PCMA

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Creating International Linkages Among Grassroots Activists
To Promote Sustainable Development:
Report of a Pilot Exchange Project

**The Program on Conflict Management Alternatives
at The University of Michigan**

**Creating International Linkages Among Grassroots Activists
To Promote Sustainable Development:
Report of a Pilot Exchange Project**

Final Report to the
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

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ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
1991 PROJECT YEAR

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ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
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The Environmental Change and Economic Development Project brought together community activists and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Indonesia, Kenya, Nicaragua and the United States with educators, researchers and policy analysts from the U.S. to exchange and integrate local and popular knowledge across regions. This one year pilot project was conducted to explore and demonstrate the viability of a longer term multi-national collaboration aimed at enhancing grassroots strategies and tactics for resolving problems of environmental and economic sustainability; strengthening collaborative efforts between NGOs, grassroots organizations, educators, researchers and policy analysts; and promoting national and international policy changes. The pilot project emphasized strengthening community initiatives through information exchange, development of international networks, and collaborative action research. Goals of the pilot project year also included identification of structures and processes to promote the transfer of knowledge among grassroots groups and between grassroots groups and support organizations such as NGOs and universities.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Representatives from the Institute for Development Research, the Program in Conflict Management Alternatives (University of Michigan), and the Highlander Research and Education Center met in July of 1990 to plan a collaborative project which focused on environmental change and economic development in the United States and in developing countries[1]. The original proposal submitted to the John D.

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1. The Institute for Development Research (IDR) has a long tradition of work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), government and multilateral agencies, and international NGOs in the developing world. IDR's purpose is to promote voluntary action and sustainable development through supporting and furthering the involvement of grassroots participation in development.

The Program in Conflict Management Alternatives (PCMA) at the University of Michigan supports an agenda of research application, theory development and practice focused explicitly on the relationships among social

and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation requested funding for a one year planning grant to build collaborative relationships with NGOs in the Southern hemisphere and begin a process of grassroots exchange and network building. The proposal described how this project might unfold in subsequent years.

A seed grant was awarded by the Foundation in December of 1990 for a one year pilot project at a reduced funding level from the original proposal. Representatives from each of the three U.S. organizations met in Ann Arbor, Michigan in February of 1991 to create an inter-organizational decision making and management structure and to plan for the year. At this meeting, project objectives, each group's expectations and concerns about the project, selection of international participants, content and process objectives, inter-organizational roles and responsibilities, and patterns of planning and participation were discussed.

Decision making and management structures for the project were developed to facilitate intra- and inter-organizational communication and coordination of tasks. One person from each of the three U.S. partner teams was selected to be responsible for communicating decisions within and between teams. Planning teams comprised of members from each of the three U.S. organizations were created at this meeting. These teams were given responsibility for planning specific aspects of the international exchange: community visits, workshop, proposal writing, and documentation of the learning process.

It was agreed that an international meeting would be held and would involve: representatives from grassroots and mediating organizations (NGOs) from North

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conflict, social change and social justice. It examines the use of alternative strategies for resolving conflicts, the institutionalization of approaches to conflict resolution that address social change, and the permanent alteration of fundamental inequities between parties.

The Highlander Research and Education Center is a private, non-profit organization which works primarily with low income communities in Appalachia and the southern U.S. Highlander utilizes an educational process which facilitates the analysis of community problems by community members and strengthens their capacity to create institutional and community change.

America and Central or South America, Asia and Africa; community visits in the Appalachian Mountains and Deep South; an environmental workshop at the Highlander Research and Education Center; and sessions to plan for future collaboration which would include the representatives from the international groups. Also discussed were expectations about the process of learning by the participating individuals and institutions.

Criteria for the selection of NGOs from the three developing regions were outlined. These included: 1) ongoing contact with and support for grassroots community organizations in the country or region and credibility with these grassroots groups; 2) prior working relationship with one of the three U.S. groups on which we could continue to build; 3) currently playing a major role in the environment and development movement in their country; 4) capacity for and interest in hosting an international exchange; 5) interest in being part of a group with a focus on democratic process and empowerment; 6) comfort with a participatory research process; and 7) work with diverse community grassroots groups. Based on these criteria, a list of potential international partner organizations was developed, and narrowed down to include one from each region.

In April of 1991, representatives from IDR and PCMA met at the Highlander Center to participate in an STP environmental workshop[2]. The workshop involved representatives from local communities engaged in environmental struggles. The content and process of this workshop formed the foundation for the subsequent international workshop. Representatives of the three collaborating U.S. organizations also met several times during the weekend to make

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2. STP environmental workshops are held regularly at the Highlander Research and Education Center to discuss issues of the environment and economic development among grassroots community groups. The acronym has been used to represent several referrents, including Stop the Pollution, Save the Planet, Stop the Poison, and Shoot the Politicians.

decisions about international involvement, organizational responsibilities, and timetables for task completion.

Decisions were finalized concerning which international mediating organizations (NGOs) to invite to participate, and the information they would need to make a decision to be involved in this project. Invitations were sent to WALHI (The Indonesian Environmental Forum), KENGO (Kenyan Energy and Environment Organizations), and MAN (Movimiento Ambientalista Nicaraguense). Each NGO was asked to select one staff person and two persons from grassroots groups that they work with to be involved in this project. Representatives from the participating groups were asked to come to the international exchange prepared to help develop a proposal for an extended project involving international exchange among grassroots groups from the four regions.

In early May, representatives of the three U.S. collaborating groups met in Washington, D.C. to finalize plans for the international meeting. There was detailed discussion of: travel plans of the international visitors; the content and process of the meeting with agreement on roles and responsibilities for specific aspects of the 10 day visit; the information and exchange expected in the community visits; and the workshop. Special emphasis was placed on discussion of issues of facilitation and leadership during the workshop and potential modifications to the format of an STP workshop as a means to facilitate exchange among participants with multiple languages and cultures. Again, subgroups were created with responsibility for specific tasks both prior to and during the exchange period. Two additional planning activities - the documentation of the process and the planning/proposal writing days - were initially carried out by one person who took the lead for developing 'guidelines'. These guidelines were then responded to by other members of the U.S. teams.

There was agreement that substantial efforts would be made to involve the international participants to the extent possible in all phases of planning and implementation for the next phase of this project. Preliminary planning for the second phase of the project was completed prior to the international visits and distributed to the three U.S. organizations to provide a basis for the planning session conducted at the end of the international visit.

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
JUNE 23 - JULY 2, 1991

The international exchange took place June 23 to July 2, 1991 and was based at the Highlander Research and Education Center in eastern Tennessee. Three participants from Kenya and Nicaragua arrived Sunday, June 23. Due to scheduling difficulties, the Indonesian team was unable to arrive until Tuesday, June 25 and could send only two participants: they were joined during the workshop portion of the exchange by a third team member. The schedule for the 10 day exchange period included: orientation, community visits, debriefing, workshop, and planning days for future steps. Each of these events is outlined briefly in the following sections.

ORIENTATION, JUNE 23-24, 1991

An orientation period was facilitated by staff from the U.S. organizations and began with a brief overview of the events for the week, followed by an introduction to the Highlander Center and a brief history of its work. This was followed by personal introductions of the participants and their work.

Introductions were followed by a discussion of the goals of the project and the expectations of the international visitors. This included an extensive discussion, initiated by one of the visiting team members, of the problems encountered by the visiting countries as a result of pollution by multinational corporations. This conversation underscored the desire on the part of grassroots groups for

international communication and solidarity to address problems across national and regional boundaries.

The second day of the orientation session began with presentations by the Kenyan and Nicaraguan teams (the Indonesian team had not yet arrived) about the socio-political context in their countries, the environment and environmental issues, and the programs and strategies used by the grassroots groups and NGOs present (see Appendix A)[3]. International visitors had been asked to bring audio and visual tapes, and in the evening they shared music, dancing and videotapes from their home regions. Photographs depicting the environmental issues the groups were involved with were displayed on the walls of the main meeting room.

COMMUNITY VISITS, JUNE 25-27, 1991

A central component of the international exchange involved visits to community groups in the U.S. struggling with issues of environmental degradation and economic development. Through these visits the international teams saw the daily realities and the environments of community people in the Deep South and Appalachia. The community visits were designed to enable community people from the visiting countries to talk with community people in the U.S. and to explore commonalties among regions. As the visitors interacted with community members in the U.S., they learned that contrary to their prior perceptions, the U.S. communities faced problems of pollution and employment similar to those faced in their home countries.

To provide maximum opportunity for in-depth discussion and to minimize translation difficulties, country teams traveled together on the community visits. Each group included a team coordinator from Highlander and a recorder from

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3. Appendix A outlines briefly the environmental and socio-political context of the four countries participating in the workshop. This information was drawn from presentations made by each country team during the orientation sessions.

either the University of Michigan or the Institute for Development Research to document the content and process of the visits. A translator also accompanied the Nicaraguan team.

The community groups invited to host these visits were selected to maximize the diversity of the experience of the international participants during their time in the U.S. Each team visited four community groups over a three day period. Due to time constraints and the location of the Highlander Center in Tennessee, communities were selected within the Appalachian region and the Deep South. Host community groups varied on the following characteristics: 1) racial diversity, with white communities and African-American communities in Appalachia and the Deep South; 2) cultural diversity, as the experience of African American and white groups in the Deep South differed from that of African American and white groups in Appalachia; 3) diversity of issues, ranging from industrial contamination to hazardous waste sites to the struggles of the black family farmer; 4) diversity in stage and style of organizational development of the community group; and 5) diversity of strategy and tactical approach to organizing and social change.

The hosts at each community visit were provided background information about the program and the international participants, as well as an explanation of the goals of the visits. The activities themselves were planned by the community group members, and included visits to hazardous dump sites and industrial polluters, and attendance at community meetings. Many of the community groups hosted the international visitors in their homes, planned cultural events and informal gatherings, and prepared home cooked meals for the visitors and community members.

The community groups who hosted the international teams during the visits were also invited to attend the three day workshop held June 28-30 at the Highlander Center. This workshop provided opportunity for more in-depth

discussion and sharing of information and strategies across groups and is described in more detail in a later section of this paper.

Case studies of the communities and grassroots groups that were visited were prepared by the recorder for each team. These are presented in Appendix B.

DEBRIEFING SESSION, JUNE 28, 1991

Following the return from the community visits, the international visitors and members of IDR, PCMA and HREC met for a full day to discuss what they had seen and learned. Each of the three site visit teams met briefly to talk among themselves about the visits and their learnings, and to organize a brief presentation for the entire group. The following themes became apparent through these presentations and the subsequent discussion.

1. **Surprise at the extent of environmental damage and poverty in the U.S.**

The international visitors consistently expressed surprise at the extent of environmental damage and poverty experienced by communities they visited within the United States. They noted the marginalization of segments of the population, and the difficulties that poor communities experienced in influencing decisions that subjected them to environmental pollution or deterioration.

> *The poor in the U.S. have little power to fight the waste dumped in their back yard. Housing has been built on these dump sites and community residents are only recently becoming aware of this.*[4]

> *The community visits allowed an opportunity to obtain more information about the Civil Rights struggle in the U.S., and to realize that the struggle was still in progress, especially in marginalized communities.*[5]

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4. Quotes are reconstructed from notes kept during the workshop: they are not verbatim transcriptions.
5. This team had visited African American communities in the Deep South as part of their community tour.

2.   **Collusion between government and industry.**

The international teams were also struck by the collusion of government and industry in the protection and promotion of industrial interests at the expense of the environment and community health.

> *We were surprised that the officials (local politicians) ignored the industries who were polluting the communities.*

> *There was a high level of corruption in government and in plant management. Health care is not available to the community and there were many deaths due to environmental pollution. There is a need to question the viability of plants and the priority of capitalist production over people's health and environmental destruction.*

> *We came from the community visits with a feeling of personal contamination. The media, industry and the politicians are corrupt and the larger umbrella groups are not adequately supporting the community groups. There is a need to address this problem. The grassroots groups were struggling to support themselves as well as they could.*

> *It was alarming to see the contamination and the direct destruction of the environment. Community groups were working to bring in housing, clothing, and basic needs. Ultimately, it is the government's responsibility to take care of people's needs, to work toward getting people out of poverty, rather than helping them to 'get by' in continuing poverty.*

3.   **Differences in techniques used by community groups to influence environmental and development decisions.**

Each of the international teams commented on the commonalties and differences they observed in techniques used by community groups in the U.S. as compared to those used to create change in their home countries. Some of these differences related to the levels of repression used by the political regimes in the different countries, although activists in all of the countries, including the U.S., were acutely aware of the violence used against environmental activists.

> *We were surprised that people in the U.S. use rallies and demonstrations to create change. In (home country) it is illegal to have a rally without a permit, it is illegal to have a rally to protest.*

> *We noticed that community groups do not support each other. One community we visited was organizing against a waferboard plant polluting the area, and the community group in another community had used this material to construct their building.*

A few people in the communities had organized and were working very hard, while the rest of the community was not willing to work or raise their consciousness. There is a general lack of awareness of some of the problems, and the results of the industries polluting in other areas, and a failure to network among groups.

4. **Differences in organizing techniques and levels of support from outside groups and individuals.**

International visitors noted the lack of support available to community groups in the U.S., both from other community groups and from professionals willing to provide free or low cost assistance. In contrast, NGOs from the South[6] felt that they had access to extensive networks of lawyers, progressive people within government and other organizations, and networks with other NGOs which provide legal assistance and support for community groups. U.S. groups consistently were deterred from use of the legal system to pursue their issues as the court systems were too costly and too time consuming. It was noted that the legal systems in the U.S. as well as internationally often operate to protect the interests of the powerful and the wealthy, and that community groups were disadvantaged in these respects.

One international team noted that three of the four community groups they visited on their tour had no secretariat or outside organizer. Rather, these organizations were created and run by the people of the community. In contrast, in this group's home country, it is much more common for an NGO to come into a community to organize, facilitate, provide information, and advocate. Less common are community groups which organize on their own.[7]

Another group observed that, in contrast with their country where community groups are comprised primarily of younger people, these U.S. groups primarily involved older people. In most of the communities they visited,

6. In this case, south refers to the Southern Hemisphere rather than the southern portion of the United States.

7. While this is a fairly common model within the U.S. as well, the Highlander Center tends to work more with organizations created and run by community people and thus this type of group was more commonly represented in the community visits.

community groups were comprised of equal numbers of men and women. In one community the group was primarily comprised of women who organized, while men were concerned about the loss of their jobs if they spoke out. This international group expressed surprise that the threat of unemployment was used against people in their struggles and felt that this needed to be addressed.

> *One of the differences we noticed was in the strategies and methods used to create change. In (home country), people are not always free to speak openly if they disagree or think things are bad. In the U.S., people can demonstrate or speak out. If we are going to speak out, we need to know the law- people who don't know the law can't fight. We need to be informed about what our rights are and what loopholes are there. Also in (home country), there is no clear environmental law: it is pieced together in different places within the government.*

5.   Similarities in problems experienced and the benefits of developing networks across countries.

Finally, the international visitors frequently noted similarities in the problems experienced by the communities in the U.S. and those faced by communities in their home countries. Several noted that the development of networks across countries would enable grassroots groups to share strategies for addressing these problems.

> *The dumping of toxic substances in poor communities is one problem bringing people together. This raises questions for us about whether the same thing is happening in our country and we haven't recognized it yet.*

> *We see many similarities in the problems we observed in the U.S. communities and at home. Water pollution by heavy industries is a problem in both countries. Coercion of the community is used by industry to dampen opposition. In a capitalist society, jobs are needed to survive. The industry uses the jobs to coerce the community into silence.*

> *Women are active in the U.S. struggles with environmental issues because men have to be employed at the industries which are polluting. This is similar to our home situation, where women also are active in environmental struggles. The development of networks of women across countries can help to strengthen and empower women in these actions.*

It was also observed that environmentalists across countries are facing a difficult task: they are discredited and called 'crazy environmentalists'. Participants

noted that it often seems as if environmentalists are the enemies of the government: the government wants the industry because it brings a lot of wealth, so they don't react when problems arise. They suggest that solutions need to be sought which are good for both the environment and the country.

DISCUSSION AND CRITIQUE OF THE COMMUNITY VISITS

Following the descriptions and initial comments from each of the teams about the community visits, there was a general discussion of the learnings from these visits. It was pointed out by a team member from one of the visiting countries that the exchanges had been inherently unequal, with the international guests learning a lot about community problems and strategies in the U.S., but with less opportunity for the international groups to talk about their own work. A more reciprocal exchange in later years was suggested as a means to regain balance in the exchange of information. It was also noted that the models of change which had been shared with the South had been North American models to a large extent. It was suggested that South models may benefit the North and help to address the problems experienced by marginalized communities in the U.S.

By the end of this day-long debriefing session, the participants generated several lists of ideas based on the experience of the past several days. The lists included learnings from the community visits, common themes noted at the community level, and differences in strategies between the groups visited in the U.S. and communities in developing countries. Finally, participants assessed how they felt the visits had gone. These lists are included as Appendix C.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP, JUNE 28-30, 1991

The Environmental Change and Economic Development Workshop began Friday evening, following the debriefing session from the community visits. By this time the U.S. community group members who had hosted the field visits had begun

to arrive at Highlander. Twenty-six participants from non-governmental organizations and grassroots groups in four countries (Nicaragua, Indonesia, Kenya, United States) took part in the workshop. In addition, two workshop facilitators and seven support staff from three mediating organizations within the U.S. participated in the workshop: The Highlander Research and Education Center, the Institute for Development Research, and the Program in Conflict Management Alternatives at the University of Michigan. Two translators were present to facilitate communication among English, Spanish and Indonesian speakers.

Workshop participants were seated in rocking chairs in a large circle to promote exchange among participants. The purpose and history of the Environmental Change and Economic Development project were described briefly as an effort to bring together community groups from various parts of the world to enhance grassroots approaches to environmental problems and economic development, and to discuss ways to work collectively across national boundaries. Next, the workshop facilitators introduced themselves and described a general outline of workshop events over the next two days.

Introduction and Hopes and Fears

Participants were invited to introduce themselves and give a brief description of their environmental or community work, what they hoped to gain from the workshop and what their concerns or fears were in attending the workshop. Some of these hopes and fears are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Hopes and Fears About the Environmental Change and Economic Development Workshop*

Hopes
By sharing we can help each other
By bringing people together we will all
  begin to think differently about
  problems and the solutions to our problems
We will deepen our understanding of the
  opposition
We will learn ways of working together
We will learn about others and their struggles
  and hope our experience will be
  of use to others here
Fears
We will stay too broad (in our discussions)
  and will be unable to narrow down
We will emphasize that which is urgent and
  neglect that which is important
Some may not let us accomplish what we have
  been sitting here saying we want to do
May get myself into more trouble at home
  (if overcome fears about speaking out)

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* Partial list

At this point, the co-facilitators suggested guidelines and norms to facilitate cross cultural and cross language discussion in the workshop. These included: the importance of hearing from everyone in the group; listening; agreement that we would sometimes disagree; and encouraging participants to make use of the informal time during breaks to reach outside of regional groups to get to know others from different countries. Finally, participants were reminded of the need to be sensitive to issues of confidentiality and safety outside of the group to protect the participants living and working in threatening and repressive situations.

Country Presentations: Environmental Issues and Socio-Political Context

The group reconvened Saturday morning with introductions once again, as some participants had arrived late in the night. Participants from Indonesia, Kenya and Nicaragua gave presentations of the socio-political context in their countries, the major environmental and economic issues they encountered, and the projects on

which they were working.[8] (A summary of similar information presented during the orientation session is provided in Appendix A.) The presentations were intended to familiarize the U.S. and other country teams with the environmental problems faced by the groups in the visiting countries and the political and social context within which they conduct their work.

Following the presentations, the workshop participants worked together to develop an analysis of the environmental and development issues they face. They began by using an open brainstorming format to list and discuss the various parties who gain from the process of polluting the environment. The partial listing of these parties is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Parties Who Gain From Pollution*

- Multinational corporations
- Elected officials
- Local officials
- Lawyers
- Environmental regulatory agencies
- Landowners
- Banks
- Military
- Official families
- Ruling elite in developing countries
- Us

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* Partial list.

Through this discussion, it became clear that it is not just the North which benefits from pollution, but many wealthy and powerful people in the South also. As one workshop participant noted, there is an impoverished "South" in Northern countries as well as a wealthy and powerful "North" in Southern countries.

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8. International visitors had already received comparable information about the U.S. during the orientation session and the community visits.

Barriers to Effective Action

Next, workshop participants listed and examined some of the barriers to effectiveness in grassroots work on environmental and economic issues. A partial listing of these barriers is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Barriers to Effectiveness in Grassroots Work*

- Our own fear
- Lack of information
- Lack and love of money
- Lies by government
- Power of multi-nationals
- Media- not reporting
- No freedom of information
- Blackmail- international/ domestic/ jobs
- Bribery of developing countries
- Unemployment
- Lack of community organization
- Violence

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* Partial list

Role Plays of Decision Processes

Following this discussion, participants divided into four groups - Kenyan, Indonesian, Nicaraguan and U.S. - to prepare to role play. The role play was to illustrate a situation in which a multinational corporation and the government of that country had been working together and had made a decision to locate a hazardous waste site or a polluting industry in a local community. The role play participants were to enact how the decision was made and presented to the community. Participants played the roles of the corporate members, local government officials and community members. A few U.S. participants joined each of the international groups and played roles as agreed upon.

Similarities and Differences Identified Through Role Plays

After the performance of the role plays, similarities and differences across countries were discussed, as well as individual learnings. Many similarities were noted across countries in the tactics and processes used against communities and environmental groups. Key similarities in the themes included: 1) the loading of decision processes against the interests of low power groups and grassroots organizations around the world; 2) the sensitivity of government decision-making processes to the interests of wealthy corporations and powerful government officials, and their blindness to the concerns of the poor; and 3) the conviction across all the countries that "the system" could and would be perverted to serve the rich and powerful at the expense of the poor without constant vigilance and effective grassroots action.

There were differences in the extent to which existing norms and political systems required that collusion between government and corporate interests be covered by an illusion of legitimacy. Some skits illustrated efforts by governments to appear to consider grassroots interests, while in others protesters were summarily silenced by government "thugs". While the participants recognized differences in political regimes, they also made it clear that the interests of grassroots people are seldom met even by the most avowedly democratic governments.

Another key theme which appeared throughout the decision-making skits were North-South linkages in the government and corporate sectors which are involved in many decisions that lead to community pollution. All three Southern skits had Northerners (usually Americans) in the role that represented the sources of the capital and technology needed to start the new industry. Most of these characters drew on their "trouble-free" records in the North to defuse any local concern that there might be environmental consequences of the new plants.

While the Southern participants were particularly aware of the roles played by Northern corporations in the introduction of new plants, the Northerners were particularly aware of the likely consequences - since many of those plants are in fact leaving Northern communities for Southern contexts that have considerably lower pay scales, are less unionized, and less protective of the environment. There appeared to be a growing awareness of the dynamic of corporations moving from the north to the south, and the relationship between economic and environmental issues related to this dynamic.

Other themes which arose throughout the skits included: the collusion of 'experts' (environmentalists, lawyers and others) in the silencing of community voices and concerns; the use of employment opportunities as a lever to discourage speaking out against polluting industries; the oppression and intimidation of the opposition; and the fragmentation and devaluation of traditional cultures and communities, with concomitant destruction of their power to resist change.

How To Work Together

The final day of the workshop focused on ways to provide support and work together both within and across countries. Participants discussed both broad and specific strategies which could be used to improve work in environmental change and economic development. A long list of specific strategies was generated, and is appended to this paper (Appendix D). Key themes discussed regarding strategies are noted below.

1. **Network and exchange opportunities for grassroots activists to provide opportunities for mutual learning and exchange of information.**

Participants supported continued exchanges that would allow grassroots activists and NGO support organization staff to learn from each other and from experiences in other countries. National linkages among grassroots organizations

were seen as critical to recognizing and influencing key policy decisions and implementation.

There was wide variation across countries in the extent to which grassroots organizations work together or with national associations to influence policy decisions in sectors and levels at which they have little influence as individual organizations. WALHI, MAN and KENGO are all membership organizations that link many different grassroots organizations and to some degree represent a national voice for grassroots concerns. By contrast, most of the U.S. grassroots groups remain quite isolated from each other, and there are few larger organizations which support and advocate for these groups at a policy level.

This isolation of U.S. grassroots organizations was associated with their relative lack of information regarding opportunities for shaping national and international policy. For example, all the Southerners were familiar with the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992, whereas none of the U.S. grassroots groups knew of it.

2.   **Research and documentation of the experiences of grassroots groups, and dissemination of the results to grassroots groups in other regions.**

Research and documentation of grassroots environmental groups' struggles were viewed as essential resources for community groups in other parts of the world. Through documentation of strategies used by multinational corporations and community groups, other groups can learn both what they may be up against and techniques for addressing these issues. Many of the groups are struggling against corporations which have plants in other communities, either within the same region or in other regions: by documenting their actions and the strategies used to confront the corporations, information can be transferred among groups. Research on the experiences of these local sites is an essential part of documentation of the conflict.

Dissemination of case studies and reports of experiences of grassroots groups provides information for groups working on similar issues in other areas. The exchange of researchers and observers was also seen as beneficial, contributing to the learning of both the host and the home country of the visiting researcher.

3.   **International solidarity can help build an international grassroots movement, influence national and international policies, and support local struggles through broad based support.**

Network building and information exchange were considered foundations for the development of international support and solidarity. They provide a basis for international publicity for local struggles, dissemination of information regarding multinational corporations (e.g., boycotts of, or sharing the environmental record of a corporation across regions), and collective influence of grassroots groups on national and international environment and development policies. The exchanges noted above may be a component of building solidarity, but the development of international communication and support networks to share information and other resources on an ongoing basis are also necessary.

Evaluation

At the end of the workshop, a closing session provided an opportunity for participants to evaluate the events of the past week. Participants from both the North and the South commented on their new awareness of the commonalities among them:

> *I feel like I'm a member of a larger international family after coming to this workshop.*

Participants from the Southern countries again noted the impact of the community visits on their perception of the United States. As one participant commented:

> *When I received the invitation and initial description of this project, I wasn't clear how grassroots action related to the United States - I thought there were no grassroots communities in the U.S. Now I know differently.*

Finally, participants noted changes in their perceptions of the environmental movement itself. This included an expanded awareness of the global nature of the problem for some, while for others it took the form of placing prior concerns about community problems into the context of the environmental movement.

I am more aware that a global action is needed and that it must come from the grassroots.

Prior to this I didn't see myself as an environmentalist, but as someone seriously concerned about community problems. Maybe now I'll become an environmentalist- it has put my commitment into this perspective.

Wherever I went I found the people were great, and what I learned in the workshop was also great. We shared experiences and created new ideas. I didn't understand the word environment in quite this way before- I thought it was trees, etc., but now I have an expanded vision of what it is about.

PLANNING DAYS, JULY 1-2, 1991

The final component of the international visit was a two-day planning period, in which the international organizations and the three U.S. partner organizations worked together to create a proposal for a collaborative project building on the experiences of the past week. This period began with a half-day planning session in which the teams from each country and the three U.S. partner organizations met separately to discuss future participation. Each group was asked to consider: how they would like to participate; how this project fits with the agenda of their organization; and resources they have to offer the project.

The groups met together briefly as a large group to discuss the responses to these questions. Based on this meeting, it was clear that all of the participating groups were interested in collaborating in the creation of a long term exchange and networking project. One representative from each of the NGOs met together Monday evening and Tuesday morning to draft a plan for a renewed proposal to submit to the MacArthur Foundation.

Both Northern and Southern participants expressed interest in developing organizational capacities and strengthening strategies and tactics for community work. When the NGOs discussed their needs and interests they independently converged on three different kinds of activities that they wanted to pursue and that would enhance their future effectiveness. These were: 1) continued exchanges that would allow grassroots activists and NGO staff to learn from each other and from experience in other countries; 2) training that would enhance grassroots leadership, environmental awareness, and technical capacities; and 3) participatory action research that would develop case studies to document key activities and learnings that could be used by other community projects, and in the development of policy implications. An overall aim of these activities would be to build local capacity for effective action.

In addition, the participants put international exchanges among grassroots activists at the top of their list of desired continuing activities. Such exchanges offer opportunities for sharing problems and solutions, exchanging information, joint problem-solving on difficult issues, building solidarity and support, and identifying issues where joint action across international boundaries may prove helpful.

A number of other issues and roles and responsibilities were identified for future discussion and clarification. These included:

- progress reports would be written and shared;
- regarding exchanges, each partner has veto power if the collaboration is not working in terms of its responsibilities and relationships to community groups;
- steering committee will set policy and oversee the project - it will meet face-to-face and have other communications;
- program/country and steering committee decision-making areas need to be defined;
- clarification for evaluation responsibility needed;
- IDR accountability during the proposal writing process;
- partner accountability during the proposal writing process;
- raising issues of trust and concerns; and
- representing the project outside (e.g., credibility, credit or public relations).

The design and process of the planning meetings contributed to building the participation of Southern partners. In the first stage, each of the organizations that support grassroots groups outlined potential program components in four areas: community exchange; information exchange and networking; training; and research. These were shared and the two intermediary organizations were invited to respond to these and suggest how they might contribute. In the next phase, plans for developing the proposal and basic agreements about working relationships were developed in a meeting facilitated by IDR. Following the meeting, each organization further developed its plans and budget. IDR prepared a draft proposal which was reviewed by all and amended before submission to the Foundation.

COMMENTS AND LEARNINGS ABOUT THE PILOT PROJECT YEAR

The pilot project year was instrumental in learning about the process of building collaborative relationships across groups and across regions. The process of building and managing an inter-organizational team is described earlier in this report. Here we present some comments and learnings about collaborative efforts which grew out of this experience. The three U.S. organizations worked together extensively during the planning year to sponsor the visit to the U.S. and much of the material in this section deals with the challenges of this joint sponsorship and coordination. During the visit itself and the planning period for future work, the six organizations worked together: learnings which derive from this experience are included in the sub-section entitled "Extending the Collaborative Network".

Many of the learnings which are discussed here became apparent as conflicts or differences arose throughout the planning year. Although some were anticipated and discussed early in the collaborative project, they often resurfaced in different forms at various points during the project. Below we note some general issues that arose and discuss briefly our thoughts about how these might have been addressed.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive treatment, but merely to raise issues for consideration.

Collaboration: Assumptions, Expectations and Team Building

"Collaboration" may mean different things to different people, both within and between organizations. For some, a collaborative project involves a team-building process, with members of each organization becoming part of a new inter-organizational team with shared collaborative roles and responsibilities. For others, the collaborative process may be one of coalition building, with members of different organizations coming together to work on specific, separate tasks towards a common goal, but not necessarily building a team in the process. These differences imply different communication and decision-making processes, as well as differences in project management.

A second, but related, issue is the extent to which emphasis is placed on collaborative decision-making processes. Participatory decision-making, in which all team members share responsibility for participation in discussions and the development and implementation of action plans, may be valued differently both within and between organizations. The benefits of participatory decision-making must be balanced against the time commitment involved. Not all will agree that the extra time investment is balanced by the gains in team-building which may derive from this process, particularly when there are differences related to whether collaboration means team building or coalition building. The level of participation necessary for effective collaboration may vary depending upon the tasks that need to be accomplished and the participants involved. The tasks to be accomplished, the personal styles of team members, and organizational norms and constraints are all factors influencing the extent of participatory decision-making.

An explicit conversation early in a project about assumptions related to collaboration and about the costs and benefits of different levels of participation

may help to facilitate the collaborative process. However, despite such an early conversation, differences may continue to arise, and repeated conversations and negotiations may be necessary. Strong norms for participation and team building on the part of some group members may not be easily relinquished, and may conflict with organizational priorities and human constraints in other organizations. These issues may not be resolved, or even clearly articulated, in one early conversation, but may require continued attention and energy. Therefore, commitment to organizational priorities and constraints is essential.

Another potential source of difference among participants in a collaborative project is in definitions and norms regarding 'processing' that is, discussions of and reflections on a group's work together. Within organizations there are clear differences about styles of processing as well as the extent to which time and energy should be allocated to processing rather than more task oriented activities, particularly when team building and collaborative learning are defined and valued differently by participating organizations and individuals. The establishment of the meaning of processing for each of the collaborating partners, the circumstances under which they view it as being useful, and the style in which they prefer to carry it out may be a starting point for the development of jointly agreed upon mechanisms for discussion of perceptions and concerns throughout a project.

Models of Learning

When education is a fundamental goal of a collaborative process, it is important to recognize differences in models of education, learning and training which may underlie differences among the collaborating partners. The use of a large group format or the use of small groups for information sharing and discussion each have advantages and disadvantages, depending upon the objectives of a particular learning event and the extent of integrative and analytic work to be done. In addition, because styles of participation may vary with class, culture, gender, and

personality, some variation in process and format can facilitate learning for a broader range of participants. Once again, a discussion early in the collaborative process in which educational goals are articulated and different formats for meeting these goals are explored may be useful.

Flexibility and willingness to explore new and innovative educational processes may be necessary. Again, as in the above discussion, differences are likely to persist due to both individual skills and preferences and institutional commitments and constraints. A single discussion may not be sufficient, but can provide the basis for understanding differences which may arise later in the process.

Extending the Collaborative Network

The planning process for future collaboration and pursuit of renewed funding for this project was conducted at the end of the international workshop, while participants from all four regions were together and able to plan as a group. Preliminary work for the renewed project had been completed by the U.S. partners to facilitate this process. However, neither the MacArthur Foundation's "Request for Proposals" document nor the original grant proposal (written in 1990 by the three U.S. partner groups) had been shared with the three international partners. This oversight was problematic in that all participants were not familiar with the background and initial set of assumptions and objectives of the U.S. partners and the Foundation's initiative.

At the same time, the dynamics of the exchange had resulted in a reformulation of the partnership configuration from three U.S. organizers and three "international guests", to four grassroots support groups (KENGO, MAN, WALHI & Highlander Center) and two U.S. intermediaries (PCMA & IDR). Planning for future collaboration rested on a basic assumption that the four grassroots support groups were the primary actors, and that the role of the two intermediary research/education organizations was to support these groups. In this instance

expansion of the collaboration to include the three "international partners" also involved role redefinition based on organizational missions and competencies for furthering grassroots exchange and learning. Leadership and power shifted away from the two research/education intermediaries toward the four grassroots support groups. This meant that the planning effort reframed previous work, and the objectives of the proposal.

Time affected the way the collaborative network was extended. Less than a month was available for submitting a proposal for support of a continuing effort. It required that partners respond quickly, which they did. The firm deadline may have provided an incentive for cooperation. At the same time it limited opportunities to fully elaborate the elements of the proposal (e.g., the overall research).

An extended period for planning which would have allowed all partners the opportunity to reflect and revise proposal ideas might have furthered the development of more solid relationships as well as more carefully crafted plans. However, even without a time constraint, many of the partners may have viewed more detailed planning as premature given the uncertainty of the Foundation's response.

Trust, Respect and Institutional Dynamics

Finally, the process of building a collaborative project is one which we believe should be undertaken with care and consideration for the goals, roles and dynamics both within partner organizations and between them. Within organizations it is often not possible for those persons involved in the original planning of a project to remain integrally involved throughout its implementation. Different individuals within any organization have different roles, responsibilities and skills that can be most effectively applied to the diverse tasks and needs of a given project. However, in cases where the initial project development is built upon the trust and prior professional and personal relationships of the collaborators, and

where there is a transfer of responsibility for implementation of the project to team members who do not have this shared history, it can not be assumed that this trust will transfer. Organizations entering a collaborative project need to explore the existing bases of trust and respect and either build on those bases, or generate new ones. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that participation in the original design of a project creates a common understanding and commitment to the ongoing collaborative process on the part of those involved, and thus particular attention needs to be placed on who is involved in this design phase and their subsequent role in a project.

At the inter-organizational level, when partner organizations are operating from different institutional bases with different missions, goals and constituencies, there is the possibility of different understandings and conflict about these differences, especially when organizations and their members are labeled based on stereotypic expectations (labels such as researchers, community activists). In addition, when organizations represent different national and cultural perspectives, there is the potential for differences in understandings based on, for example, language, values, norms, and beliefs. Therefore, in establishing a collaborative project partner organizations need to develop open channels of communication and explore their differences and build on the uniqueness as well as commonalities of those involved.

Managing Institutional Differences and a Dynamic Situation

This project brought six organizations together from different cultures, continents and social conditions. Various motivations, hopes and perceptions of risk shaped the participation of each. Inevitably, conflict arose as the groups sought to find common ground and to define a framework for future interaction.

The exchange became the focal point for defining shared goals, roles, and methods for this collaboration. Redefinition of the roles of various organizations

was required by our changing understanding of the collaborative situation itself. A collaboration necessarily begins with limited information about the parties involved. Through interactions and events encountered, new information becomes available. In this pilot project there were many unforeseen developments that required changes from early plans, expectations and assumptions. For example, facilitation roles shifted from an inclusive, not very differentiated model in the orientation sessions, to a renegotiated understanding that reflected the differing institutional interests and competencies of the three U.S. organizations. Similarily, the roles of the two intermediary research/education groups changed dramatically as the four grassroots support groups expanded their "ownership" of the project during the planning phase.

Success in redefining institutional arrangements and relationships relies heavily on the ability of individuals to resolve conflicts at both interpersonal and institutional levels. Sometimes it is not clear which of these is at issue. Organizational differences can be interpreted in individual terms because, in part, people are the carriers of the institution's values, interests, and norms. When initial differences are not easily recognized and handled, both individual and institutional differences can have large impacts.

The pilot project illustrated many sources of conflict and constraints on their effective management. Different formulations of the conflict situation emerged, depending on the insights and perspectives of the parties. For example, some interpreted ideological differences as an expression of organizational priorities and imperatives, while others saw these in individual terms. Without agreeing on the "problem", it was difficult to find resolution. A strong norm for inclusion was created early in the planning of the pilot program. This made it more difficult to discuss differences in capacities and skills and to agree on appropriate roles. Finally, social hierarchies and power dynamics are inevitably part of collaborations

that span complex social chasms and differences. These are not easily bridgeable, and not easily resolvable. Moving from a collection of organizations that mirror social gaps - rich and poor; North and South; grassroots and elite - to a collaboration that transcends these differences is no easy task. Creating mechanisms for recognizing differences; understanding their impact on the nature of the collaboration; and resolving issues that prevent the creation of new relationships are critical steps in bridging these gaps in constructive ways. The pilot project demonstrated some of the challenges these complex issues raise.

PRODUCTS OF THE PLANNING PROJECT YEAR

There are two primary tangible products from this planning project year. The first is the proposal mentioned above, which was developed collaboratively by the six participant organizations: WALHI, MAN, KENGO, IDR, HREC and PCMA. The proposal was submitted to the MacArthur Foundation for consideration for funding of a three year project building on the events and relationships established during the planning year.

The second product is this report which describes the process and content of the international exchange which took place during the pilot project year, and a brief analysis of key issues in the development of inter-organizational and international collaborative projects.

APPENDIX A

Social, Political and Environmental Situations
Of Participating Countries*

I.   Nicaragua: Movimiento Ambientalista Nicaraguense (MAN)

There are 16 departments within Nicaragua and three large administrative regions which correspond roughly to environmental regions. The Pacific Region receives the lowest levels of precipitation and the Atlantic Region the highest, with the Central Region receiving an intermediate amount. In each of these regions, tourism is increasing and is encouraged by the government.

The Spanish came to Nicaragua by way of Panama and settled in the Pacific Region, where they sought to destroy the indigenous cultures of the region. The English settled in the Atlantic area, and were not as oppressive. Remnants of the colonial system affect Nicaragua's current economic and environmental situation. Landowners have amassed more and more land, displacing small landowners and forcing them to clear rain-forested areas for farming.

Nicaragua's recent economic and environmental history is deeply tied to the United States. The earliest corporate intervention occurred in the late 1880's when the Boston Lumber Co. established operations in Nicaragua, soon followed by fruit and steamship industries. The focus of interest of outside corporations has been rubber, mining, cotton, cattle, fisheries and cheap labor. All of these industries have been based on the exploitation of natural resources and human resources for international export.

Since 1951 the agricultural industry in Nicaragua has used pesticides heavily, including very powerful contaminants.   Insects in Nicaragua have become increasingly resistant to insecticides: boll weevils in the Pacific region are 45 times

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*This information was drawn from presentations made by each country team during the orientation sessions and the workshop.

more resistant to pesticides than in other parts of the world. As a result, Nicaraguan people have high levels of pesticides in their bodies: twelve times the national average in the rest of the world. The presence of DDT in human fats in Nicaragua is sixteen times the national average globally, while women's breast milk in Nicaragua contains 45 times the national average in other parts of the world. In 1972, 500 deaths were attributed directly to pesticide use: in 1980 the number had risen to over 1000. Up to 5% of the population suffer from the effects of pesticide contamination.

The military dictatorship which held power in Nicaragua for 50 years was overthrown by revolution in 1979. The new government reorganized the credit system and conducted land redistribution so that up to 50% of the land can be owned by cooperatives. This has enabled people at the grassroots to organize much better. Attempts by the new government, elected in 1990, to undermine the changes created by the Sandinistas have been met with resistance by the people. There appears to be continuing organizing at the grassroots level, especially in technical areas.

Nicaragua suffers from environmental destruction resulting from the acceptance of technological packages developed in the U.S. which exploit the environment. While Nicaragua is economically dependent upon environmental resources, there has been no plan to reproduce or replace these resources. Moreover, government policy has encouraged foreign business by allowing economic and environmental concessions to these industries, at the expense of the living conditions of the rural and poor communities. Unemployment remains at 67% despite the influx of foreign industry; health problems resulting from exposure to toxic hazards and tuberculosis have increased, while the availability of health care has declined in rural and poor communities. As a result, some sectors of the population have rearmed, and the potential exists for renewed military activity.

There is increasing confrontation between the government and the people, and demands for services such as education and health care are increasing. While the Sandinista government refused to recognize Nicaragua's international debt, the UNO government has done so. As a result, Nicaragua is now subject to structural adjustment programs promoted by the World Bank and the IMF to repay loans. These economic policies place priority on repayment of the debt and result in greater environmental exploitation and greater hardship for marginalized people, as employment decreases and loan rates increase.

The Environmental Movement in Nicaragua

The Environmental Movement developed in Nicaragua between 1979-1989. During this time, policies were changed to discourage the indiscriminate use of pesticides. Nicaragua was also boycotted and prevented access to the world market as it was alleged to have become a communist country. Despite these changes, there is no national policy toward environmental protection and no regulation to prohibit practices by larger corporations which are detrimental to human health. Heavy contamination of rivers and lakes from past pesticide use remains a problem.

The economic development program outlined by the new government opens the door for Taiwanese corporations to lumber in Nicaragua, while other multinational corporations are seeking to build toxic waste incinerators and to import substances which contain toxic materials. Efforts to protect the environment from these threats have been labeled communist in this context, in an effort to discredit them.

MAN was organized in 1988 by experts interested in bringing environmental problems to the attention of the general population. MAN's membership is comprised of 20 groups within Nicaragua, in addition to individual student, peasant and professional members. The organization is run by a Board of Directors, with a

5 member Executive Board responsible for carrying out board decisions. Projects currently underway fall into five major areas:

1. Environmental Education and Popular Participation: MAN is working with local populations on the resolution of local environmental problems, including toxic contamination of Lake Managua, and problems of potable water, toxic contamination, contagious diseases and meeting basic energy needs in Managua. They are also working with the Association of Nicaraguan Cinematographers and the World Wildlife Fund to produce environmental programs for Nicaraguan television.

2. Agriculture and Environment: Working with agricultural groups to support organic agricultural techniques, restore degraded soils, and promote organic agricultural production and integrated pest management.

3. Peace, Development and Environment: Working with affected populations to create a development plan which will integrate the Nicaraguans displaced by the contra war in a manner which is both environmentally sound and which meets the needs of the population.

4. Women and the Environment: This program is designed to investigate and address the domestic and communal environmental problems that particularly affect women.

5. Other Programs: Working with pesticide reduction, assisting refuges and those displaced by the war, creating an international Peace Park on the border between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and the development of a national wildlife refuge at Chacocente.

MAN's current strategy is to work with the government with a minimum of conflict. Government representatives are invited to participate in the process of building the environmental movement. The government was invited to attend the Women and Environment Conference in June of 1991, and the Minister of Natural Resources attended and took responsibility for supporting further actions. The government has also invited NGOs, including MAN to work with them on other projects, such as the elimination of cholera.

II. Kenya: Kenyan Energy and Environment Organizations (KENGO)

Kenya, a small country in east Africa, has a population of about 24 million. Swahili is the national language: schools are conducted in English, and several other languages are spoken in local areas. Those who grow up in urban areas may not know their local (mother) tongue, but may speak only English and Swahili.

Three fourths of the country is arid and sparsely populated, with dense population in the urban centers, lake regions, and in the highlands, where precipitation is greater. Most of Kenya's cash crops, such as coffee and tea, are grown in these less arid areas. The dry areas, or scrub lands, are used for grazing beef cattle and for national parks. Kenya has few mineral resources for industry: there are some glass making, chemical and cement production factories in areas where the infrastructure is sufficient to support them.

Kenya was colonized by England and the Sultan of Oman. There was major slave trade from Zanzibar Island off the coast of Tanzania, and slave traders went in as far as the current capital of Nairobi. The Massai, who lived in this area, were very hostile to the slave traders and stopped them from going further inland. "Nairobi" in the Massai language means 'a stream of cold clear water'. The Nairobi River is now extremely polluted with effluents from industry. It smells so bad that no one wants to live along it: all of the slums and marginalized people in Nairobi are located along the river.

The structure of the government is linked to the British government structure and consists of three branches: legislative, executive and judicial. The British government structure grants the greatest power and resources to a few people, while the community, with the greatest number, have the least power.

While the system was designed and put in place by the British, it has continued relatively intact after independence on December 12, 1963. The sub-

location or village is the lowest administrative level. In colonial times the chief was the lowest arm of oppression, enforcing taxes and other government policies. During colonial times, representatives at the Division level and up were always white: now they may be black or white but carry out similar functions. Independence resulted mainly in a changing of the guard: the current movement is aimed at changing the power structure itself.

Multinational corporations have control of resources at the national level in Kenya. Community sentiments must go through all levels of the government, beginning with the sub-location, and are likely to fall on deaf ears at the higher levels where officials benefit from multinational corporations.

The District level has become the focus for rural development policy making. As part of the effort to decentralize and shift power to lower levels within the system, each District has been assigned responsibility for creating its own development policy. This process begins at the level of the sub-location, with a Sub-location Development Committee which includes representation from the community. There are no community level forums for discussion and planning, and only selected representatives from the community attend the Sub-location Planning Meetings.

The Sub-location Development Committee talks to the Locality Planning Committee, which then works with the Divisional Planning Committee, and finally the District Planning Committee. The structure as it currently stands still allows the silencing of community people. A community which wishes to protest an environmental policy must work through the levels of this process: it is illegal to demonstrate in protest. The community has not had any voice in large scale IMF projects like hydroelectric dams which involve relocation of large numbers of local people.

Harambee (self help or working together) is a key element of Kenyan government policy. School, roads and hospitals all utilize a form of cost sharing in which the community shares the cost with the government. Unless the community works together on these issues, the poor can not afford books, uniforms, or buildings for schools. This is especially a problem in communities with no cash crops. Cost sharing is a strategy which developed because the government does not have the funds to provide these services: much of the governments funds go to pay off the national debt. Cost-sharing is also in line with recommendations of the World Bank's Structured Adjustment Policy.

Energy and Environment Work in Kenya

The United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, held in Nairobi in 1981, was the impetus for the formation of KENGO, a coalition of Kenyan NGOs which coordinates work on renewable energy and community development in Kenya. KENGO has six major programs that combine a resource production and management strategy. These include: 1) a field extension program initiated to promote and facilitate food production, tree planting, and energy conservation at the community level; 2) a biomass energy technology development program, which conducts research and development of improved cookstoves and the socioeconomic impact of these new technologies; 3) the regional wood energy program for Africa, which works across national boundaries in East and Southern Africa to curtail wood consumption; 4) an international development and networking program; 5) a natural resources research and development program to gather information on Kenya's indigenous trees; and 6) a land use management program.

Wood fuel is the single most important renewable source of energy in Kenya, and there is a new and growing awareness of deforestation. Many community groups plant trees in an effort to stem soil erosion and grow wood for fuel. In the

wetter areas, deforestation is a result of tree cutting for fuel, while in the dry areas, deforestation results from overgrazing.

The land use management program attempts to address conflicts which arise over land use and ownership. Rights to resources on the land may not be held by the group or individual who owns the land. Conflicts over land use arise primarily when the land is owned by one entity while resources are controlled by another.

Land grabbing by those in powerful positions, such as the government and corporations, perpetuates the poverty of less powerful groups. The privatization of communal land is a concern, as these lands become increasingly owned and controlled by corporations. There is pressure for communities and individuals to move onto state owned and private corporate land as the bulk of the land comes to be owned by these interests.

Pesticide use in rural communities by small subsistence farmers is also a problem in Kenya. Much of the formal sector has been promoting the sale and use of pesticides: once small farmers begin to use chemicals they are pushed toward cash crops, as they need cash to purchase the pesticides. NGOs are working with local farmers to promote organic and sustainable forms of agriculture.

Public awareness and education are a focus of KENGO's work, based on the belief that these are more effective than the use of boycotts and other more confrontational methods to create change. There is an emphasis on working with, rather than against, the government to the extent possible.

Community work involves the provision of technical and informational assistance and support for grassroots groups. They attempt to build on indigenous knowledge rather than replace it with technology. Their work with the Keyo Women's Group in Kisumu is an example. The Keyo Women's Group began in 1984 and developed a small nursery to encourage tree planting to increase the availability of firewood in their community. A drought forced them to abandon this

project, and in 1985 they began working with KENGO to produce fuel efficient stoves. Pottery was a traditional craft in the area, and was readily adapted to stove making with technical and informational support from KENGO. The stoves are made for collective, rather than individual, profit. The goal of the group is to eventually raise enough money to purchase a piece of land for the production of the stoves: they currently operate out of a facility built with assistance from KENGO on land donated by the husband of one of the group members.

In addition to selling the stoves, the women's group encourages participation in agricultural activities to increase food and cash crops. They also provide education about diet, nutrition, use of clean water, health and family planning, and provide support for community members in times of bereavement and difficulty.

III.   Indonesia: Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (WALHI)

Indonesia is comprised of 17,000 islands with a total population of 180 million. The population of the capital city of Jakarta is 9 million. The government consists of a parliament elected directly by the people, and a president elected by the parliament. The current president has been in power for 26 years, and is likely to be re-elected in the next round.

Indonesia is often cited as an example of a 'good' recipient of World Bank funds. They borrowed money from the World Bank several years ago and are repaying the debt on time, at the rate of $7 billion per year.

WALHI: The Indonesian Environmental Forum

WALHI was established in 1980 by a group of 10 NGOs with the goal of increasing the participation of NGOs in environmental efforts. Currently WALHI is comprised of 149 participating NGOs in the environmental movement. WALHI works with NGOs in local communities to organize and provide legal aid to promote cleaner environments and community well-being. In the period between 1989 and 1992, WALHI has four priority issues:

1) Biological Diversity Conservation
2) Law and Environment
3) Climatic Change
4) Women and Environment, and
5) Urban Population.

Currently, WALHI is working in communities where lives and livelihood are being threatened by industrial pollution. Factories dump effluent into water sources, polluting rice and shrimp fields which are primary food sources for communities downstream. WALHI is working to organize community members around this issue, while other NGOs are working to provide sources of clean water. In one community, the same village experiencing this industrial pollution has also been selected as the municipal dump site. It has become so unpleasant to live there that people are leaving and selling their land very inexpensively, allowing the

municipality to purchase even more cheap land for their dump. Several NGOs are working together to bring attention to this problem, and have requested a meeting with the provincial parliament members to discuss its resolution. In 1992, a priority will be the issue of urban population, with concern especially focused on the slum area around the Ciliwong River in Jakarta.

WALHI is also working as part of a coalition of NGOs to boycott six polluting industries in Indonesia. They have created a coalition of human rights, women's rights, and environmental organizations in the first Indonesian effort to use boycotts to create pressure for change.

WALHI uses three primary strategies for change:

1) advocacy, or third party mediation of discussions,
2) lawsuits, as a backup strategy if mediation fails, and
3) consumer education and support for community
   activists and organizers who experience retaliation
   or harassment as a result of their activities.

An important milestone in WALHI's first ten years of existence was the filing of a lawsuit against five governmental agencies and a pulp and rayon factory. This was the first lawsuit ever brought by an NGO on an environmental issue. While WALHI lost the suit, they managed to acquire legal standing in representing environmental problems.

IV.   Appalachia

The Appalachian region begins in New York and continues through Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Virginia, and West Virginia. There are North, Central and Southern regions within Appalachia. Central Appalachia is the only portion with extensive coal reserves: mining has changed the culture of this region extensively.

Historically, Central Appalachia was first settled by whites at the expense of Native Americans. A lot of white immigrants were from the debtors prisons in the British Isles, and many were of Scottish and Irish descent. They settled in the Appalachian region and did not have much contact with the outside world until the mid-1950s.

Railroads were developed for coal transportation and provided a gateway into the region. Coal miners lived in mining camps owned and operated by the mining companies. Food and supplies were purchased at the company stores, and often workers ended the month more in debt than they began as supplies were more costly than their earnings.

Many of the coal mining operations are owned by multinational corporations. To bust the unions, they first imported Italians, then African Americans from the south, thinking that language and racial barriers would prevent workers from organizing. Workers organized despite these barriers and formed the United Mine Workers Union, one of the strongest in the country. The union was helpful in improving wages, but the area continues to have one of the highest rates of unemployment (43%) and illiteracy in the U.S. Most of the land here is owned by multinational corporations and the government.

Appalachia remained isolated from the rest of the U.S. until the mid-1960's with no telephones, roads or electricity. The War on Poverty built roads throughout central Appalachia to bring coal out as well as bring development in. The roads

resulted in more exploitation because the companies could get in better to get the coal. The Tennessee Valley Authority was the first to develop strip mining, where the entire top of the mountain is removed down to the layer of coal. Severe water pollution is one result of the strip mining. Water in the area is not drinkable and water birds can not nest in the streams because their nests become silted from the run-off. Thousands of acres of hardwoods are lost per day as trees are cut and bulldozed under as part of the strip mining operations.

Now industrial waste is being brought in from the industrial Northeast to put in the land which has already been disturbed by strip mining. Appalachia does not have enough people to influence the political process and also suffers from entrenched power in the region which uses its power, money and violence against those who protest. Economic blackmail is common and those who speak out against the system are unable to find jobs or obtain assistance. Many youth leave the area because there are no jobs, so only the very young and the elderly are left.

Appalachia has been culturally isolated and has a distinct culture which includes music, basket-making, quilting and wood carving. Appalachians have lived for a long time primarily on a barter economy and have developed a strong sense of community. They have a long history of community organizing which continues today. Organizing has been effective on small, local issues, but has not yet been effective in creating a broader movement. People are now beginning to talk about structural economic change and ways to invert the power pyramid. The immediate question for community groups is how to decide whether to address local issues or national and international problems.

APPENDIX B

Case Studies: International Environmental Change and Economic Development
Community Visits
June 25-27, 1991

I.   **Indonesian Group Tour: JONAH, SOCM, Dayhoit and Yellow Creek**

JONAH (Just Organized Neighborhood Area Headquarters):
West Tennessee

Problems

JONAH identifies unemployment, education, health, roads and the environment as the major problems of the black community in this rural section of west Tennessee. Current representation in local government is clustered in white communities, excluding black political influence. JONAH seeks to gain power and develop leadership within the black community to work toward greater involvement in and responsibility for local decision making.

JONAH began working in the community in 1977: there are now 11 community groups in 8 counties. The communities within JONAH's area have been targeted for solid and hazardous waste dump sites; they are located between two major airports (Nashville and Memphis); a railroad, highway and the Mississippi River provide transportation into the area; it is flat, with an acceptable clay content for waste dumping; and has a low income black population.

Structure

JONAH staff members are community activists and leaders recruited from the local chapters of JONAH. The central office provides two year internships for these local leaders in preparation for staff positions. This ensures that staff live within the communities in which JONAH works, and are familiar with and committed to change within those communities.

The board is comprised of two members from each of the 11 member community groups. The board has decision making responsibility for setting priority

issues for the organization to address. Training for staff and community members is provided by outside support groups, such as the Highlander Center and the Center for Community Change. There is a commitment to training and staff development within the organization.

The main office is located in Jackson, Tennessee, central to the communities in which groups are located. There is a satellite office in Haywood county, which has a 52% black population: a newsletter provides communication between groups.

Strategies

There are large numbers of unskilled laborers in the communities, with few opportunities for steady, full time work under non-hazardous conditions. The types of employers attracted to the communities are not what the communities would wish: hazardous waste dumps, garment factories (where garment dust is a health hazard), and chemical factories seek to move into the area. Because jobs are scarce, employees who speak out against environmental or health problems are threatened with job loss. Community groups affiliated with JONAH have organized demonstrations against companies: employees who participate in these are commonly threatened or fired.

Education has been a concern, in part because of the difficulty of transportation resulting from poor road conditions. Haywood County contains 150 miles of rural roads, and most of those in black communities are unpaved, with substandard bridges and no street name, railroad crossing or stop signs. The community group in this county has organized around this issue, and recently elected a black representative to the road commission. Due to the poor quality of the roads, many of the children in these communities have to walk to school, and absentee rates are high as a result.

Many community members live in substandard housing with no running water or electricity. Community Block Grants are federally mandated to help poor

community residents, but are often controlled by the power structure and used to benefit those with power. JONAH members traveled to Washington, D.C. to learn how to apply for Community Development Block Grants to improve housing, bypassing white decision makers who have used Block Grants for their own gain in the past. JONAH used the grant to put plumbing in community houses, doing most of the work themselves to retain the money within the black community (avoiding white contractors). They have also gained appointments to housing boards in their communities, and forced landlords to meet housing standards and lower rents in some cases.

A primary strategy is to increase voter registration and black political representation to improve political power within the black community. They have initiated voter registration drives and encouraged community group members to run for mayoral and legislative office, in addition to seeking appointments on school boards and other decision making groups.

JONAH has also been concerned with general community development. They obtained federal funds for the development of community playgrounds: JONAH members build the playgrounds themselves. In addition, recent school reform resulted in the closing of all the black community schools because of their substandard quality. Students from these schools have been integrated into other community schools. JONAH forced the county commissioners to give the empty school buildings to the communities as community centers. These community centers now house a fire station, electoral equipment, and provide space for other JONAH activities.

Roane County SOCM (Save Our Cumberland Mountains): Roane County, Tennessee

SOCM (Save Our Cumberland Mountains) started in 1971-72 as one group, then formed local chapters in different communities. There are currently 12

chapters, with a membership of about 1200 families. The Roane County chapter had been inactive for a period, then reorganized in 1989 to oppose a medical waste dump to be sited in Knoxville. They continue to battle the siting of proposed incinerators in the community- at one time there were five proposed incinerators in the area- and have also organized to clean up the local waste dump which was polluting the local river. They now organize around a variety of issues of concern to the community: recently they were active in protesting the parole of a local man convicted of sexual abuse. They work closely with the media to draw attention to these concerns and to influence local officials to take action.

Members of the community group talked about their personal empowerment through SOCM activity. One group member in particular described her experience as she learned to have confidence in her ability to demand a democratic decision making process in her community.

SOCM came into the Roane County community to help the group learn how to organize around the waste incinerator. SOCM initially called a town meeting, advertised through fliers: people were concerned about the incinerator and eager to learn what they could do to prevent its construction.

Through working with SOCM, the Roane County community learned to demonstrate, write letters to representatives, and speak out at county commissioners' meetings. After defeating the proposed incinerator, they continued to fight other issues as they arose. SOCM also provided assistance with planning strategies and actions and information about who to contact at the state level to address larger issues. The local chapter is also working through the political system to influence local decisions. They have been active in voter registration campaigns, and have begun organizing to encourage local community members to run for County Commissioner.

A member of the community plays a role as an organizer or convener for the local group, working in conjunction with a staff member from SOCM. SOCM provides training and workshops for community members, as well as acting as a clearinghouse for information.

A problem for the Roane County SOCM chapter is the scarcity of employment opportunities in the community. It is difficult for community members to organize against their employers: there is fear of retribution through job loss. Community officials who are embarrassed by the group's activities also enact revenge. Recently, the group invited a television crew to a local dump to publicize water pollution resulting from inadequate containment. The SOCM members who escorted the media crew around the dump as they filmed had access to this road cut off by a local official who claimed that the individual had 'embarrassed' him. The entire group protested and took the action to court in support of the group member. The road was eventually reopened.

SOCM is actively working to create linkages with other community groups. They are particularly concerned with building coalitions with people of color and low income groups. This summer they are working with JONAH on a summer camp for young people from both groups, to learn more about environmental issues and encourage youth involvement.

Funding for activities is a constant struggle. Primary sources are foundations, grants, membership dues, and fundraisers such as bake sales, garage sales, and walkathons.

Dayhoit Community Group
Dayhoit, Kentucky

Dayhoit is a small community located in the Cumberland Mountains in Kentucky. Cooper Industries has operated a plant in the community for 35 years which has contaminated soil and groundwater with PCBs, vinyl chloride, and heavy

metals. The first clue of the contamination came when the state of Kentucky conducted random tests of the wells, found significant contamination, and began to shut down tested wells in the community.

The Dayhoit Community Group formed as the community learned of the contamination of the wells in 1989. A steering committee of 12 members elected by the group meets a couple of times each month to discuss plans and group activities. Some of the group members are former employees of the plant and have been valuable sources of information about chemicals and processes used within the plant, and their effects on workers.

Initially, representatives of Cooper Industries met with members of the community group to discuss concerns and plans for clean up. Currently, the industry refuses to meet with group members, claiming that they are cleaning up the problem and that the group's demands are unreasonable. Because the industry is voluntarily paying for the clean-up of the site, the EPA refuses to intervene in the process. The community group has had difficulty obtaining information about the clean-up process, and has not had access to information about the extent of the contamination. At one point the company brought in doctors who stated that the contamination ended at the fence separating the industry from an adjoining trailer park. Yet wells in the trailer park are contaminated, and residents have high levels of PCBs and lead in their bloodstreams.

When there first began to be suspicions of water contamination by the plant discharge, Cooper Industries gave $500,000 to the local government to bring in clean, piped water to households whose wells were contaminated and closed. This has made it more difficult to get the local government to respond to continuing community concerns.

The Dayhoit Community Group has recently conducted a survey to assess support for their actions and determine the health effects of the plant

contamination. They found 100% support for their work among the 130 community households in the sample. They also asked limited health questions, and conducted kidney tests to determine the extent of kidney damage among exposed community members. They found that roughly 20% of those exposed to the toxins had kidney damage, while none in a control sample had kidney damage (the physician who ran the tests was unaware which urine samples were from exposed residents and which were from unexposed individuals).

In addition to work with the community, the group has sought recourse through the legal system. This strategy has not been particularly helpful, as the laws are designed to protect the industry rather than the people, and the industry has more funds with which to support a court case. Two lawyers have provided volunteer consultation for the group, although they will not file suit on a voluntary basis.

Community members continue to write letters and visit government representatives to influence the clean up process. They also work with local representatives to gain support, especially for relocation of the residents of the trailer park adjoining the plant who are unable to afford to move themselves. They work extensively with the media to publicize their struggle. While the local media have not been supportive of their efforts, they have developed working relationships with journalists at the state and national levels.

Members of the group who have spoken out against the plant and demanded responsible action have been physically threatened, lost jobs, threatened with unemployment, and labeled "troublemakers" or "hysterical housewives" in attempts to discredit them and their work.

During June of 1991, Cooper Industry brought in trucks which were not licensed for hauling hazardous wastes to remove the topsoil from plant property. Citizens have not been allowed access to the site to monitor the clean-up. Members

of the community have been climbing trees adjacent to the land to photograph and document the clean up. In this process, they observed a drainage pipe which ran underground from the plant underneath the fence and into the adjoining trailer park. The plant denies that there has been any drainage of materials off site, and as mentioned earlier, has stated that the contamination of the soil ends at the fence separating the plant from the trailer park.

The contaminated soil is being hauled to a hazardous waste dump site in Emelle, Alabama, a community engaged in its own struggle against this contamination.[9] As of mid-July, 1991, nearly 300 truckloads of contaminated soil had been removed from the Dayhoit site.

Most of the tests conducted at the Cooper Industry site were paid for by the industry itself and conducted by paid contractors selected by the corporation. As a result, the EPA has been reluctant to intervene or even to monitor the clean up process. The plant would have been listed as a Superfund clean-up site if Cooper Industry had not voluntarily paid for the clean-up. However, all of the money for the clean-up has gone to clean the plant site itself, rather than for testing wells or removal of contaminated soils from the community.

In addition to contamination of the soil and drinking water in the community, the plant dumps contaminants directly into the stream which flows through the community. The soil at the point where the drainage ditch enters the water has been tested at 8000 ppm PCBs. The legal limit for PCB contamination on industrial property is 50 ppm, while areas to which there is community access, such as this one, have a limit of 10 ppm. Until 1987, an incinerator at the plant burned refuse, releasing contaminants into the air. The industry is seeking to install a device called an air stripper which removes the contaminants from the water prior to its entry into

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9. Both the Emelle and the Dayhoit Community groups hosted community visits and participated in the international environment and economic development workshop.

the river. However, the air stripper then releases these chemicals into the air. The community group is working with the State and Federal EPA to block the installation of the air stripper until a mechanism for monitoring the air contamination is put in place. The Federal EPA has approved the installation of the stripper, but the State EPA refuses to grant a discharge permit without a public comment period.

Cooper Industries is an international corporation, with plants in Spain, Italy, Mexico and other countries, as well as elsewhere in the U.S. In the past several years they have virtually shut down operations in Dayhoit, currently employing only about 12 people. The Dayhoit Community Group has had some contact with other communities working to confront Cooper Industries' contamination of their soil and water.

Yellow Creek Community Group: Middlesborough, Kentucky

The community of Yellow Creek consists of 1000-1200 residents and is located in the Cumberland Mountains in Kentucky. Coal is the primary industry, but employment is declining. Unemployment in the county is 43%, and many people are leaving the community to find work elsewhere. The community organized around contamination of the Yellow Creek by a tannery dumping chemical effluent into the river upstream.

Community members had been aware of the problem with water contamination for some time. Animals could not drink the water, fish did not live in the creek, and children were not allowed to play in the creek. While community members knew there was some problem, they did not know exactly what is was. As they learned more about the chemicals dumped into the river, they became increasingly concerned, and decided to organize in 1980.

Most of the people who worked in the tannery lived in Tennessee and West Virginia. About 35% of the employees were residents of Kentucky, which was the state which received the effluent. The Yellow Creek Community Group was comprised of these community members, some of whom were ex-employees of the tannery. These members were able to provide valuable information about the chemicals and processes used in the plant, and their effects on workers.

The community organized by telephone and word of mouth. The problem was a visible one, which helped organize people around it. Meetings were announced in the newspaper and local radio station, and special events were announced with mailings. Membership was drawn from a 17 mile area along Yellow Creek. The organization produced a newsletter which was sent regularly to over 1000 people to keep them informed of actions and events.

Community members were very supportive of the group's efforts to stop pollution of Yellow Creek, but local public officials were not responsive. The owners of the polluting tannery were the largest contributors to the election campaigns of the Mayor of Middlesborough. Tactics used to threaten and silence group members included: phone threats, poisoning dogs, and attempts to murder the organizers.

During the peak of the struggle, the Yellow Creek Community Group met weekly. In addition to applying political pressure through letters and lobbying, the community group demonstrated at City Hall. They once took over the City Hall until the mayor would agree to provide information which he was withholding. Strategies included other forms of civil disobedience: the group dumped a load of toxic waste on the front steps of the State Capitol in an effort to draw attention to the case. The group members responsible were not arrested because the government did not want the publicity.

Yellow Creek had more success going outside the community for media coverage of their struggle. While the local newspapers refused to cover events, several national media groups covered the story and ABC News did a documentary about the community. They continue to receive inquiries from media groups around the world interested in creating a documentary about the fight.

The Yellow Creek Community Group filed a lawsuit, which is still in court. They believe that legal approaches are not effective means to create change, as they are expensive and take a long time to resolve.

II. Nicaraguan Group Tour: Freis Civic League, Concerned Citizens to Save Fayette County, Health Environmental Action League

Freis Civic League:
Freis, Virginia

Freis is a small town of 800 residents located along the New River in southern Virginia. Although once a cotton mill town and regional commercial center, some people and institutions have moved or closed in recent years. Those residents who remain have loyalty to the community but face uncertain economic conditions.

Local residents have organized a Freis Civic League in order to participate in institutions and decisions that affect them at the local level. They have represented the community in committees and meetings, and promoted programs and services responsive to local needs. Among their concerns is the New River, which is an important regional resource, a panoramic feature, and a strong source of pride.

In early 1990 the neighboring town of Galax studied alternatives, constructed a facility across a mountain, and began dumping its waste directly into the river flowing downstream through Freis. The principal polluter is the Vaughn Furniture Company.

Freis residents and Civic League members became alarmed by the pollution. They gathered in homes around the community, organized a series of meetings, and discussed strategies for response. They decided to adopt a legal strategy, hiring an environmental attorney from Roanoke to represent the community to appeal the case in court.

Today the group is awaiting word from the court and developing community capacity for future action. They are educating themselves on the issues, strengthening their community action skills, and working closely with local elected officials.

Concerned Citizens to Save Fayette County:
Minden, West Virginia

Minden is a small town with 800 residents located in the flood plain of Arbuckle Creek in the mountains of southern West Virginia. Traditionally the area was dependent on employment in coal mining, but decline in the coal industry and increase in industrial automation have worsened economic conditions in the region.

In the early 1980s a former employee of the town's Shaeffer Equipment Company reported contamination by dumping of toxic waste in Minden. Shaeffer---which bought and restored electrical transformers for Illinois Power Company, Indiana Power Company, and Walter Reed Hospital among other customers---reportedly had dumped highly toxic PCBs in the soils and water of the creek flowing down from the plant to the flood plain of the community.

Community residents became alarmed about contamination of the community. They approached public health officials and agency administrators with requests for information about health and safety conditions. They held highly publicized, well attended meetings with local, state and federal government officials, and formed the Concerned Citizens to Save Fayette County to advocate their environmental concerns.

The Concerned Citizens with assistance from Vanderbilt University conducted studies of local health conditions. Studies showed unusually high incidence of miscarriages, stillbirths, birth defects, liver damage, and immune system deficiencies, cancer and high PCB levels in the bloodstream. It was reported that 40 percent of the women had miscarriages and that some individuals had the highest recorded rates of PCBs of any living persons in the United States.

In 1984 the Environmental Protection Agency removed hundreds of cubic yards of contaminated dirt, conducted tests on several soil locations, and concluded that the community was clean and no longer threatened by contaminants. Community residents challenged agency studies, and sought studies of PCB levels

and health impacts over longer periods of time. Since then, EPA officials have conducted studies, assembled panels of experts, and concluded that contamination is no longer a threat.

However, community residents are confident of their own experience and expertise and are conducting their own studies. With assistance from student interns, they are conducting 5-year follow-up studies to compare health conditions of residents between 1986 and 1991. Preliminary results show that 24 of 100 people studied have died in the intervening five year period. Fully 40 percent of those interviewed were reportedly very sick and lacked medical insurance or money for medical care.

Community residents have expressed concern about property values and asked government officials to provide funds for relocation. They have pressed agency administrators to recognize the contamination and to allocate funds for relocation of the entire town to another area. There is precedent elsewhere for evacuation of residents from contaminated areas, federal government bailouts of local housing, demolition of structures, and cleanup of entire communities.

Community residents have described their struggle and drawn general lessons learned from the experience. They recognize the importance of developing their own community capacity through knowledge of environmental issues and skills in organizing for change. They recognize their own persistence on a diverse range of issues over time and their awareness that environmental change is a political matter which is too important to be left to the experts.

At the community visit associated with the present project, steering committee members memorialized the deaths of two members who had died from environmental causes. One was a community member, and the other had lived outside the community but worked with the group for many years.

Health Environmental Action League:
Dungannon, Virginia

Dungannon is located in a rural valley of mountainous southwestern Virginia. The residents of the town and surrounding areas have traditionally depended on mining, logging, and subsistence family farming, although steady employment has been scarce in recent years.

In 1984, Louisiana Pacific located a waferboard factory in Dungannon. Factory officials built community support for needed jobs in the factory despite the company's use of phenol, formaldehyde, and MDI in gluing together wooden chips into the finished waferboard product.

Community residents welcomed plant operations in 1986 but soon expressed concern about working conditions and environmental pollution. Workers complained about their treatment in the factory and became sick from the resin used to bind the wooden chips into the finished waferboard product. Some workers' eyes became so swollen that it was difficult to tell whether they were open or closed. Toxic emissions from the waferboard sold nationally will continue for the life of the product.

Community residents formed the Health Environmental Action League (HEAL) despite little history of environmental action in the area. They have sought change in the plant's smokestack emissions, the chemicals it uses in manufacturing, and in its worker health and safety record. Residents also organized a labor union to represent workers in the factory.

Leading the local environmental group is a chemically sensitive person who moved to a hillside near Dungannon from the area called Cancer Alley in southern Louisiana because of her sensitivity to fumes from the many chemical factories there. She enjoyed a remission of symptoms for several years until her lungs and immune system became affected by emissions from the waferboard factory located 1 1/2 miles from her home.

Since its formation HEAL has pressed factory officials, county and union representatives, and the Air Pollution Control Board to monitor emissions from the plant. For example, the group has called for use of continuous stack scrubbers and emission monitors, and the company has agreed to supply personal monitors to all workers and community members and to form a safety committee to review the use of chemicals.

In September, 1990, Louisiana Pacific closed its Dungannon plant and laid off 80 workers in the process. Company officials cite the overstocks of unsold products and problems with obtaining a new permit for decreased production. Environmental group members report that the company remains open elsewhere and that the local difference is that local workers have unionized and citizens have organized to represent themselves. Some community members blame activists for the plant closing and job layoffs. Group members have received threatening telephone calls and been targets of cross burnings in the community.

III. Kenyan Group Tour: Alabamians for a Clean Environment; The Federation of Southern Cooperatives Land Assistance Fund; Chattanooga Community Organization; Americans for a Clean Environment

Alabamians for a Clean Environment:
Emelle, Alabama

Emelle, a small town in Sumpter County, is located along the Mississippi border in southern Alabama. It is the home of the largest toxic waste dump in the world. The dump covering 2700 acres is the depository of waste from forty eight states and several foreign countries. It opened in 1977 on 340 acres of land. A relative of Governor Wallace was one of the original owners who sold the dump site to Chem Waste Inc. in the early 1980's. Chem Waste has expanded its size and the scope of the hazardous waste it accepts.

County revenues generated by the dump at the rate of $5 per ton equaled over $4 million in 1989. However, the larger economic picture in Sumpter County is quite bleak. The overall industrial base has eroded with the closing of 8 large plants by 1986. Unemployment has gone from 5.8% to 21.1% between 1980 and 1990 while the population declined by 11%. Property taxes have increased by 30% to be the third highest in the state.

Concerned citizens formed Alabamians for a Clean Environment to fight the expansion of Chem Waste; watch dog its operations; and inform the community about possible environmental dangers. The group, after a six year struggle, succeeded in stopping an incinerator on this site from becoming operational. It also succeeded in getting passage of a city ordinance to limit truck routes to the site. It continues to monitor the site giving special limited attention to the potential for ground water contamination.

Federation of Southern Cooperatives Land Assistance Fund:
Epes, Alabama

The rate of black owned farm land loss is greater than 300,000 acres a year, diminishing the total from 15 million acres in 1910 to less than 2.5 million acres

today. Sumpter County like others in the Deep South is particularly affected. The Federation of Southern Cooperatives Land Assistance Fund is a resource center that helps black farmers retain their land by providing financial management and legal assistance, marketing support, and through advocacy for national farm policy reform. It also builds and manages low income housing in the county.

Chattanooga Community Organization: Chattanooga, Tennessee

The Chattanooga Community Organization (CCO) has been supporting poor neighborhoods in the city to fight a variety of issues. It became deeply involved in environmental issues when it learned that a poor/middle class black neighborhood on the outskirts of the city was the home of forty-two waste sites as well as a half dozen or so industries. An elementary school, two public housing projects, and a hospital are actually built on some of the dumps, while the Chattanooga Creek which runs through the area has been designated as a Superfund Site.

The community's goals are to: 1) force a public hearing on a permit for expansion of a waste site that is leaking into Chattanooga Creek; 2) get waste sites fenced (they are now easily accessible to children); and 3) conduct a health study to follow up on a 1986 survey that found high levels of respiratory disease in the area. It has successfully organized Piney Woods, a black neighborhood, and St. Elmo, a white community, into an equal partnership to stop factory emissions.

Americans for a Clean Environment Cocke County, Tennessee

The Pigeon River flows through a paper mill in North Carolina on its way to a hydroelectric plant at the border of Tennessee. The river is so polluted with dioxins from the paper mill that white water rafting companies have had to abandon it, thereby eliminating one of the few sources of employment in this very poor rural county. Americans for a Clean Environment (ACE) is a sixty member group that has been struggling to get the river cleaned up for a number of years. Its members

began to be involved under the auspices of a "parent" organization initiated by business and real estate interests that were concerned about the negative economic impact of the pollution. However, this group was not willing to push the issues as much as community members so they broke away to form ACE. Greenpeace has helped ACE to test the river water and build its case, but because the source is in another state, ACE has had little success in forcing the plant to reduce its effluents. The mill is the dominant industry in the town where it is located, so it has been difficult for community and environmental concerns to converge here.

Hartford, which has a population of about 500, is the hometown of many ACE activists. It is located on the Pigeon River. In the last twenty years 167 people in the town have died of cancer, most of them men, hence the town is frequently referred to as "Widowville." Health authorities do not accept survey results that show extremely high rates of cancer as conclusive evidence of the dioxin polluted river as a health hazard.

APPENDIX C

**Debriefing Session of the Community Visits
June 28, 1991**

I.   Learnings from the Community Visits

A list of learnings from the community visits was generated during the

debriefing session after the community visits, and included the following:

-        Development must be for the welfare of low income groups. In the end they
         need to be empowered so they can take care of themselves- those in power
         will not come back someday and take care of them. How can we develop
         networks?
-        There are similar problems across countries- the poor get poorer and the rich
         richer.
-        We used to talk about the North and the South. It is clear that there is a
         South in the North and a North in the South. Therefore, networks across
         North and South are very important.
-        Certain strategies that community groups use need to be changed, because
         they appear to be obsolete. Strategies must be in flux - not just on
         environmental issues, not just one country- it's a global problem.
-        Do we know who the people are who are destroying the environment? The
         same people who are controlling the capitalist economy. What do we do
         about that?
-        Problems need immediate attention, but not just at the community level: this
         just stops problems in one place and puts it some place else. There is a need
         to address the issue at the policy level. Protection is needed at the national
         level for those who are not empowered enough at the local level.
-        The industries are acting together, and our actions must work together. As a
         common interest party, we can form a common front.

II.   What are the common themes at the community level?

Common themes across community groups in the U.S. and in the visiting

countries were explored in an effort to further establish the commonalties among

the experiences of the participating countries. These included:

-        The marginalized are becoming more and more marginalized, both in (the
         South) and in Alabama.
-        Pesticide use, health problems from use of sprays and exposure to toxic
         substances are problems. People are not aware of the hazards associated
         with pesticide use; it has been introduced as a 'medicine for the plants', not
         as something hazardous.
-        (Southern hemisphere country) still uses pesticides which have been banned
         in the U.S.: some are black market sales.
-        Cities dump waste in slum areas where poor people build their homes.
-        People have been threatened, repressed and intimidated in the process of
         their struggles.

- There are laws, but they are often not implemented, or they favor those in power.
- Water contamination occurs with no concern for the quality of life. Profit is the motivation for much of the pollution.
- There is a lack of communication among groups that are working for a clean environment: this gets in the way of there being a united front.
- The state always argues " there's no cause for alarm.
- There is a need for people who interpret from an environmental perspective, e.g. lawyers and other professionals who can give an unbiased environmental perspective.
- Media are not available for people in the struggle, those who are living the problems of the environment. Media serves the purpose of those in power.
- Assistance does not change the system to help poor people in the environmental struggle: it is not attacking the root problems, and is developing an unhealthy dependence on that external assistance.
- Lack of food, clothing, and shelter: people need a job to survive, but are being killed by those jobs, e.g. hauling toxic wastes, economic blackmail.

III. Differences in Strategies

The participants also discussed differences in the strategies used by environmental groups in the U.S., Kenya, Nicaragua and Indonesia. These differences represent potential sources of learning from each other. These included:

- In (home country), there is better networking. Some of the tactics used in these countries might benefit people working in the U.S.
- In (home country), base communities work together for change. In the U.S., because of the dependence on corporations for jobs, people do not work together against the corporations which are damaging their health.
- In (home country), there is an awareness that the environment is not always considered in political decisions. In the U.S. it is assumed that the environment is a consideration in government decisions: there is a need to increase awareness that this is not always the case.
- There is a lack of self identity with the land in the U.S. In (home country), people see that the land is all that they have, and hold it very dear. In the U.S. there is not this identification.

IV. Recommendations and Suggestions for Working Together

Throughout the discussions noted above, suggestions were made for building coalitions among groups and countries, and other means of working together toward environmental health. These included:

- Create a women and environment network. This has happened in (home country) among women's groups. Women in rural communities are able to identify environmental problems fairly readily and accurately: this could also happen in an international network.

- The 1992 Conference[10] will not start a process, but will endorse a process which is already in place. The industrialists' agenda will be represented. We should start a process now which we should bring to the 1992 conference. Our strength is our membership: we can begin a process which will bring the recipients of the garbage to the 1992 conference in Brazil to speak. We should look at the community problems and start a process that will lead to the Brazil Conference to shape policy. Otherwise, we will continue working on a scattered basis.
- Need to come up with a global policy to deal with common issues.
- Create a joint program to work on human rights issues for a healthy and clean environment.

V.   How Did the Visits Go?

Finally, the visitors were asked to discuss their thoughts and impressions of the community visits as a whole. The responses to this questions included:

- We had always heard that people in the U.S. had no problems. Meeting with people who have severe problems has made us wonder what democracy really means- to have the right to be poisoned?
- It's a pleasant surprise that this work is being done in the U.S. at all. Before, we primarily had contact with large groups saving whales and telling us what we need to do, rather than working at the grassroots.
- The tour was wonderful: we felt welcomed, people were willing to share, although it was tiring at some times and we ate a lot of fast food. Coming back to Highlander was like coming home.
- Surprised that there were so many bad things in the U.S.
- Surprised that the local government can allow industries to pollute without installing water treatment facilities.
- Rural people are rural people wherever they are.
- Liked being able to stay with an American family overnight.
- Elder people are very concerned about the welfare of every other person.
- This encounter provided opportunity to share with other Third World groups, share music and culture.

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10. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil in June of 1992.

APPENDIX D

Strategies for Cross-Regional Support

The group generated ideas for cross regional support, based on the community visits and the discussions and presentations during the workshops.   General items included:

- Exchange programs as much as possible- both within and between countries.
- Teach and try to educate.
- Contact each other, use each other to share information.
- Network with groups in other areas.
- Network with people in other communities which have the same problem or corporation that they are fighting (within the U.S. and internationally).
- Create networks between people who are working against the same corporation.
- Learn what the laws are in different countries.
- Learn the laws and rights in our own countries.
- Proper documentation of cases that come up- for use in future legal cases (Bhopal for example), and also for distribution to others working on similar issues.
- Need to *not* underestimate the collusion that goes on in suppressing information- doctors, state, government and individual officials all collaborated in suppressing info in the Bhopal disaster. The Participatory Research in Asia organization and Highlander worked together to show that the plant itself was dangerous by working with Union Carbide's plant in the U.S.: the accident was not the fault of the people who worked there. Showed that the media and information were used by the ruling elites to promote their interests.
- Need more effective tools than just talking face-to-face when people are being bombarded with disinformation from the media.
- Figure out strategies to get information out to a lot of people once documentation is made. Church may be effective way to get info out, also schools. In Kenya and in Appalachia there is a built in networking system in some churches, between denominations and some local groups. Need to be aware of which churches support social change and which don't. Also social gatherings, community and village water sources, natural food stores etc. are good places to share information.
- Work with sympathetic people within the establishment.   Reporters, columnists, who are sympathetic: identify and share allies within the media.
- Show support and solidarity for other people's struggles.
- Use cultural activities at the local level to educate- like the role plays we did yesterday- the folklore spreads the message.
- Distribute information through the groups that fund environmental activists.
- Use traditional and other forms of gatherings to disseminate information to people (e.g. in Indonesia, work in Islamic boarding school)
- Be politically active- be aware of the voting record and activities of the people you vote for.

- Lobbying as a means to strengthen our position- work with key people to change their thinking (KENGO has been working with key government officials since 1984 in an ongoing education process).

Specific suggestions for working together internationally included:

- Maintain contact.
- International environmental research- "The hyena lives in the sugar plantation, but doesn't realize how sweet it is"- bring in outside researchers and observers to see things that people within the community may not be aware of. Exchange observers and research.
- Collect specific information about what is going on.
- Developed countries fund staff in developing countries.
- International cultural folkloric exchange across countries.
- Volunteer service- exchange services and skills.
- Exchange information across countries.
- Call upon people in other countries to give support in times of stress.
- Decide on certain key issues that we share, so we can work together on these specific issues (e.g., incinerators, hazardous waste dumps).
    If begin by focusing on common issues and use them for multiple purposes- building movements, conscientizing people - can also provide a means to bring new groups and countries on board.
- Create international or global environmental laws.
- Highlander could use their network of community groups to provide advance warning when something is coming - tracking polluting companies which are moving across borders.
- Learn each other's tactics.
- Begin a survey as we establish a grassroots network.