

ABSTRACT

Hunger-related problems are considered to be the most pressing of mankind's contemporary dilemmas. Conventionally, problems of world hunger have been attributed to rapid population growth in developing countries, along with "primitive" and therefore "inefficient" farming practices endemic in these countries.

Logically, this conventional diagnosis has elicited related proposals for the solution of those problems. Invariably, the suggestion is for the institution of stringent measures to curb population growth, and even more widespread have been the suggestions for the unconditional "modernization" of the agricultural methods used in developing countries.

The suggested, and indeed manifested "modernization pathway" has always involved the en masse transfer of agricultural technology from the industrialized to the developing countries. The rationale is that since these technologies allow high agricultural productivity in developing countries, their transfer to less developed countries would boost productivity there also. However, despite the many agricultural modernization initiatives, both at national and international levels, domestic food production in many developing countries continue to stagnate, and even decline.

The basic point is that many agricultural development projects have failed to comprehend the highly complex and adaptable farming systems of these regions as well as the cultural and environmental milieu in which these systems are embedded.

This research seeks to highlight the impacts that conventional approaches to agricultural modernization have made on traditional small scale farming societies, using the Accompong Maroon village in Jamaica as a case study. This is in support of the calls for an "alternative pathway" to agricultural development now being echoed by many scholars on Third World development problems. The research focuses on analyses of the food supply system of the Accompong Maroon village as well as the factors which initiate transformation in this system. Examination is made of the ways in which transformation impacts on the agro-economic and socio-cultural framework of the village. Ultimately the research emphasises the need to a reassessment and reappraisal of traditional farming systems as a precursor to the formulation of a relevant and appropriate agricultural modernization pathway, for these societies.