



Actions speak louder . . .

## Fact Sheet no.6: Rural economic development and stability

### Description and analysis

Rural areas are at the back of the queue for economic development with urbanisation-a worldwide trend leading to 'urban drift'. However, agriculture is a sector where there is comparative economic advantage for countries with tropical rather than temperate climates with internationally competitive wage levels. City life is attractive for social reasons, but more significantly people value the variety of employment opportunities, hard surfaces (less mud and dust) and amenities such as electric power and water. They aspire to houses built permanently rather than subject to organic decay.

In wealthier societies suburban and exurban living is becoming more attractive for many people than city life. Markets, leisure amenities and employment opportunities are now springing up in what were previously rural areas. Rather than being completely urban focused, such settlements become economically self-sufficient and stable.

### Design response

Small-scale rural industries serving local building and construction needs can be designed to supply materials which are cut and quarried in the vicinity. By careful design and materials development, housing which meets modern aspirations, can be built from local stone, adobe brick and where straight grow-

ing species are available, from timber poles for the roof structure.

### Parry Associates technical input possibilities

Parry building materials production plants are designed to be able to operate in rural areas as well as in towns. In locations where electricity is unavailable 'human powered' versions of the basic machines can be operated without power. If raw materials such as sand and gravel are mixed together when it is required that they be separate for use, Parry machines can be supplied which crush and grade the soil into clay, sand and gravel. Such machines can also be supplied to sort a material such as gravel into different sizes, increasing the choice of products that may be manufactured.

### Local resources required

There is no point in trying to create resource based building materials production in an area where no suitable raw materials are to hand. However, clay, sand and gravel are quite common, especially near to rivers or are sometimes found mixed together in laterite soil types. Building materials enterprises also require a water supply and keen energetic staff to do the work.

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## Potential local business response

Even in villages, entrepreneurs can be found performing a variety of roles, from simple trading of vegetables or consumer goods such as sweets and cigarettes, doing vehicle repair or running transport business using boats, handcarts and bicycles. Manufacturing enterprises have additional requirements such as a secure site, knowledge of raw materials and the use and upkeep of process equipment. However, the essential attributes of commercial acumen and the ability to manage money can be adapted from other types of business.

## Real case studies

Rural development has been encouraged using Parry ideas and technology as part of the Lionde High School Project, Mozambique (2002) and the Resource Based Building Materials Project, The Gambia (began in 2000). For other case studies where Parry technology has been used to combat problems in the developing world see our Success Stories page.

### FACT SHEETS AVAILABLE

1. Import substitution
2. Livelihoods for the disabled
3. Mud and dust in hospitals, schools and offices
4. Low energy construction
5. Living with floods
6. Rural economic development and stability
7. Reviving a war-torn economy
8. Quality housing at low cost
9. Work for women
10. Roof structures without using timber
11. Living with diurnal extremes
12. Living with environmental extremes
13. Being prepared for the next Earthquake