

Overview of Bahá'í Social and Economic Development

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The development activities of the Bahá'í community express a well-articulated alternative paradigm of development, of interest in its unusual approaches to the dilemmas of sustainability, of meaningful project design, and equitable North/South interaction. The singularity of the Bahá'í approach is rooted in Bahá'í scripture and is evident in the history of the Bahá'í community's efforts to create social progress since the mid-nineteenth century. Although most of the 1300* or so Bahá'í social and economic development projects are small in scale, they occur in over 100 countries throughout the world. The trends discernible in current Bahá'í social and economic development activities include increasing collaboration with U.N. organs, international aid agencies, and non-governmental organizations; a growing willingness to openly assert a Bahá'í origin for ideas and projects; an increasing recognition of the utility of Bahá'í administrative institutions in facilitating development with justice; and a shift towards a greater degree of coordination and systematic implementation of development possibilities throughout the worldwide network of Bahá'í communities.¹

A Bahá'í Development Paradigm

The Bahá'í paradigm asserts a central role for spirituality in development: the vision of how to create social well-being comes to humanity through the revealed word of God, and human beings develop the capacities to take effective action through their relationship with their Creator. Bahá'u'lláh states that "the purpose for which mortal men have, from utter nothingness, stepped into the realm of being, is that they may work for the betterment of the world and live together in concord and harmony." Hence, Bahá'ís view their involvement in development activities as a fulfillment of this spiritual obligation to serve humanity.²

Bahá'ís orient their development efforts in terms of principles expounded in the Kitab-i-Aqdas, the central work in Bahá'u'lláh's Writings, and other Bahá'í scriptures which call for universal education, the creation of mutually beneficial ties of economic interdependence, and the elimination of prejudices of all forms, and which exhort individuals to trustworthiness, to high moral standards in their individual lives, and to the voluntary sharing of wealth.³ The most thorough exposition of Bahá'í beliefs regarding the process of development is `Abdu'l-Bahá's treatise on the potential advancement of Iran, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*.⁴ Writing in 1875, `Abdu'l-Bahá called for the mobilization of the masses through their own efforts to obtain education. He identified ignorance and the absence of genuine faith as causes of the perpetuation of injustice and oppression; outlined the characteristics of effective administrators; and demonstrated that, throughout history, the coming of a new religion has brought about major societal transformation. In *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, further expounded on the relationship of the Bahá'í Faith to the social evolution of humanity, outlining the need to imbue human endeavours with spirituality.

The over-arching context for the design and implementation of development projects is Bahá'u'lláh's mission to weld the diverse elements of the human race into a dynamic and spiritually organic world community. This means that Bahá'ís are extremely concerned about development processes. As important, or more important, than the immediate concrete results of any development undertaking, is that people are drawn together, that they develop the ability to hear all of the voices in a community, and that they begin to learn the process of collective action.

Since Bahá'ís view development activities as practical expressions of the central tenets of their Faith, they focus their attention on those aspects of development which are not usually explicitly addressed in development discourse. Among these are the aspiration that development activities will contribute to a rehabilitation of human society and will eliminate extremes of poverty and wealth, a belief that a desire to serve others is ultimately the most sustaining motivation for participation in development activities, and the conviction that high standards of morality can and should be intentionally cultivated by every person.

Bahá'ís place a priority on cultivation of the moral qualities which they consider to be essential for successful development. "Material development may be likened to the glass of a lamp, whereas divine virtues and spiritual susceptibilities are the light within the glass."⁵ In Bahá'í religious practice, each individual attempts to improve his or her character through daily prayer and introspection. Bahá'ís consider qualities such as trustworthiness, sincerity, and self-sacrifice to be the invisible infrastructure for development, and try to organize their efforts in ways that foster these qualities. The Ruhi Institute training course for teachers, developed in Colombia and adopted by Bahá'í communities all over the world, contains units on prayer, developing a sense of joy and radiance, and thinking about life after death, as well as units on how to organize a learning environment and how to promote healthy development of children.⁶

Bahá'í development activities are also based on the perception that initiatives which lead to social transformation begin inside the heart, in the human longing to express love for God through acts of service to humanity. This means that Bahá'ís care about the motivations which people bring to their participation in development activities, and direct significant attention to inculcating a system of values that affirms the spiritual nature and capacities of human beings. Developing attitudes and habits of service is a core element of curricula for Bahá'í schools and training centers. The Human Development Program of the Maxwell International Bahá'í School in Canada aims, for example, to train students to "develop self-knowledge, to work with diverse people, to solve personal and collective problems, to establish healthy relationships with others and to be of service to their community and the world through a comprehensive sequence on practical and transcendent subjects which include Knowing and Loving God, Living in a Material World, and The Role of Youth."⁷ Each student contributes three hours of service each week in activities which have included constructing an interpretive trail in a provincial park, tutoring, coaching, and finding ways to participate in children's classes or in literacy training with people from nearby Native American Reserves.

The centrality of social service in Bahá'í religious practice means that Bahá'í development projects are able to rely on volunteer participation from individuals and communities. The Guaymi Cultural Center in Panama, for example, operates a radio station, holds annual music and dance festivals, an annual children's festival, regional women's conferences, regular consultations where Guaymi and other indigenous people can consult about their future, and other meetings. It provides training for teachers of the rural secondary curriculum and for adult literacy instructors, assists eleven village schools, and supports local Bahá'í communities in the area by disseminating information on health care, farming, and other development topics. Ten permanent staff (seven of whom are Guaymi), eleven volunteer teachers who are supported by their communities, and twelve volunteers who translate and do programming carry on the work of the Center on an annual budget of about \$30,000.⁸ The practice of seeking out volunteer

staff, especially women and youth, enhances the ability of Bahá'í radio stations to serve as the voice of the people, and also reduces operating costs.⁹

Some Bahá'í projects, particularly those in non-formal education, have chosen to depend entirely on local volunteer labor and resources. Seen as a way to make religious principles effective in the world, this strategy to draw out people's capacities and to encourage community self-reliance, has had both positive and negative results. A network of almost one hundred self-sustaining literacy centers was established in Bahá'í communities in the Kivu region of Zaire in the early 1980s. On the other hand, the number of Bahá'í literacy schools in India has dropped from 262 in 1986 to slightly less than 200 in 1993, partly because of a lack of administrative support or funding.¹⁰

The experience of village Bahá'í schools in the Mangyan areas of Mindoro, Philippines, suggests that well-trained rural teachers, however, can help to set in motion far-reaching processes of social transformation. In the past eight years, the number of Mangyan Bahá'í village schools has grown from five to eight. Five of the school teachers are now Mangyan, and students from the schools have received high marks on national examinations.

Bahá'í development projects such as these are encouraged and supervised by the Bahá'í administrative structure made up of Spiritual Assemblies. On the local and national levels they are elected annually by secret ballot from among the adult members of a Bahá'í community. Every five years all the members of National Assemblies gather to elect the Universal House of Justice, the international governing council. Assemblies organize devotional services, religious instruction and other functions carried out by clergy in other faiths, but Bahá'í Assemblies are also called on to consider themselves responsible before God for the material and spiritual well-being of their communities.

In well-established Bahá'í communities, Assemblies have become recognized, truly local, representative bodies, able to focus people's attention on actions that are conducive to their welfare. The capacity of Bahá'í administrative institutions to create order and inspire progress has been demonstrated in the past several years by the activities of 200 Liberian Bahá'í refugees in Côte d'Ivoire, who fled from civil war in their country in 1990. The Bahá'í refugees held a large gathering soon after their arrival, re-elected six Local Assemblies based on the communities that people had come from, and began to organize the spiritual and material dimensions of life in their new homes. They established regular Bahá'í meetings, choirs, classes for children and built several Bahá'í centers. In the fall of 1991, they invested the equivalent of \$20 in order to buy tools for the eleven vegetable gardens and four fish ponds which are now having a perceptible, positive impact on the local economy. The solidarity and self-assurance of the Bahá'ís has attracted attention, and there are now about 1,000 Bahá'ís and 25 Local Assemblies in the area. A Liberian Bahá'í who serves as community development facilitator explained the undertaking: "if work is done in the pathway of humanity, it brings a lasting result. We think development is the practical application of the spiritual potential that God has given man."¹¹

The obvious creativity and strength of the Liberian refugee community in Côte d'Ivoire encourages Bahá'ís in their efforts to nurture the 20,000 Local Assemblies that now exist around the world. Bahá'ís are deeply committed to the principle that democratically-elected, spiritually-focussed local institutions are critical for social transformation and the creation of a dynamic and stable society. They have invested significant energy and resources in the development of these institutions since the 1920s, and continue to consider it one of their most important priorities.

Historiographical Survey

The earliest Bahá'í development projects were schools established by the Bahá'ís of Iran at the turn of the century in response to a stream of letters from `Abdu'l-Bahá extolling the importance of education, especially for women.¹² More than ten schools in urban areas and approximately forty rural schools were operated by the Bahá'ís between 1888 when the first kindergarten opened in Ishqabad, Russia and 1934 when all Bahá'í schools were forced to close because they would suspend classes on Bahá'í Holy Days. The character of these institutions, and the other cultural, primary health, and agricultural activities of the early Iranian Bahá'í communities have been described elsewhere.¹³

During the forty-year period ending in 1963, Bahá'ís focussed on establishing Bahá'í communities around the world and erecting the global network of administrative institutions which are now so essential to its development work.¹⁴ Although the Bahá'í community outside of Iran was small and its resources were extremely limited, a number of Bahá'í schools and student hostels were established around the world. The first of these was the New Era Bahá'í School in Panchgani, India, which began as a student hostel in 1945. It was followed by others in the Pacific, Latin America, and Africa.¹⁵ During this same period, the Bahá'ís of Iran, constrained by religious intolerance and persecution from carrying out any publicly visible projects at that time, virtually eliminated illiteracy within the Bahá'í community and implemented an extensive program of moral education for children and adults.¹⁶

As hundreds of thousands of people living in the agrarian societies of the world have become followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the last third of the twentieth century, Bahá'í communities have been impelled to find ways to make the kind of social changes that the term "development" implies. Well-defined plans to promote consultative decision-making and community structures for women, youth, and the education of children were pursued in about one hundred and fifty nations with Bahá'í administrative institutions.¹⁷ Less systematic efforts to provide literacy training, health education, and agricultural technology were undertaken by Bahá'ís in a smaller number of countries. In India, an integrated rural development program in the Panchgani area of India began in 1975, and the Rabbani secondary school oriented to rural development was opened near Gwalior in 1977.¹⁸ The Ruhi Institute near Cali, Colombia, whose programs draw participants into a systematically expanding pattern of service to their communities, began to operate in 1976.¹⁹ Radio Bahá'í in Otavalo, Ecuador, began to broadcast in 1977, and established the patterns of providing community service and speaking in the voice of local people that now characterize six Bahá'í radio stations. Hein's monograph on Radio Bahá'í and his series of articles describing its community radio techniques in *Development Communications Review* are still the most detailed published account of a Bahá'í development project.²⁰

The innovative but diffuse efforts of Bahá'ís, up to this point, were transformed by the 20 October 1983 letter of the Universal House of Justice which called on individuals and Bahá'í communities to apply the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh systematically to the problems of their societies. This seminal statement points to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh as a source of order in the world, asserts the coherence of the spiritual and material dimensions of human life, praises the social and economic progress achieved by the Bahá'í community of Iran, announces the formation of an Office of Social and Economic Development at the Bahá'í World Centre, and defines the role of various Bahá'í agencies in fostering development.²¹ Together with *The Secret of Divine Civilization* and *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* letters of Shoghi Effendi, it defines the Bahá'í approach to social and economic development. The concept is briefly summarized in *Social and Economic Development: A Bahá'í Perspective*, published by the Bahá'í International Community's Office of Public Information and widely available in several languages.

The response to this letter of the Universal House of Justice was exponential growth in the number of development activities reported to the Bahá'í World Centre--a rise from 127 in 1979 to 1,344 in 1986.²² Most of these were small-scale, community-initiated activities, but the number of more ambitious projects, with physical infrastructure and full-time staff, also increased dramatically during this period.

Some statistical and descriptive information regarding recent Bahá'í developments is available in publications of the Bahá'í International Community and the Bahá'í World Centre; several projects have produced written materials or videos about their work as well.²³

At the present time, Bahá'í endeavors in development consist of a few dozen schools, colleges, and training centers, hundreds of communities participating in literacy or primary health projects organized on a regional or national scale, and innumerable activities carried out by local communities or individuals especially in village tutorial schools. Notable events in 1992 and 1993 included many literacy initiatives; a collaborative project with UNIFEM in Bolivia, Cameroon, and Malaysia (described below); and the involvement by institutions such as the Landegg Academy and Nur University in the design of curricula for moral education. The Banani School opened in Zambia, and the Maxwell International Bahá'í School in Canada held its first graduation. In India, a national literacy program was initiated, the New Era Development Institute added new courses to its program, and the Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women won a Global 500 Environmental Action Award. These successes, and the less visible ones in towns and villages, indicate a community engaged in a process of recognizing its own capacities.

Current Trends in Bahá'í Development

More Bahá'í communities are gaining experience in carrying out collaborative projects with United Nations agencies, governments, and non-governmental organizations, and the size and complexity of these endeavours have also increased. The Bahá'í approach to collaboration with non-Bahá'í agencies is summarized in the words of the Universal House of Justice in a letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia in 1989: "External assistance and funds (Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í) may be used to make surveys to initiate activities, or to bring in expertise, but the aim should be for each project to be able to continue and develop on the strength of local Bahá'í efforts, funds and enthusiasm." Bahá'í National Spiritual Assemblies and the Office of Social and Economic Development which coordinates development activities for the Universal House of Justice, have maintained a policy that the decision to start a project should not be based on the availability of outside funds, but rather on the extent to which community support and commitment can sustain the project once external funding is terminated. Sometimes this policy has meant that Bahá'í communities have found it necessary to refuse funding that was offered to them.

Bahá'í collaborative endeavours in development began in 1980, when the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) awarded a small matching-funds grant to Radio Bahá'í in Ecuador. The purpose of the grant was to augment Radio Bahá'í's cultural and agricultural programming, resulting in the development of the highly successful "people's radio" techniques which are carried on at the six Bahá'í radio stations now in operation. Beginning in 1985, Radio Bahá'í Bolivia collaborated with UNICEF to broadcast radio programs based on "Facts for Life" booklets, with the purpose of improving the health of indigenous children and reducing the infant mortality rate through regular vaccination programs. In 1991, Radio Bahá'í Ecuador also undertook a collaborative project with UNICEF in which they produced hundreds of radio spots and mini-programs on health issues.

Bahá'ís have also received assistance in their efforts to train community health workers. For example, a Canadian Public Health Association grant to the Bahá'ís of Kenya in 1988 enabled them to train community health workers to participate in the government's "Expanded Programme for Immunization." The Bahá'í contribution to this program has received praise from local health authorities and from the Ministry of Health. In 1992, an extension of funding by the CPHA was granted for a period of three years.

The National Spiritual Assemblies of India and Norway have established a productive working relationship with NORAD, the Norwegian Agency for International Development Cooperation. In 1988,

NORAD began to fund India's New Era Development Institute (NEDI), with support for a two-year rural community development program. In 1989, funding was extended to cover a one-year community development facilitators course and short courses on agriculture, rural technology, literacy, and domestic science. The National Spiritual Assembly of Norway has reported that the NORAD representative in India was impressed with the Bahá'í community's ability to coordinate social and economic development projects, and approval for a further phase in the NORAD funding was given in 1993. Norway is the first European government to financially assist a Bahá'í social and economic development program and the support provided by NORAD has been instrumental in assisting NEDI to restructure its training program and to make a major shift in its evolution as an educational institution--from one which offered only short-term courses, to one which currently offers a variety of community development and rural technology courses lasting up to two years, including both certificate and diploma programs. Within the next few years it is expected that NEDI will evolve into the New Era College of Human Services, offering degree programs along with a fully developed polytechnic institute.

The Bahá'í International Community (BIC) is now co-operating with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in a two-year project called: "Traditional Media as a Change Agent." This project is funded by UNIFEM in Bolivia, Cameroon, and Malaysia and by the BIC in Brazil and Nigeria. The project aims at improving the status of rural women by using traditional media, such as music and dance to stimulate village-wide discussion of women's roles. The long-term goal is to enhance the status of women in rural and semi-rural communities, primarily by improving their self-esteem and encouraging their participation in decision-making. Determined attempts are made in each program to include men in the discussion of issues relating to women's status, and to create a mutually supportive atmosphere which is conducive to constructive behavioral change by both men and women.

These projects, and other collaborative endeavors with CIDA, the Indian agency CAPART, and other donors, have enabled Bahá'í communities to extend their development activities more rapidly than otherwise would have been possible, and have helped them to develop the administrative skills they will need as greater opportunities for collaboration become open to them.

In the past decade, Bahá'ís have made more explicit the religious beliefs underpinning their development activities, although the ways that the connections have been articulated vary from project to project. The Bahá'í perception that the fundamental infrastructure for effective development is internal, that endeavours are only successful when participants are honest, self-sacrificing and concerned for the well-being of others, is expressed in various ways. In some cases, Bahá'ís have emphasized that their commitment to the elimination of prejudice and service to humanity make them reliable and sensitive agents of development. Another focus has been the capacity of local Bahá'í administrative institutions to mobilize support for immunization or other public campaigns. Defining development broadly, some Bahá'ís have argued that all the activities undertaken in Bahá'í communities, including worship services and the religious instruction of children, contribute to a moral foundation that supports social development. All of these are distinguished from the practice, which was prevalent several decades ago, of attempting to promote development without any direct reference to Bahá'u'lláh or Bahá'í principles. The 20 October 1983 letter of the Universal House of Justice, which pointed to "a dynamic coherence between the spiritual and practical requirements of life on earth," encouraged evolution towards more direct approaches.

Bahá'ís are concerned, therefore, about how to conceptualize and present Bahá'í involvement in development. The need to assert the distinctive character of Bahá'í schools, and the ways to accomplish this in contexts where students and faculty in Bahá'í institutions may be members of other faiths, was one of the themes that emerged when administrators of Bahá'í schools from twenty-one countries met in British Columbia in 1992.²⁴ On the one hand, Bahá'ís have not wished to appear sectarian, to exclude

anyone from their activities, or to alienate potential collaborators through their use of religious concepts that are not part of the mainstream discourse on development. On the other hand, they make use of the existing community structures of Bahá'í administration, the enthusiasm which religious commitment generates, and what they perceive to be the transforming capacities of spiritual conviction. It seems clear that there will be a wide range of solutions to the challenge of defining Bahá'í development, appropriate to the scope, context, and design of any particular activity.

Bahá'ís have also recently begun to recognize the capacity of the worldwide network of Bahá'í administrative institutions to facilitate exchanges of knowledge and resources that go beyond patterns of exchange dominated by the world's wealthiest nations. Financial resources are channelled to development projects from wealthier Bahá'í communities through the Bahá'í International Fund and coordinated by the Office of Social and Economic Development--a system which allows recipients of funds greater freedom to control their own development processes. National, continental, and international conferences of Bahá'í development workers were held in New Delhi in 1991, Santa Cruz, Bolivia in 1991, and Shawnigan Lake, Canada in 1992 to enable people to consult and learn from each other.

Within the Bahá'í community, technical assistance and models for project implementation have gone from South to South, from North to South and also, although not as often as Bahá'ís might hope, from South to North. Kenyan materials developed for the education of rural mothers and Colombian techniques and materials for training teachers and stimulating community development are now in use all over the Bahá'í world. Patterns of integrating service activities into secondary school curricula were adopted for the Maxwell International Bahá'í School in Canada from the Rabbani School in India. The community service model for Bahá'í Radio was developed in Latin America and adopted at the Bahá'í radio station in South Carolina, U. S. A., while programming innovations that originated in Liberia spread to both North and South America. These are a few examples of what Bahá'ís hope will become a well-established pattern through which insights, knowledge, and experience flow freely from every part of the planet to the other parts. The structural means to effect this exchange are inherent in the consultative process of the Bahá'í administrative order.

Finally, a trend towards a greater international coordination of the possibilities for development is emerging in the Bahá'í community. This is evidenced by current initiatives to intensify literacy education within the Bahá'í community. In July 1989, the Universal House of Justice asked all National and Local Spiritual Assemblies to make efforts to eliminate illiteracy among Bahá'ís. Pointing to the salience of reading for transformation of the individual soul and of society, the House of Justice called literacy "a fundamental right and privilege of every human being," and asked every Bahá'í community to institute their own literacy programs or join those organized by others.²⁵ In response to this call, a task force of Bahá'ís with experience in basic education met at the Bahá'í World Centre to create and disseminate effective literacy methodologies to Bahá'í communities worldwide. The task force prepared suggestions for utilizing spiritually empowering words and themes (called generative words) in literacy training, and arranged conferences in Nairobi and Bangkok in 1992 where Bahá'í literacy workers and leaders met to discuss the implications of this approach for languages and populations in their respective continents. These two meetings led to a number of workshops and the initiation of several new literacy programs.

Conclusion

Considering its small numbers and modest financial resources, the Bahá'í community's contributions to social and economic development are quite remarkable. Bahá'í participation in social and economic development has grown rapidly in the past decade, and in some nations, Bahá'ís have made a visible contribution in rural education, in community health worker training, and in programs for the promotion of equality of the sexes and the elimination of prejudice. From the perspective of Bahá'ís themselves,

these actions are only the beginning of what they believe to be possible using the tools of vision, inspiration, and organization which they find available in their Faith.

*For the most recent statistics concerning Bahá'í development activities see [Bahá'í Development Projects: A Global Process of Learning](#)

1. I am grateful to Monette Van Lith of the Office of Social and Economic Development and the reference library staff at the Bahá'í World Center for their assistance in the preparation of this paper, and to Michael McCandless and Mark Gilman for their extremely helpful comments on draft versions of it.
2. Bahá'u'lláh, Trustworthiness: A Cardinal Bahá'í Virtue (Mona Vale: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1987), 8.
3. Compilations of Bahá'í scripture on the Bahá'í paradigm of social and economic development are Social and Economic Development (Mona Vale: Bahá'í Publications Australia, 1988) and Vick, Holly Hanson, Social and Economic Development: A Bahá'í Approach (Oxford: George Ronald, 1989), 134. A definitive bibliography of Bahá'í scripture and writings about Bahá'í topics is Collins, William P., Bibliography of English Language Works on the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths 1844-1985 (Oxford, George Ronald, 1990).
4. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Secret of Divine Civilization (Wilmette, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1957).
5. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 288.
6. The Ruhi Institute, Learning About Growth: The Story of the Ruhi Institute and Large-scale Expansion of the Bahá'í Faith in Colombia (Riviera Beach: Palabra Publications, 1991). In their attempts to integrate religious conviction and practice with concern for material advancement, Bahá'ís find unique solutions to problematic issues in development. For Bahá'ís, the essential goal of any development undertaking is the implementation of Bahá'u'lláh's instructions regarding the creation of a united world, and projects are sustainable when they harmonize the inner need of human beings to understand their true reality with their outer needs for sustenance, shelter, and support.
7. "Human Development Program at the Maxwell International Bahá'í School", unpublished.
8. Ovidio Carrasco, "Informe de las Actividades Relacionadas Con La Cultura", 1990, unpublished, and National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Panama, May 1992, unpublished.
9. Kurt J. Hein and K. Dean Stephens, "Radio Stations, Bahá'í", Bahá'í Encyclopedia, in press.
10. Statistical Summary of the Seven Year Plan (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, YEAR)109; Office of Social and Economic Development, "Bahá'í Social And Economic Development Projects: A Report on Activities and Trends", 1993, unpublished.
11. Henry Appleton, quoted in Frances Kazemi, "Liberian Refugees Strive for Self-sufficiency", One Country: Newsletter of the Bahá'í International Community, Vol. 4, Issue 4, p. 13.
12. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í Compilation on Education.
13. Lee, Anthony A. "The Rise of the Bahá'í Community of 'Ishqabad'", Bahá'í Studies 5: The Bahá'í Faith in Russia: Two Early Instances, January 1979; Vick, Holly, "Bahá'ís of Iran Set Early Example in Social and Economic Development", Bahá'í News, no. 675, June 1987; R. Jackson Armstrong-Ingram, "American Bahá'í Women and the Education of Girls in Tehran, 1909-1934", in Peter Smith, ed., In Iran: Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History, Volume 3 (Kalimat Press, Los Angeles, 1986).
14. In 1963, the Universal House of Justice was elected, culminating the process of the creation of the linked elected structures of the Bahá'í community.
15. Barbara Barrett. "The Development of Bahá'í Schools During the Seven Year Plan". The Bahá'í World, vol. XVIII, 1979-1983 (Haifa, Bahá'í World Centre, 1986). Barrett's review of the development of Bahá'í schools from this middle period to the present is comprehensive and authoritative. A review with a thorough bibliography of early English-language sources is van

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16. "A Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities" in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XV, 1968-73, (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre).
 17. Descriptions of these activities can be found in *Survey of Bahá'í Education Programmes*, New York, United Nations Office and the Office of Public Information of the Bahá'í International Community, 1990; the "Survey of Current Bahá'í Activities" sections of successive volumes of *The Bahá'í World*; and *Bahá'í World Centre, The Seven Plan, 1979-1986: Statistical Report* (Haifa, Bahá'í World Centre).
 18. "Rural Development in India", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVII, 1976-1979 (Haifa, Bahá'í World Centre, 1981), 227-228. Stephen H. Waite, "The Rabbani School at Gwalior", *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XVIII, 1979-1983 (Haifa, Bahá'í World Centre, 1989), 233-238.
 19. Instituto Ruhi, Learning about growth.
 20. Hein, Kurt John, *Radio Bahá'í*, Ecuador: a Bahá'í Development Project (Oxford, George Ronald, 1988). Hein, Kurt. "Community Radio Thriving in Ecuador: Otavalo Indians Running Their Own Show", *Development Communications Report* 40, December 1982, 11, 13; Hein, Kurt J. "Community Radio in Ecuador Meeting People's Needs", *Development Communications Report* 42, June 1983, 2; and Hein, Kurt. "Community Radio in Ecuador Playing Local Music, Strengthening Cultural Ties", *Development Communications Report* 44, December 1983, 2. A further source is Hein, Kurt, "Popular Participation in Rural Radio: Radio Bahá'í, Otavalo, Ecuador" in *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, vol. 3, 1984, 97-104.
 21. The full text of this message can be found in Vick, Holly Hanson, *Social and Economic Development: A Bahá'í Approach*, 2-6; excerpts are published in *Universal House of Justice, A Wider Horizon: Selected Messages of the Universal House of Justice, 1983-1992*, compiled by Paul Lample (Riviera Beach, Fla.: Palabra Publications, 1992), 139-141.
 22. Statistical and general descriptive information can be found in *Universal House of Justice, Statistics Department, The Seven Year Plan, 1979-1986: Statistical Report* (Haifa, Bahá'í World Centre, 1986); and *Universal House of Justice, The Six Year Plan 1986-1992: Summary of Achievements* (Haifa, Bahá'í World Centre, 1993). A more thorough description of selected projects is provided by *Bahá'í International Community, Survey of Bahá'í Education Programmes* (New York, United Nations Office and the Office of Public Information of the Bahá'í International Community, 1990), and *Bahá'í International Community, Office of Public Information, Social and Economic Development: the Bahá'í Approach* (Haifa, Office of Public Information, 1987).
 23. Publications produced by Bahá'í communities about their development activities include Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women (Madhya Pradesh, India), Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women (New Delhi, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of India, Department of Social and Economic Development, March 1987); Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women (Madhya Pradesh, India), Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women (Indore, M.P., Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women, 1992), National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Brazil, Department of Social and Economic Development, Bahá'í Development Projects in Brazil (Brasilia : Assembléia Espiritual Nacional dos Bahá'ís do Brasil, 1992), and National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Zambia, Social and Economic Development Committee, Bahá'í Community Health Educators (Lusaka, Social and Economic Development Committee, 1991); Videos produced by Bahá'ís in order to share their development experiences with others include Zein, Kamal, Villages Bahá'í [sic] de [sic] Kivu, IBAVC [distributor], 1988 (1991 distribution) and Centro de Cultura Guaymi (Soloy, Panama), Small Lights : Guaymi Tutorial Schools, produced for the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Panama and the Continental Board of Counsellors for the Americas, with the assistance of the International Teaching Centre, Haifa, Israel; International Bahá'í Visual Services, Deerfield, Ill. [distributors], 1991.

24. Waite, Stephen H., "International Bahá'í Schools Networking Conference: Overview and Summary of Recommendations: November 28 through December 6, 1992" (Maxwell International Bahá'í School, Shawnigan Lake, British Columbia, unpublished), ii. The appropriate scope for Bahá'í development has been discussed in several publications. See Farzam Arbab, "Development: A Challenger to Bahá'í Scholars", *Bahá'í Studies Notebook*, vol. III, Nos. 3 & 4, February 1984; Holly Hanson, "The Spiritual Framework of Development", *World Order*, vol. 23, nos. 1&2, Fall 1988/Winter 1988-89.
25. Universal House of Justice to all National Spiritual Assemblies, 10 July 1989, unpublished.