb. to review (his or her) performance; to go back to (him or her); to discipline (him or her)

kurudia vb. to return to, go back over, review

kurukia vb. to jump on or over, bypass

kushtaki vb. to accuse

kusimamia vb. to stand over, to supervise; to stand up for; to stand in place of

kusindikiza vb. to escort (someone) who is departing

kutia bidii vb. to add effort, exert oneself

kuvunja vb. to break

maandishi n. pl. writings, written materials

madeni n. pl. debts

maendeleo n. progress, development

makosa n. pl. mistakes, errors (s. **kosa**)

mapenzi n. love, affection(s)

matoleo n. pl. offerings, gifts

mchungaji n. shepherd

meneja n. (English) manager

mikono n. arms

milele adv. forever

mipaka n. pl. boundaries, borders

mkutano n. meeting

moto n. fire, (fig.) enthusiasm

msamaha n. forgiveness, apology

msimamizi n. supervisor, overseer

msituni in the woods or forest

muhtasari n. record or summary; minutes

mzee n. elder (usually male)

mzigo n. load, burden

mzungu n. s. European, white person (pl. **wazungu**)

ngao n. (s. or pl.) shield, shields

pesa n. (s. or pl.) money, monies

pigo n. beating, blow

ruhusa n. permission, leave

saa n. (s. or pl.) time(s), hour(s), clock(s)

shamba n. farm, farmland, cultivated plot

shida n. (s. or pl.) trouble, problem

shule n. (English) school(s)

shughuli n. (s. or pl.) business, affair, pressing matter

uchi n. nakedness

uhusiano n. relationship

ulegevu n. slackness

umoja n. unity, oneness

vyama n. pl. councils, boards (s. **chama**)

wafanyakazi n. pl. workers, employees

watoto n. pl. children, offspring

wazungu n. pl. Europeans, white people (s. **mzungu**)

weka vb. (imperative) put, place

GLOSSARY OF KIKUYU TERMS

The following definitions are given by Benson (1964) on the pages cited:

ciira n. case, debate, dispute, law-suit (p. 62)

kĩama n. those set apart as a council, council of elders; council, tribunal, association, party, committee; a deliberative, advisory, legislative, judicial, or executive body in a country, province, district, ridge, or village (p. 6)

mũthuuri n. elder, married man with children or of an age to have children (p. 533)

mwanake n. young unmarried man, initiated youth (p. 10)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

NLA SELF-DESCRIPTION

(Note: The material below is excerpted from an English language document produced by the Nakuru Laymen Association, with the possible help of one or more expatriate volunteers, for the purpose of presenting the NLA to those not familiar with the organization--especially Westerners. The document was distributed in connection with a visit to the United States in 1981 of an NLA Planning Council member. An earlier version of parts of the document appears in a funding proposal sent to international agencies in approximately 1979. Ellipsis [. . .] indicates that a personal reference has been deleted.)

PURPOSE OF THE NAKURU LAYMEN ASSOCIATION

The Nakuru Laymen Association is a fellowship of men and women in the Nakuru District of the Rift Valley Province of Kenya. We ourselves have been changed by and now moved by Christ's compassion for the needy, by His willingness to serve and not be served, and by His death and resurrection for both the forgiveness of wrongdoing and the renewing of individuals and communities.

Because of this love of Christ, we are together commited:

A) to helping both rural and urban communities develop toward maturity in body, mind and spirit (Colossians 1:28), and

B) to being examples for others to follow of generous and sacrificial giving of time, talents and money towards this development (Proverbs 3:9).

Since 1972 we have committed ourselves to doing our part to alleviate poverty. We share the same concerns for rural development since we have helped to establish 60 churches in community farms throughout the Nakuru area. Because the NLA grew out of a young people's group soon after independence, we have always maintained an emphasis on young people.

Our members are scattered throughout various rural and urban communities in the Nakuru District. We see the needs and potential for development with our own eyes every day. And our particular concerns in development are for churches and families in the five target groups outlined in Kenya's 1979-1983 Development Plan:

1) Pastoralists
2) Small farmers
3) Landless rural workers
4) Urban poor
5) Handicapped

More particularly, we have started a Laymen Training Centre at Githioro-ini, 10 km. outside of Nakuru. This Training Centre has adopted the same five target groups as the Development Plan.

With each of these groups of people we are specifically striving to:

1) Train leaders among men, women and youth of our churches
2) Increase productivity of small scale farmers in cooperative farms
3) Offer vocational training to Standard 7 and Form 1 finishers
4) Provide health care and education to families
5) Establish small businesses in order to increase employment and to raise the level of income.

HISTORY OF THE NAKURU LAYMEN ASSOCIATION

The fathers of our present leaders of the NLA were some of the first national leaders of the Africa Inland Church in Kenya (founded in 1895). For example, the father of . . ., and grandfather of . . ., member of the Planning Council, was the first pastor for the Nakuru-Njoro area and started the first AIC in Njoro. Several of those sons broadened their vision for community development at a Trade and Technical School led by . . . in Colonial days when such training of nationals was not always approved or encouraged. But these men wanted at all costs to see their own people develop and they used their training to start some of the first Kenyan-owned businesses in Nakuru District.

Another of these sons (. . .) in 1956 helped to start the first Sunday School in the Africa Inland Church in Kenya here in Nakuru. This Sunday School led to a Youth Fellowship which started in 1959. Many of the present Laymen were in this fellowship, and after marrying, formed a Married Couples Fellowship in 1966. This group saved their money to launch one of the first African-owned cooperatives for household supplies in 1968. It was called Jamaa Traders (meaning community or family) with . . . being appointed manager.

In 1970 these same laymen established the Christian Farmers and Businessmen Association which was the immediate forerunner of the Nakuru Laymen Association which was established in 1972. The name was changed to include not only farmers and businessmen, but also teachers, government and office workers, laborers and anyone committed to community development.

These sons and others grew up together as young people, then as married couples and working people. Soon we in the NLA began to set out minds on encouraging other young people to get all the training they could get, even overseas, to be able to return to Nakuru and carry on the vision for community development. Currently, several young people are eager to assist in this work. They have received training in such areas as educational administration, special education for the handicapped, music, nursing, Bible teaching and pastoring, business, farm management, veterinary medicine, elementary education, etc. This new generation wants to pass on to their children the burden Christ had for the needy.

ACTIVITIES OF THE NAKURU LAYMEN ASSOCIATION

Since 1972 the NLA has undertaken many responsibilities in the Nakuru District.

1) In 1972 there were 13 Africa Inland Churches in Nakuru District. Today there are 60. Members of the NLA have been in the forefront of establishing, giving and raising money for, and building these new churches. Wherever a new community farm started, the NLA was anxious to see a new church start. We have a commitment to see churches develop in communities so that people do not need to go outside their own community to be involved in a church that is concerned about the needs of the people.

2) We have launched a Laymen Training Centre to accomplish our purposes of helping poor families, churches and communities develop.
3) We have not been concerned only with our own District. Over the past four years the NLA has helped support a pastor and his family in the desert and nomadic area of East Pokot. We have also built a new church, completely furnished, for this new Pokot congregation. Now the NLA is working with this church to reach out in other needy areas, such as Bible translation, community development, famine relief and small business development.

4) One third of our members come from the Boito-Rongai area and they are eager to renovate an old 22-room farm house which they purchased for use as a youth retreat and training centre. The NLA is seeking ways to fund a badly needed water project there.

5) We meet twice yearly as an entire membership. The 14-member Planning Council meets monthly for business, Bible study, prayer and fellowship. The Executive Council of the Planning Council meets nearly every week to decide on different matters.

6) Each of our Executive Officers is one who has proven his ability to manage in business, education and farmning. Each carries large responsibilities in his church.

7) We have hosted many friends from the United States who have shown great interest in this project and who share our vision. Some of these people are . . ., . . ., . . ., . . ., . . ., and . . . .

8) We have begun to tell others in other parts of Kenya about our burden and vision. Mr. . . ., himself a member of the NLA, has helped to introduce the NLA to various individuals and agencies in Nairobi. What the NLA is doing in Nakuru can be improved by what others are doing in other parts of Kenya and vice-versa.

DEVELOPMENT OF LAYMEN TRAINING CENTRE

To accomplish our purposes for development among poor families, churches, and communities, the Nakuru Laymen Association, in 1977, laid plans for a Laymen Training Centre.

Eight acres of land was given by the late Mr. . . ., one of the supporters of the NLA. First, local churches were established in each of these community farms and one by one church buildings were built and two pastors were found. Through having these local churches, needy families could be identified and helped.

Second, a much larger 800-seat, 10 classroom church building was started on the site of the Training Centre. This was planned to accomodate a growing church at Wanyororo as well as provide space for larger conferences and seminars sponsored by the LTC. Many of the training and demonstration courses and the initial office for the LTC will be located in this church as soon as it is finished.

Soon after the start of the Africa Inland Church--Githioro-ini, the foundation for the Laymen Training Centre itself was laid. The walls are now (1979?) [sic] being put up. This LTC is a two-story building with six classrooms, one dining room-kitchen, one conference room, three offices, two dormitories and ten private rooms. Kenyan shillings 580,000/ has already been raised and an additional 2,700,000/ is needed for completion.

To coordinate and lead the planning and implementation of the LTC, an LTC Director has recently been appointed by the NLA. We have pledged 5,000/ each month for his support and expenses. The Director's name is Rev. . . . . He is well-suited and trained for this position. He received a Master of Arts degree in pastoring and theology from . . . Theological Seminary in U.S.A. and is an ordained minister for the Africa Inland Church. He served for three years as Principal of . . . Bible College in . . . . Following his service there, he worked for two years for . . ., training lay men and women and pastors in rural and urban areas. He is married (wife, . . .) and they have four children.

The Laymen Training Centre has set five purposes in order to help poor families, churches and communities develop. For each purpose a desperate need exists and we have begun to outline the work ahead of us.

1) To increase productivity of small-scale farms.

Few have reliable sources of supplies, or adequate access to markets, storage, processing or finance. And there is often no one within the community to help them.

We have already established a company, Farming Systems Kenya Ltd. (FSK) to provide the needed training and service support for these small farmers. FSK is working in cooperation with Farming Systems East Africa. One of the members of the NLA, Mr. . . ., has been appointed Manager of Farming Systems East Africa. For the past 15 years he has been a successful farm manager in crops, cows, pigs and chickens. He has helped several poor families get started with keeping cows, pigs or chickens. A second member of the NLA, Mr. . . ., has been appointed Assistant Manager of FSEA. He graduated from . . . College in farm management and served as a Divisional Extension Officer for the Ministry of Agriculture. He will be training a manager for FSK, as well as managers for the Farm Service Centres, and helping FSK to work in close cooperation with the Government and Egerton College. A member of the Board of Farming Systems Kenya is Mr. . . ., also one of our members and chairman of the Agricultural Society of Kenya.

2) To establish small businesses in order to increase employment and raise the level of income.

3) To provide health care and education for families.

4) To provide vocational training for Standard 7 and Form 4 finishers.

5) To train leaders among the men, women and youth of our churches.

In the Nakuru District there are 60 churches but only 8 pastors. For this reason, much leadership responsibility rests on the laymen. In addition to this burden, many trained young people and husbands and educated women have left the rural communities for better work opportunities in Nairobi. All of this leaves a tremendous leadership vacuum in homes, churches and communities.

APPENDIX B

FSK SELF-DESCRIPTION

(Reproduced below are the entire contents of an English language original document, dating from approximately 1985, describing Farming Systems Kenya, a subsidiary of the NLA.)

Farming Systems Kenya is a charitable Christian Organization formed and owned by Nakuru Laymen Association of the Africa Inland Church--Nakuru District.

FSK was formed as a result of a felt need of the small-scale farmers of which most members of NLA are. The Church felt an obligation to meet the needs of the farmers both spiritually and physically. We in FSK therefore, seek to bring Christ at the market place as we work with our recruited farmers.

FSK endevours [sic] to provide the following service to the farmers:

1) Training. From every enterprise that is undertaken, a relevant course will be offered to introduce the farmers to it, on how to grow it and manage it. In such situations the farmers will be required to attend a course for one week. It will be followed by field visits from FSK extension workers.

2) Supplies (Credit). FSK will also provide farm supplies for the commodities recommended in various climatic regions. The supply will be in the form of materials. However, FSK will only meet the needs which the farmers would not get. The farmers will provide labour and other affordable resources.

3) Storage. FSK will also advise on the best ways of storing agricultural commodities. This will be beneficial for both home consumption and for marketing purposes, to maximize on the best market price.

4) Marketing. FSK will advise on the best market which will be cost effective and allow the farmer to make the highest profit. To accomplish this, FSK is launching a market survey in four major markets in Kenya: Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru and Eldoret. Where possible, FSK will link the member farmers with the already existing market channels, either locally or abroad.

Goals

(a) To achieve a self sufficiency food production level.

(b) To raise small-scale farmers from subsistence to commercial farming level.

Strategies

Even though FSK is a charitable organization, the farmers will not be served free; they will have to pay a commission to the organization for two main reasons:

i) To help develop responsibility and self confidence in the farmers; also to help them undertake the risk involved in farming, a major turning point in undertaking farming as a business.

ii) This commission will be used to make FSK an on going program and a self supporting organization.

Hence both FSK and farmers face a challenge that is quite unique in motivating ourselves to meet our nation's effort to be self sustaining in food supplies.

APPENDIX C

NLA CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

The name of this fellowship will be the Africa Inland Church Nakuru District Laymen Association.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this fellowship will be:

A - "To present every man mature in Christ" (Colossians 1:28)
B - "To honor the Lord with our substance and with the first fruits of all our produce" (Prov. 3:9).

Being convinced that everything we have is given to us by God and that we are fully accountable to Him for how we use those gifts and resources, we pledge

a. To be examples of generous and sacrificial giving of our time, talents and money;
b. To encourage others to be good stewards; and
c. To establish wise and helpful means for generating resources;

SO THAT we will better be able to present
"every man" in every church and community
"mature" in body, mind and spirit
"in Christ" who is the one we seek to obey, follow and trust.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO CHURCH

As members and leaders of the church, we seek to serve, support, assist and encourage the church in the work which Christ has given to His church.

The Laymen Association will carry out all of its activities under the authority given to it by the Africa Inland Church Nakuru District.

4. CONDUCT

All activities and transactions of the Nakuru Laymen Association will be carried out in a Christ-like and Biblical way. The Association will not undertake any activity which will antagonize the word and name of God.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Anyone 18 years of age or more who confesses faith in Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and Lord, who accepts the Bible as God's complete authority for his life and who is an accepted member of his church is welcomed to be a member of the Nakuru Laymen Association.

By "Laymen" we mean any member of the church who does not earn his salary from the church but who is as much committed to "building up the body of Christ until it reaches the unity and maturity of Christ" (Ephesians 1:1-16).

6. MEMBERSHIP FEE

To become a member of the Nakuru Laymen Association one pays Shs. 250/=. Each year after that each member pays Shs. 100/=. All fees are non-refundable. Each member will receive a Constitution, a membership card and all general mailings (e.g., Newsletters).

7. MANAGEMENT

a. The Sponsor of the NLA will be the Africa Inland Church Nakuru District Church Council. It will be represented in the NLA Planning Council by four members who will advise and encourage the Association. The NLA will also be a member in the Africa Inland Church Nakuru DCC.

b. The General Membership will be made up of all members of the Nakuru Laymen Association. The General Membership will advise and evaluate the work of the NLA. Each member will act as a representative for the NLA in his local church. Each member will be encouraged to use his gift(s) in carrying out at least one task in the NLA. Each member will seek to give financially what he can and will seek to find others to join hands with the NLA.

c. A Planning Council chosen by the members of the Nakuru Laymen Association will carry out the planning of the Association. It will consist of 14 members: 9 from the NLA and 4 from the AIC Nakuru District Church Council, plus the Nakuru Laymen Training Center Director. This Council will have the authority to co-opt up to 3 additional members whenever they deem necessary.

These Council members must:
1. meet all the qualifications for membership;
2. not be paid for any work done for the NLA;
3. be dismissed from the Council if excommunicated from the church.
4. The four appointed from the AIC District Church Council are not obliged to pay fees other than by their own free will.

d. An Executive Council within the Planning Council chosen by the members of the NLA will oversee any needed administration for both the Planning Council and General Membership.

It will consist of:

Chairman - who will chair all General, Planning Council and Executive Council meetings and will represent the NLA on the AIC Nakuru DCC.

Vice-chairman - who will assist the Chairman and carry out his responsibilities in his absence.

Recording Secretary - who will keep records of all minutes, transactions and correspondence.

Organizing Secretary - who will carry out communications, plan activities and supervise the recruitment of new members.

Treasurer - who will keep careful records of all fees, donations and expenditures and report regularly to the membership.

Nakuru Laymen Training Center Director - who will advise and inform the Council on activities of the LTC.

A vice-recording secretary and vice-organizing secretary will also be selected from within the Planning Council. They will assist their respective officers and carry out their responsibilities in their absence. These will not serve on the Executive Council except in cases of absence. The Chairman of the DCC and any one member representing the DCC should be represented in the Executive Council.

8. ELECTION OF COUNCIL

Half the Planning and Executive Councils will be chosen every two years by a meeting of the General Membership. Members chosen must:

a. fulfill all requirements for membership;
b. be fluent in Swahili or English.

Two months before the election, members will be asked to submit letters giving names of people whom they wish to nominate for the Planning Council. These names will be published one month before the election so that members may pray and discuss the nominations. The election will take place at a meeting of the General Membership and will be carried out by secret ballot.

Those chosen must be approved by the DCC.

9. MEETINGS

Meetings of the NLA will be as follows:

a. A General Meeting (for all members) must be held one or more times per year.
b. The Planning Council will meet three or more times per year.
c. The Executive Council will meet three or more times per year. This Council has the authority to call additional meetings as necessary.
d. The Chairman of the NLA will be asked to plan one or more "prayer days" for the work of the NLA. Members of all AIC churches in Nakuru District will be requested to join in prayer.

10. QUORUM

In any of the General Membership, Planning Council or Executive Council Meetings a 50% quorum will be necessary to transact official business.

11. FINANCES

a. All fees and donations will be receipted by the Treasurer.
b. All money must be kept in a bank savings or current account.
c. All expenditures must be withdrawn from the bank by check and full written explanation given.
d. All checks must be signed by three people: the Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.
e. If there is need to open any other accounts, this must be approved by the Planning Council.
f. Allocation of finances must be made as follows:

Laymen Training Center	40% (yearly %)
Mission/Evangelism Project	25%
Reserve	15%
Administration	10%
Other	10%

Any money received marked for a special purpose must be used for that and is not included in the above percentages. All businesses established in conjunction with NLA (e.g. Daraja) will be encouraged to give at least 10% of their total profit to the Training Center.

12. NAKURU LAYMEN TRAINING CENTER

The Sponsor of the Nakuru Laymen Training Center will be the AIC District Church Council and the Nakuru Laymen Association, although the Laymen Training Center (LTC) will have its own Board of Directors. The NLA will be represented on the LTC Board by at least 5 members, one of whom will be the Chairman of the LTC Board. A simple majority of the LTC Board must be AIC members.

The LTC Director will be a member of the AIC and the NLA. He will serve on the NLA Executive Council.

13. DISSOLVING THE ASSOCIATION

In any case of dissolving the NLA the following steps must be taken:

a. If there are any properties such as farms or businesses, it will be the responsibility of the DCC to decide how these are to be disposed of.
b. If in the reverse there is a debt owing, likewise it is up to the DCC to pay the debts and maintain the good image of the church.

14. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution can be changed by a "yes" vote of 75% of the Membership and consequent approval by the DCC.

15. DISCIPLINE

The NLA in all their relationships to one another will seek to "encourage one another to love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24), will seek to "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave us" (Ephesians 4:32) and be Christ-like and Biblical in every way.

If one should sin against another, the counsel in Matthew 18:15-20 should be followed. The promise of God's forgiveness, blessing and presence (vs. 18-20) should move us all to a bond of fellowship.

APPENDIX D

SCHEDULE FOR INTERVIEWS OF WESTERN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE WORKERS

(The following questions served as the framework for the structured interviews of five Western development assistance workers and formed the basis for the mini-case study research inquiry procedure.)

How did you first make contact with the NLA, or how was your interest in the NLA first aroused?

How did you begin to inquire about the possibility of working with the NLA?

Did you have any difficulties getting information about the NLA?

What role did any intermediary agent(s) play:
- in transmitting current information
- in defining roles
- in job placement/task assignment
- putting you in direct touch with NLA leaders
- preparation for job/living situation?

How did you know with whom to communicate?

What forms of communication did you attempt with the NLA?
- What response did you get? Was it complete enough?

Did you inquire about:
- personnel needs, opportunities
- organizational structure, lines of authority
- interorganizational relationships
- political climate (of NLA), work attitudes
- job description
- clientele needs
- living conditions?

Did you have access to any documents produced by the NLA? Were they helpful, inadequate, contradictory, irrelevant, etc.?

Were you aware of any of the internal workings of the NLA organization:

policies, formal structures
individuals, their professional or educational background
task differentiation
informal networks within the organization?

How has your perception of the NLA changed over time? Why has it changed?

What were the major sources of frustration for you in attempting to plan to work with the NLA?

What policies do you think the NLA should have for its relationships with development assistance workers? That is, what are the values, attitudes, assumptions or understandings that you think ought to underlie an agreement between two partner agencies?

How have these ideals been fulfilled in your relationship with the NLA?

How have they not been fulfilled?

What do you think can be done to help the NLA move toward these ideals?

APPENDIX E-1

MINI-CASE ONE: DAVID A.

David A. sojourned in Nakuru for four months in 1980 under an internship program which was part of his undergraduate training in the United States. All advance contacts with the NLA were made by the administrator of the program, a professor at the college David attended. However, much of the administrator's early correspondence concerning David's planned sojourn with the NLA leaders went unanswered; it was necessary for the program administrator to telephone to Nakuru three weeks before David's scheduled departure in order to confirm arrangements.

David's internship had two major goals, as stated by the sponsoring institution: learning through participant observation and the completion of a project in the student's chosen field. David, whose field was physics, had not decided before his sojourn what his project would be, although he had several possibilities in mind. Eventually he built a demonstration biogas digester. No other role definition was given to him by the NLA.

Prior to his sojourn, David had no direct communication with the NLA and was only given contact names and telephone numbers upon his departure. He had seen nothing in writing about the NLA. Upon his arrival in Nairobi, he was not met at the airport. Plans for someone from the NLA to collect him the next day fell through. The following day he was told to take a bus to Nakuru, and, despite having been on the wrong bus company line, finally met his hosts.

David had been prepared by his internship training program to be flexible, and he did not find the lack of directives from the NLA to be particularly frustrating. He suggested, however, that the NLA should appoint one of its members as a liaison with visiting workers in order to facilitate cooperation.

APPENDIX E-2

MINI-CASE TWO: PETER H.

Peter H. first heard of the NLA in 1977 while in university through a couple who attended his church, had visited Nakuru, and who subsequently lived in Nakuru and were affiliated with the NLA. In 1981 a Kenyan couple affiliated with the NLA toured in the United States, and Peter met them through his father, who had a business relationship with the foreign guests.

In 1982, Peter began to pursue the possibility of work with the NLA. He wrote to his friends, the American couple, who by then were living in Nakuru, to inquire about the feasibility of such a sojourn. He was given names and addresses of several NLA members and began corresponding with them. In course of time, the following concerns were expressed to him:

- the NLA was interested in starting a polytechnic, and Peter could help them teach a 'seminar' to young men in carpentry and masonry;
- the NLA would not be responsible to pay Peter a salary, and he would be required to have a sending agency; and
- some NLA members would be able to give Peter room and board in their homes.

Peter, who was raised in Zaire, understood from his background in Africa that, by asking him to lead a 'seminar,' in fact nothing had yet been done toward founding a polytechnic. He came to Nakuru in 1984 not expecting much of anything, and so he was not disappointed when his suspicions were confirmed upon arrival. He stayed for two years, during which he helped found and manage a polytechnic for primary school leavers.

Peter was never given a specific job description, though he would not have expected the NLA leaders to write one until after they had met him and known him for a time. He sent them his resume before he arrived, but he did not expect them to act on that alone.

Despite the fact that Peter did not know what his living conditions nor his actual job assignment were to be, he was not frustrated in all his plans to work with the NLA. He did, however, express one major frustration after he arrived and began to work with the polytechnic: the NLA leaders were not involved with school matters and took his own help for granted. He perceived that they took little responsibility for the school, even for its future, right up until the time Peter left Kenya.

Peter considered part of his initial duties to be getting to know the people he was working for and with. He expressed how difficult it was to proceed beyond a surface relationship with most of the men, possibly due to his difference in age and marital status.

APPENDIX E-3

MINI-CASE THREE: SUSAN C.

Susan C. came to Kenya in the summer of 1985 as a short term volunteer with Africa Inland Mission. She attended a missions conference in the United States in December 1984 and decided to spend the following summer overseas before completing her final year of university. She was accepted for service with AIM only a few months before her departure, and she only learned of her placement three weeks before her arrival in Nakuru. She stayed for three months and helped primarily in organizing a library for FSK, the agricultural extension arm of the NLA.

Susan received very little orientation from her sponsor, AIM, and nothing about the NLA. She did receive a few documents from the researcher, but she had too little time for further correspondence. She would have liked to know more so that she could have prepared herself better and brought relevant materials with her.

Susan's greatest frustration stemmed from the ambiguity surrounding her job description. It appeared to her initially that there really wasn't anything for her to do, and she wished the NLA had simply told her that. She was asked to work with FSK, but only after several weeks did the possibility of helping to set up a library emerge as something she could do. Also, had she been given a job description or a set of goals toward which to work, Susan would have been able to use them in evaluating her work at the end of her sojourn.

Susan made an effort to communicate her frustrations with individuals in the NLA on at least two occasions. Both times the individuals expressed the concern that she should be learning from her experiences. Other concerns expressed were that she be having a good time and that she be forming friendships. When Susan expressed some of her frustration over the lack of job definition, one of the individuals spoke of the NLA in the third person ("they"), which Susan understood as unwillingness to take individual responsibility for corporate actions or failures.

Another difference Susan noted was her own understanding of community development as involving "hands-on" activities--helping in a dispensary, building a building, organizing people, etc. Though the NLA claimed to be doing community development, it was not involved in any of those activities at the time Susan was affiliated with the NLA.

Susan, along with others interviewed in the mini-case studies, agreed that it would be helpful for one NLA member to be given the responsibility of implementing group decisions affecting expatriate volunteers and of helping to coordinate their activities.

APPENDIX E-4

MINI-CASE FOUR: WENDELL S.

Wendell S. and his wife came to Nakuru in September 1981 and stayed until the following September. Wendell, a medical doctor, was under contract with a private agency which had initiated agriculture-based projects first in Uganda, then in Kenya. The couple first heard of the NLA in the late 1970s while in the United States and later had direct contact with some NLA leaders while enroute to Uganda in early 1981. When the contract in Uganda fell through, Wendell and his wife were moved to Kenya, in the hope that the work in Kenya could serve as a base for renewed work in Uganda. Eventually, the agency had to withdraw the couple from Kenya as well.

Job negotiations took place between the couple and their sponsoring agency, though many other negotiations remained between the agency and the NLA concerning program parameters. Frustrations for the couple stemmed mostly from the latter deliberations. Language differences comprised one set of problems. Propositions would be set forth by agency representatives in English, then discussed by the Laymen in Swahili and Kikuyu. In the end, the Kenyans might simply say, "we agree to the conditions," but the Westerners did not know what other miscommunications may have taken place nor whether their African partners really understood all the implications. So another question would be put or qualification made, and the process would begin again.

Expectations concerning financing were also the root of other tensions. Wendell expressed the feeling that the Laymen wanted financing even though they were unable to state explicitly what they wanted it for or would do with it. Alternatively, he sensed that one particular need overshadowed all others, so that the Laymen focussed entirely on the greater need while neglecting other needs which would obviously arise (such as for ongoing project maintenance costs). Wendell also believed the Laymen had succumbed to dependency, whereby it appeared that the NLA members could afford to wait for Westerners to get and bring them money much more easily than Westerners, who are generally task (and accomplishment) oriented, could wait for the Laymen to do something using their own resources.

Another difficulty experienced by the couple was the apparent lack of cohesiveness and consensus among NLA members. It appeared that the individual Laymen were quite sensitive to social and economic differences among themselves, and this may have led to some jealousies and rivalries. When one NLA member returned from a trip abroad, Wendell felt other members treated him with suspicion; it was even rumored that the member had secured quite a substantial sum for himself while abroad. These factions or cliques perhaps also impeded the group coming to consensus on many major or minor questions, it appeared to Wendell. Wendell helped to draft a number of funding proposals for the NLA, and he noted that not only was this a task the Laymen did not like to do, but also that he had great difficulty getting them to agree on specific terms of the proposal. On occasion, a proverb was used to end discussion and gain limited consensus; still, Wendell found this means of securing agreement, which was rarely written down and possibly both obscure and ambiguous, less than satisfactory. He lamented the lack of one "voice" he could go to to get the group's consensus.

APPENDIX E-5

MINI-CASE FIVE: STAN B.

Stan B. lived in Nakuru beginning in October 1983, when he began working under a business relationship with one member of the NLA. His employer in the U.S. made initial contacts with several NLA members; Stan met his Kenyan business associate first in the U.S. in 1982 and later visited Kenya for three weeks in early 1983.

His specific job duties were always mediated through his Western employer. Making the transition to living in Kenya was not a big concern: his wife was raised in Kenya. Since he had had no formal ties with the NLA Planning Council (apart from his liaison with one of the NLA members), he had not experienced any frustrations which could be said to have derived directly from NLA activities.

Nonetheless, he was very interested in the concepts and ideals of the NLA embodying partnership between lay church leaders and Christian businessmen. He attended a number of NLA meetings and became friends with several NLA leaders. The frustrations he felt due to observed dysfunctions in NLA proceedings he described as "vicarious" frustrations--felt on behalf of other Westerners. He himself underwent something of a disaffection with the NLA due to a widening of the gap between his understanding of NLA ideals and his perceptions of the reality of NLA practices.

APPENDIX F

CHRONOLOGY OF RESEARCHER-NLA RELATIONS

<u>1977</u>

The researcher lived in Nakuru and was associated with the AIC. He met several core leaders of the NLA and visited in their homes; he conducted a weekly adult religious education class in the home of one Planning Council member.

<u>1978</u>

He attended a fund raising meeting (**harambee**) for the AIC Church and LTC at Githioro-ini in July.

<u>1981</u>

He attended a reception in Chicago for a representative of the NLA who was on a tour of farms in the U.S.

<u>1982</u>

The researcher sent a detailed questionnaire to two members of the NLA in order to gather data for a case study he was preparing for a graduate course at Michigan State University. The questionnaires were returned with a letter expressing thanks for the researcher's interest.

<u>1983</u>

In February, the researcher wrote to the NLA Recording Secretary telling of his interest in coming to work with the NLA and, if possible, to conduct research in connection with his doctoral dissertation. He stressed his desires that NLA members participate in the design and/or implementation of the research, and that the research benefit them.

In July, the researcher and his wife met with the NLA LTC Director in Newark, New Jersey. Further details concerning a planned sojourn were discussed. No definite suggestions for research topics were offered.

<u>1984</u>

The researcher wrote a number of letters throughout the year, both suggesting research topics and possible job responsibilities. In addition, housing possibilities were discussed and plans for arrival were sent. Still, no research topics were identified by the NLA.

APPENDIX G

DILEMMAS POSED TO INFORMANTS

The five cultural dilemmas listed below were posed to various informants during the ethnographic phase of the research.

On Task Specification

An **mzungu** (White person) has written to the Laymen to tell them that he is ready to come and help them in their work. He is an accountant, skilled in bookkeeping.

The Laymen don't need an accountant, but they have seen a need for a teacher who can teach management and marketing.

What should the Laymen do? Why?

On Supervision

Suppose that you are the supervisor (**msimamizi**) of an **mzungu** (expatriate) who has come here to work with the Laymen. Now, it happens that he commits some very serious errors--such as offending church elders or hiring a Laymen employee without permission.

Other Planning Council members come to you to tell you that you should talk to the expatriate about it.

What will you do? Why?

On Protocol

You have heard a rumor that the Polytechnic Manager has done something that could endanger the lives of his students.

What should you do? Why?

On Honoring the **Chama**

The NLA Planning Council must make an important decision concerning the Polytechnic or FSK.

You have your opinions about the matter which you think are correct and the best course of action. But you know that nearly all the other Planning Council members do not agree with you.

The next meeting of the Planning Council is soon.

What should you do to get the other members of the Planning Council to change their minds and ageee with you? Why?

On Consensus

You are the chairman of a certain board (**chama**). The members have already given their opinions about a certain matter. About half have one view, while the other half have another view.

A decision must be made. What will you do? Why?

APPENDIX H

SCHEDULE FOR FORMAL INTERVIEWS OF NLA LEADERS

Advance Arrangements

Explain purpose of interview as: to understand how Westerners can be more effective in working with organizations like the Laymen

Secure permission to interview

Arrange time and place for interview

Introduction to Interview

Restate purpose (as above)

Inform interviewee that other NLA members are also being interviewed

Assure interviewee of confidentiality--i.e., anonymity of responses

Report of Preliminary Findings

From interviews with Westerners who have worked with the NLA in the past, the following items were mentioned as problems which the Westerners found frustrating:

not knowing exactly what they will be doing

not having a job description

not knowing whom to write before coming

not having one voice who can speak for the Laymen

having a different idea of what should be done

not having anyone evaluate their work or give feedback

(Stress that the above were perceived problems, not problems for which the NLA was being blamed.)

From observation of the organization, the following types of descriptions can be made--not as a criticism, not to try to change the Laymen--but to help Westerners understand and fit in:

that people respect the council (**chama**) and abide by the decisions of the council

the ways the Laymen oversee their work and complete their plans

how the Laymen work together with volunteers and expatriates

Interview Questions

(1) Can you suggest things which Westerners should know about the Laymen and how you function, so that they can enter in smoothly and work well with all of you?

(a) For example, suppose someone were coming to take my place. What would you want to tell him before he gets here?

(b) What are some ways that the person should adapt after he gets here?

(2) What are some things the Laymen could do differently to help volunteers adjust to the NLA and to work well together with the NLA?

Termination of Interview

Thank for participation

Promise to inform NLA of research findings

APPENDIX I

TYPES OF MEETING AGENDA

External Affairs

- reports (to be sent to other bodies)
- correspondence (received from other bodies)
- proposals for funding
- expatriate personnel
  - welcome/farewell
  - housing needs
  - job description

Internal Affairs

- personnel
  - hiring/job description/resignation/firing
  - remuneration
  - performance review
- finances
  - short and long term needs
  - debts
- reports to and from subsidiary boards, NLA members
- organizational development
  - recruitment, selection, and election of officers
  - group self-evaluation
  - relations with the general membership
    - annual general meeting
    - membership development/reactiviation

APPENDIX J

INFORMANTS' VIEWS OF WESTERNERS

The Kenyan informants participating in this study recognized differences between themselves and Westerners (**mzungu** [singular], **wazungu** [plural]) The generalizations made about **wazungu** did not always result in giving them treatment which was different from that given to Kenyan employees; yet in many cases it did make it easier for the Laymen to understand and tolerate behaviors of **wazungu** which deviated from what they would have expected from national workers. The researcher saw no indication that the Planning Council members had a separate, articulated set of standards for managing the efforts of expatriate volunteers--only a willingness to give Westerners more latitude in their failures to conform to Kenyans' expectations. What follow then, are, generalized understandings--expressed by people who formed them over decades of interaction with White expatriates--which conditioned the Laymen's views of and behavior toward Western sojourners.

NLA informants recognized that Westerners lack cultural understanding of Africans and their problems; they could cite, for example, numerous instances where Westerners attempted to import exogenous technologies to Africa and failed through lack of understanding African culture. Yet they also allowed that some unique individuals could effectively bridge the cultural gap (and 'plug in') without, as one informant put it, 'making fools of themselves.' These individuals, including one missionary from the 1940s, are spoken of affectionately as having had formative impact on the shape of the NLA today. Another informant compared expatriates to farm animals: "a cow gives us so much (milk, manure)--just as Whites bring us many benefits. But it is the dog that we allow into our house because he shows us love (**mapenzi**) and speaks our language." Whites who retain their (ethnocentric) 'pride,' who can not 'learn to be servants,' remain European through and through, just as "the offspring of a snake is still a snake." On various occasions informants made general distinctions between British and American **wazungu**, as well as between American Whites and Blacks.

Wazungu, with few if any exceptions, are perceived to be rich and are often expected to 'bring money' (i.e., for development projects) with them, although the failure to do so does not necessarily prohibit them from being effective cross-cultural workers. Informants realized, nevertheless, that it is expensive for **wazungu** to come and sojourn in Kenya and felt obligated not to waste the time and other resources of Westerners. Some **wazungu** try to influence Africans with their money (e.g., to dictate the terms of a joint venture), but this is a 'big mistake'; unless Westerners' motivations are genuine, 'money won't fool people.' Planning Council members agreed, retrospectively after the "mistake" was made, that it is not a good idea for Westerners to make soft loans to their African counterparts or to project accounts. Some informants favored financial assistance on a matching funds basis, and one other said, 'We ourselves have the money; . . . it may take us longer, but when the spirit is right' people have given.

One of the more affluent informants noted that perceived class distinctions between **wazungu** and Africans constituted a formidable cultural barrier as well:

> The 'color bar' may disappear, but a 'class bar' is very difficult" (to overcome). . . . We are still lower class--it greatly hinders our relationship (**inazuia uhusiano wetu sana**) (with **wazungu**). . . . It is up to the one who is above to come down to our level; it's difficult for us (Africans) to draw close to (**kukaribia**) them (**wazungu**) unless they first come close to us.

Wazungu may invite Africans to eat in their homes, but Africans are afraid to reciprocate, for example, because their homes don't have indoor plumbing or their wives cannot bake cakes.

The Laymen recognized that they are unable to pay Western development workers a salary or even allowances (i.e., for work-related expenses), although sometimes room and board can be provided, especially for unmarried people on a short-term basis. Housing for a certain volunteer would be 'no problem,' <u>if</u> "he doesn't act like a European (**kujifanya kama mzungu**)."[1] Care was taken not to add to an expatriate's troubles (**kumletea shida**) by providing inadequate housing. Still, having an **mzungu** house guest for several months' time was not easily agreed to, even when the volunteer offered to pay for food and rent; another possible factor in their reluctance was the fact that the majority of Planning Council members had had such boarders previously and felt it was someone else's turn.

Hosting **wazungu** had other perceived social costs and benefits in the Laymen's eyes. The Laymen derived 'prestige' from having **wazungu**, even if they were unsupervised or ineffective: 'it sounds great--like we're important.' Yet this also proved to be somewhat of a liability when other church leaders perceived the NLA was better known overseas than was the AIC Church; some leaders in the DCC lamented that **wazungu** come to work with the Laymen and never affiliate closely with the AIC Church, the NLA's parent body.

The Laymen also felt obligated to welcome and bid farewell to foreign visitors in socially appropriate ways, often at no small expense to themselves. If arrival times were known ahead of time, one or several Planning Council members were designated to meet (**kulaki**) visitors at the airport--not necessarily to escort them back to Nakuru. Soon

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[1] That is, if he doesn't expect to live with the same amenities he would have at home.

after the assumption of duties, a supper would be held in one member's home for all Planning Council members and their spouses with an official welcome extended to the sojourning volunteer(s).[2] Upon departure, another, similar gathering would be held and the departing Westerner(s) thanked for their assistance, given gifts and prayed for. At the time of actual departure from the country, NLA delegates could send off (**kusindikiza**) visitors, going as far as the airport in Nairobi. Costs of all these activities were shared among Planning Council members.

Whether or not foreign sojourners were seen as desirable by the Laymen--or merely inevitable--may be a moot question. As anyone who has ever sojourned in Africa can attest, it is a rare African who will reveal to a visitor the true cost of his hospitality, and even rarer is an African who refuses altogether to extend his hospitality.

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[2] This was not done in the case of some short-term volunteers.

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