„Good leadership and sustainability – evidence from three countries“

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> The journey of a new Afghanistan will be a long one and not unlike travelling her mountain roads, having to cover a distance far greater than as the falcons fly -- with bumps and potholes causing delays, with many bends hiding what lies ahead, with precipitous rises and falls on the way, and perhaps even with some accidents from time to time. But, as long as measures are taken to subject the nation's political process to good governance, the growing bond of mutual trust between the people and their leadership will promise a safe journey. And as long as the nation's leaders continue to inspire, it also promises to be a fun learning journey, where the people celebrate each mistake as an opportunity for learning, just as much as they rejoice in their successes.
> *From: Closing Remarks of the Afghanistan Implementation Group Meeting, by Mieko Nishimizu, Vice President, South Asia Region, The World Bank, Kabul, 14 October 2002*

Introduction

The introductory quote serves two purposes: First, it reminds us of the importance placed on "good governance" in the current global development discourse - an importance stressed by institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, and others. These institutions' recommendations however, are often experienced as an unwelcome pressure, as an imposition of a global agenda on nations of the "South" which, according to critics, often aggravates the very poverty problems it claims to solve. Therefore, such proclamations as the one quotes above are often seen as not sincere or outright ideological.

But - and that is the second purpose why the quote opens this paper - the agenda of "good governance" encompasses the element of "making governments accountable to their constituents and responsive to the needs of the poor.[1]" And if they become responsive and accountable, this may indeed lead to the "growing bond of mutual trust between the people and their leadership", and then the "learning journey" to the future may indeed by "fun" and allow people and leaders together to "celebrate each mistake as an opportunity for learning."

Because these claims resonate with my own observations of participatory agricultural research in Zambia, with the experience of Indian NGOs working for empowerment of marginalized people whom I had a chance to visit back in 1996, and with the conclusions drawn from observations in the context of LAGSUS, I have refused to follow the advice given by fellow sociologists after presenting my core hypothesis previously. The core hypothesis is

[1] In the words of the World Development Report 2000/2001: " National governments should be fully accountable to their citizenry for the development path they pursue. Participatory mechanisms can provide voice to women and men, especially those from poor and excluded segments of society." (World Bank, 2000:12)

"Sustainability needs good leadership" and the advice was: "Drop this term of good leadership because it is ideological and too close to the globally enforced adherence to good governance - which is a definitely "Western" idea."

Instead of dropping the term, I have worked on being more precise - and this is what I am going to present to you today. One of my reasons for this persistence is a discussion with an Indonesian NGO-activist at a seminar in Germany, years ago. I asked her: "Do you find it in any way useful for your work in Indonesia that there are these international pronouncements on the usefulness of participation, or the necessity of sustainability?" And her answer was very clear: "Yes: because these statements and commitments to proclaimed goals are there, we can begin to hold our own governments accountable for fulfilling these commitments." I take this as an indication that despite the suspicion of being ideological, discussions around good governance and good leadership serve a useful purpose.

Before presenting the refined "model", however, I would like to give you an idea about its place in a research project concerned with the relationship between language and development.

The ongoing discussion about the relationship between language, development, and sustainability

Our common ground - as I understand it - is that an essential aspect of all "development" is communication about what this development means and how it can be achieved. This communication can only take place in a language which the very people speak who are supposed or expected bring this development forward, or who want to bring this development forward. Not just speak, but feel comfortable in, as all ideas and concepts with respect to development, all actions directed at development, and all negotiations about what should be done must be integrated into the everyday life of these people.

From this perspective it is clear that "development" - whatever the precise meaning given to this term by the actors involved - is more likely to happen if the promoters of development are able to work in the medium of the local language - whether they are local actors, government servants, NGO activists, or foreign experts. I said "more likely" because factors other than intellectual understanding - for which language is absolutely necessary - play a role. I would like to illustrate this with an example from the Indonesian part of the research project.

During several discussions with *kepala desa* they explained that they would like to promote the superior agricultural techniques (*bedeng* = raised beds for *palawija* = multiple cropping) brought by recent immigrants - and also the more serious attitude towards work which these new residents displayed. But they were disappointed that these obviously more productive techniques had not been taken up by the local population - and laid the blame on a more "relaxed" attitude to work.

The failure to "educate" the local population happened despite the fact that their own leaders wished to promote that development, and despite the fact that the recent immigrants often intermarried with the local population and learnt the local language. Hence, neither language, nor leadership, nor visible superior productivity of the technique seem to have been sufficient to convince local people of the advantage of adopting this innovation. Anthropologists are familiar with a simple "explanation": to use or not to use a certain set of techniques is part of the social or cultural identity - this is how "they" (i.e. the immigrants in this case) do it. But "we" do things differently.

While it is true that the sense of local identity is rather strong among the different language communities in the area surrounding Lore Lindu, as demonstrated in oral histories tracing the origin of these communities to mythological times (Sohibuddin 2003, Sunito 2005), this sense of a strong cultural identity did not prevent members of these different communities to adopt another innovation brought by the recent immigrants: planting cocoa on former forest lands (Sitorus 2002a, 2002b). The economic possibilities offered by planting cocoa were clearly perceived and the methods quickly adopted.

These examples serve to caution against accepting too easily theoretical explanations for the adoption or rejection of innovations leading to economic development in the sense of increasing productive capacities. They also point to the one issue which has become prominent in the global development discourse following the Rio and Johannesburg conferences: the issue of sustainability[2]. This is because according to the original plan, the development interaction to be studies by LAGSUS was to be between CSIADCP and the population of the 60 villages surrounding the newly created Lore Lindu National Park: how would this project succeed in offering the local inhabitants economic opportunities which would enable them livelihoods not based on using forest resources? And to what extent would the achievement of this objective depend on the use of the various local languages used in these villages? Planting cocoa was not one of the alternatives included in the CSIADCP plans, because in many cases these plantations are in fact encroachments into the protected areas and therefore a threat to sustainability in one of its meanings: environmental sustainability.

It is in this sense - and referring also to economic sustainability - that the term has become prominent in the international development discourse. Before that it had been used to refer to the lifespan of the impact of development projects: the question was about the sustainbility of project effects after the official end of the projects - which for CSIADCP was scheduled for March 2005. As the Indonesian part of the LAGSUS project evolved, it became clear that one of the crucial issues concerning development and resource management were the voluntary village conservation agreements facilitated by several NGOs[3]. This led to a series of interviews with various village leaders about which a later section will report. Some of these interviews followed showings of vidoes of improvised dramas by schoolchildren, others the drawing of village maps.

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[2] **Ant Research**
It took a certain scholar a lifetime of experiment before he could communicate with an ant. The one which he eventually found was a very wise and very ancient insect; but, at the risk of causing it pain, the scholar said:
'Our species is immeasurably superior to yours. We study you and yet you cannot even begin to observe us.'
The ant said:
'If you, poor man, only knew about yesterday, you would understand today - and also be prepared for tomorrow.'
The scholar confessed himself confused by such statements, so the ant continued:
'Millions of years ago, we ants worked out what was going to happen on this earth. We knew that your species would come and ruin almost everything. So we did the only thing open to intelligent beings with complete information. We destroyed the data and forbade the breeding of ants who would understand, organizing ourselves in special colonies.
'Now and again we have a throwback - an ant who can see our miserable and irrevesible fate. But untold myriads of heedless ants are happy; and will be so, until our time comes.
'That is the solution for ants. You humans, on the other hand, you have not even reached the stage when you know what may happen to you; and whether or not there is anything you can do about it.' (Idries Shah, The Magic Monastery, p. 49)

[3] For a detailed analysis of village agreements see Mappatoba, 2004

Similar methods were used in Uganda and Namibia. In Namibia the sociolinguistic analysis focuses on meetings of the Tjohorongo Kondjee Farmers' Association and and a village waterpoint committee, while in Uganda the development communication was between a foreign African agricultural specialist and local groups of farmers who were mostly women. As a result of these individual and group discussions aimed at elucidating the role of the language used, and using the focus on leadership as a comparative perspective, I came to realized that the quality of leadership has an empirical basis in human relationships which finds different expressions in different languages, yet points to a common phenomenon.

The theoretical model for "good leadership" and its role for sustainability

If we say that leadership is about "leading people" we do not say much. The question is: leading *where*? In management, it seems to me, the emphasis on leadership was about personal qualities that would allow a manager to get his subordinates follow the company wherever it wanted to go - *willingly* and with a certain enthusiasm, rather than because they were *commanded* to come along. In part, this came from a realization that the older model of "scientific management" was not appropriate any more: it had become apparent that the optimization of output could not be determined by centralized direction alone, but required the active input from employees.

What was a kind of silent revolution for Western management, started by the "Human Relations" school around Mc Gregor in fact only echoed knowledge already present in other cultures long before the industrial revolution. The oldest written references I have come across come from the Chinese Tao Te Ching, where one stance says that the best king is the one who remains unknown to people, while the second best is loved by his people, the third best is feared by his people, and the worst is despised by his people.

A later Taoist text (Cleary 1996: 46) stated:

> The art of human leadership is to manage affairs without contrivance and instruct without speaking; to be pure and calm, unmoving, unshakably consistent, delegating matters to subordinates according to custom, so that duties are accomplished without strain.

To my mind, this resonates with what McGregor called a "democratic leadership style" - and yet goes beyond it. It also resonates with the ideals of "good leadership" for which I asked respondents - both "leaders" and "followers" - in all the three project areas in Indonesia, Namibia and Uganda where I did field research in the framework of the LAGSUS project. I will give some examples in the next section. Here I only wish to draw attention to one point of overlap between statements in the three contexts: that of trust in a leader. This trust develops as a result of the actions of the leader: he or she becomes trustworthy to the extent that the leader's actions do not speak a different language than the words he or she uses when addressing people, to the extent that these actions reflect - to some extent at least - what the followers want themselves, and to the extent that these actions are considered fair or "just."

While the concrete content of the consistency of words and actions, the meaning of what people really want, and what they consider fair or just, can only be understood in terms of the everyday language used in a particular context, I am confident that a more comprehensive study (in terms of the areas covered) would confirm in an objective sense that the issues mentioned above are at the core of the problems with leadership at all levels an in all cultural

contexts. I state this because the similarity in the ideals of leadership was matched by an equal similarity in the disappointment with actual leadership in all the areas studied. It also conforms to the general ideas of sociologists, historians, and anthropologists that "human development" began with more egalitarian societies where reciprocity was highly valued. I take this as an indication that across all cultural differences - which modern theories of cultural relativism emphasize to the point of denying the existence of a "human nature" - there are in fact a limited number of options of how human beings can act towards each other and how they experience this. Comparing actions with ideals and values - one of which is justice - is one of the options which - to my knowlege - has not been neglected by any human society. There is therefore a place for science's concern for a more general theory which "explains" the diverging concrete instances of action and experience. To satisfy the quanitative requirements of the modern scientific community this claim would, of course, have to be substantiated by a much bigger research project than the present one. The starting point for such a project could be the question of how the observed discrepancies between ideals of leadership and empirically observed styles of leadership could be narrowed - if it is acknowledged that such a narrowing is consistent not just with the observations made by one researcher in a limited number of cases, but with other observations made by different researchers all over the planet and with explicit wishes of ordinary people all over the world.

Here, I only wish to suggest a theoretical model making it plausible that such a narrowing of the discrepancy between stated leadership ideals and observed leadership behaviour is relevant for sustainable development and, indeed, for the sustainability of the human species.

The point I wish to make - and this is my justification for even mentioning such a "big" issue in this context - is that the discrepancy between stated ideals and actual behaviour of leaders more or less necessarily leads to unsustainable an unsustainable leadership - and hence to unsustainable institutions. Without sustainable institutions, however, the use of resources cannot be regulated in a sustainable way. Such regulations are necessary for achieving a current resource use which is not at the cost of future generations - and idea which is at the core of sustainability discourse since the publication of the Brundtland report.

The crucial role for leadership - moreover: "good leadership" - becomes clear if we take into account that one of the functions of leadership is precisely the regulation of access to and use of resources, beginning with access to hunting or fishing resources, over access to land for agricultural purposes, access to places for the exchange of goods (i.e. markets), access to financial resources, access to education, and, finally, access to human resources in the form of educated people and their store of both knowledge and creativity. Even in so-called "modern" systems where much of this regulation takes the form of written regulations which the incumbents of positions in established hierarchies are only supposed to enact, there is a place for leadership in the older sense: regulations need to be interpreted. This interpretation leaves room for leadership and this leadership is judged by followers - or those lower down in hierarchies - on the basis of the same "human mechanisms" as the more direct leadership in historically older or currently more egalitarian socio-cultural systems.

The central suggestion of this paper is that one of the essential criteria by which followers will judge any leader is a "common sense" of justice. I call it a "sense," and not a "notion" because this "sense" is not in the first place a clear and rational *definition* of what is just and what is unjust, bur rather a "feeling for balance" in the distribution of resources among different individuals and groups. This feeling for balance does not require that all are treated equally, that everyone's interests are the same, or that everyone's interests are satisfied to the same degree. It is violated, however, if the distribution of resources is excesssively unequal. People

then tend to react with behaviours ranging from withdrawal and passive resistance to open protest or even violent opposition.

There is an arena of negotiation or contest about what falls within the area where the feeling of balance is satisfied because, in this arena - which belongs to what is usually referred to as ethics - emotions and rationality intersect and mutually influence each other. In other words: what can be defined as a "just" or "fair" mode of distribution of access to and use of resources is subject to an ongoing contest between individuals or groups, is part of a power struggle - a power struggle in which claims to knowledge or truth also play a role, and which social science itself therefore cannot completely escape. Once the definition of what is just or fair has been (temporarily) solidified into local rules or legally binding regulations, however, the definition itself will influence - but not strictly determine - the "feeling of balance" concerning the distribution of access to and use of resources. One might think of this as an area of intersection between ethics and politics - and area which seems to be largely neglected in social science studies, while it has only recently achieved some prominence in the international discourse about sustainable development (Ferguson 1999). The correction of inequality of access to resources and the distribution of power within and between countries, however, is seen by the authors of UNDP's Human Development Report 2005 as crucial if any progress is to be made towards "sustainable progress in human development" (Martens 2005).

I think it suffices to remind ourselves of the global resistance movement against globalisation and the negotiations in the WTO to show that emotionally loaded issues of justice or fairness play a role in global negotiations and struggles. At the core of the rational arguments used in these negotiations and struggles we find a question which is crucial for all considerations of sustainability: can more equitable distribution of resources be achieved by further growth or is there a need for redistribution? Because: development by way of growth necessarily means an increased use of limited resources - and hence will to some extent be at the cost of future generations, and therefore violate intergenerational justice. I do not want to enter this debate here. I just would like to point out that the same intersecting of rational arguments with an emotionally coloured sense of justice is operative in the international arena *and* in local struggles. One of the differences is that at a local level the leaders responsible for decisions concerning resource use are more visible than at a national or international level, and therefore the judgements concerning the fairness or otherwise of the leader's actions are more direct - and possibly more accurate.

To sum up the model: a crucial aspect of leadership is regulating access to and use of resources in a manner which balances the legitimate interests of different individuals and groups. This regulation is judged by those concerned by using a "common sense of justice" inherent in all human beings which defines an - often contested - area within which the distribution of rights to access will be considered fair or just. Ensuring that the distribution falls within this area is an essential criterion for "good" leadership and an important ingredient for trust in that leadership.

If the leader's decisions, in contrast, lead to what people themselves consider an unfair distribution, this trust will be lacking. Such a lack of trust will result in overt or hidden resistance, weakening adherence to the regulations leading to this unfair distribution, and, sooner or later, to a weakening of the position of leadership itself. In that sense, injustice endangers the sustainability of the institutional structure which provides the position of leadership where unfair decisions are taken.

This is particularly important in the context of sustainability, because environmental sustainability requires restrictions on resource use to ensure a sufficient resource base for the livelihoods of future generations. It is unlikely that such restrictions will be respected if the leadership advocating such restrictions is seen as an unfair one promoting only its own interest or the interests of specific groups. It seems to me that this principle applies at all levels: local, national, and international.

In addition, a leadership which is not trusted will not be able to enlist the full human capacities of all followers: neither people's full amount of knowledge available, nor their full creative potential will be available for solving the technical and social problems faced as a result of already confirmed unsustainable patterns of resource use.

Evidence from three countries

The model of "good leadership" described above represents a generalisation based on what some would call philosophical reflection, on observations made in the field, and its relevance has been "tested" in conversations with assistents, fellow researchers, and friends. This "peer review" seemed sufficient to present it to this scientific audience. The following section will present some of the observations and feedbacks from the field.

Simply mentioning my interest in leadership studies during a recent meeting with an NGO in Bogor, one of the parcipants obviously versed in Islamic studies, volunteered four characteristics of a good leader: 1. He must be honest and just; 2. He can be trusted; 3. He is open; 4; He is intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually intelligent[4].

This definition which is based on Islamic learning encompasses and yet goes beyond the characteristics of good leaders mentioned in the interviews in the three countries. These can be grouped under three headings: 1) character and attitudes, 2) behaviour, and 3) abilities.

Character and attirudes

That a good leader should have a "good character" was mentioned both in Uganda and in Indonesia. He should be "patient," "polite," "kind", "caring," "intelligent," "approachable," "humble,""principled,"God fearing" (in Uganda), or "religious" (in Indonesia) - the kinds of things one kind finds in "Western" management literature as constituting the "integrity" of a leader (Badaracco and Ellsworth 1989). In Uganda, an overwhelming agreement concerned "trustworthiness" (*bwesigwa*): this was explicitly mentioned in ten interviews, even more frequently than the ability to listen. Here, however, it referred less to a general personal character inspiring other people's trust - as it is seen in Western literature, for example in Govier (1997: 23): “One thing that makes us trust people is what we perceive as their genuineness or authenticity, our sense that they are *not* just filling a role.” Rather, it referred directly to the handling of money: “It means that if the community agrees to buy office furniture for say 140 000, and the leader goes and manages to buy for only 120 000, he will come back with the balance.”

[4] 1) jujur dan adil
2) dapat dipercayai
3) menyampaikan (terbuka)
4) cerdas (intelektual, emosional & spiritual)

In one of the Indonesian group discussions with a village head and some senior members of the local community, the notion of trustworthiness (*rapionalai* in the *Napu* or *Pekurehua* language) appeared in their local language, obviously referring to a pre-Indepdence, and probably pre-colonial model of leadership. It was mentioned in the next to industriousness (*madeta*), "charisma" (*wahena*) and two concepts translated as "from the source" (*totoiuwiane*) and "from the peak" (*uwerena*), possibly referring to the aristocratic descent the importance of which has been mentioned above. In one of the interviews, the concept of trust in the *Kulawi Moma* language was differentiated into three:

"Pepuea" - Belief or trust in the Creator.
"Kamagana" - Trust in a (traditional) leader who is just, honest, and respected
"Kaparahaia" - Trust in other people.

What is interesting in our context is not only that the concept of a transcendent reality is singled out from what the English language refers to as "trust", but also the explicit reference to "jujur" (honest) and "adil" (just) as characteristics of a leader who can be trusted. And if he is, his decisions are accepted and followed without further questioning. This is all the more interesting as it comes from a context in which an aristocratic class (*Maradika*) dominated a traditional social system which included slavery and human sacrifices. This system was regulated by customary *adat* law the express purpose of which was to maintain the superior position of the nobles[5].

Despite the clear hierarchical organization in the research area in Namibia - paralleled by a strongly centralized organization of the Herero in Namibia - in both areas leaders whose behaviour made them credible to me stressed that a "good" leader does not depend on people being afraid of him - echoing the ranking of leadership qualities put into writing in ancient China. One of the Namibian local headmen who had found it difficult to listen to criticism voiced in a meeting observed during the previous stay, however, jumped on the mention of Machiavelli in our discussion to stress that it was true: to some extent people also must be afraid of a leader.

Behaviour

In general, a leader's behaviour should be exemplary, reflecting local standards of politeness, respect, hard work, he should seek information from the outside and transmit outside information to his people. In short: he should act as a mediator between the local population and higher levels of administration. In this, he is expected to "bring development" to the area, as stressed often in the Ugandan context, and sometimes in the Indonesian context. The ability to organise people was particularly important for the *robo* work groups through which the rotational use of common pool forest resources was organised in the Indonesian research area. Such a leader also had to be trustworthy - and be able to provide food and festivities for members of his work gang, or else they might join a different leader (Sunito 2004: 74-77)

The same expectation exists in the Omatjete communal area in Namibia, where, however, this "caring" or "nurturing" aspect of leadership has strong roots in pre-colonial patters of organisation (Werner 1998, chapter one), and in a strongly paternalistic provision of (albeit limited) services by the colonial government. Incident three quoted a successful present leader of a communal Farmers Association: "A leader should be like a mother; the first thing is to

[5] The descendant of a former *magau* (local "King" or *raja*) said she could not be a member of the local *lembaga adat* for this reason: the local adat council was there to make the rules on behalf of and for the ruler, and therefore she as a member of the rulers' family could not also be a member of that council.

put the baby on her breast and to carry it all the time." In an interview with two successful modern Herero working in an investment firm in Windhoek, this need of a leader to be able to provide for his followers was also mentioned as essential - otherwise people might simply leave and join a different chief.

This aspect of leadership is echoed in the "human relations" movement in modern management (Crockett 1985; Burton and Dunn 1996) and in recommendations for "Leadership for the Common Good" (Crosby and Bryson 2005).

Another cross-cultural overlap concerns people's judgements about the congruence of a leaders' words with his actions. In Indonesia, one of the village heads had engaged his younger relatives to clear a field for planting maize (which is usually the first step to establishing a cocoa plantation) just behind his house, on a rather steep hill just above the hot springs signposted as an ecotourism attraction. Talking about the voluntary village conservation agreements, a young man remarked: "Our headman himself does not give a good example: just look at this maize field which is on a steep slope - and inside the boundaries of the National Park." Talking about leadership in Uganda, the couple interviewed pointed to their former headman who had always exhorted people to have at least one acre of cassava but did not plant any cassava himself: "Are you a good leader?"

Abilities

A third aspect of "good leadership" concerns abilities a leader should possess. These mainly refer to knowledge acquired through education - which local leaders in Indonesia explicitly called "human resources," using the short form *SDM* for the direct Indonesian equivalent of "human resources": *Sumberdaya Manusia*. In fact, one of the present village headmen in Indonesia had been urged to stand for elections to this post precisely because he was the only candidate with a certain level of school education. Education was mentioned several times in Ugandan interviews also. The members of the Farmers' Association in Namibia, however, were more concerned with leaders' abilities to deal with their immediate problems in animal husbandry and marketing.

In addition, abilities to mediate conflicts, bring people together - or even "unite them" - play a big role for successful organisation. Some of this also requires personal abilities such as being able to control one's emotions, particularly when receiving criticism from the people one is supposed to lead. The ability to tolerate criticism was mentioned by several of the farmer group leaders in Indonesia.

A cross-cultural formulation for a good leader: "In front, in the middle, and at the back"

With more research it might be possible to show convincingly that these three aspects - character, behaviour, and abilities - have to come together in successful leaders. In the context of this research I take the correspondence across geographically and culturally diverse conditions as a strong indication for this proposition. When I used formulation for good leadership which a former village headman in Indonesia had stressed as important, in a Namibian interview, I was interrupted by the local farmer leader: "You are taking away my words." The formulation had been that a good leader is "in front, in the middle, and at the back at the same time."

The following table gives the correspondence of this concept in English, Javanese, Indonesian, and *Pekurehua*, one of the local languages. The intention is to give other

researchers an opportunity to evaluate the two opposing claims I heard concerning this concept of leadership: researchers at the Agricultural University in Bogor claimed that this concept originated with the Javanese nobility in pre-colonial times, and had been popularized all over Indonesia after Independence as one of the aspects of the authoritarian rule of the Suharto regime. One of the local leaders, however, claimed that the concept had existed before Indepenence - and alread then been "much loved by the people[6]."

English	Javanese	Indonesian	*Bahasa Pekurehua*
Give an example in front	Tut wure handayani	Di depan memberi contoh	Yoru mewali panggin
Educate in the middle	Ingarso suntulodo	Di tengah membimbing	Itanga menini
Push from behind	Ingmadio	Di belakang mendorong	Iboko mohumbanga

I find this correspondence the more remarkable as the aspects of "trust" and of "justice" are mentioned as prerequisites, and one Indonesian leader who seemed to embody these qualities explicitly mentioned that a good leader has no need of people being afraid of him. He simply understands "his" people by listening them. According to the Herero model of traditional leadership, a chief achieves this through his councillors acting as his eyes and ears, so that "when a man comes to the chief with a problem, he already knows." They would probably see it as the local headman who said that the first task of a leader is to listen - "even to children."

Examples of demand for good leadership and breakdown of leadership

This, however, is no longer the case nowadays. Virtually in all research areas the perception of present leadership is one of inability, unavailability, and corruption. Hence, with a few notable exceptions, mistrust towards leaders prevails. A group of traders in a market village in Uganda were unanimous in their opinion that "clean leadership" was presently impossible in Uganda. This view was shared by many, and some gave poverty as reason: coming from a state of poverty, elected leaders use their position to improve their lot. This was echoed in Namibia: "they only come for the elections and then forget about us."

While not expressed in these terms, it seems plausible to me to link these remarks to a "common sense" of justice, which exists everywhere: while obviously incorporating cultural differences and not insisting on absolute equality, this sense of justice is based on what I would tentatively like to call a "sense of balance" in what is due to the leader, and what is due to the followers, or the "common good." It is clear that under conditions of poverty, as prevailing in virtually all of the research areas, the tempation to slightly distort this balance is particularly strong - as acknowledged even by those dissatisfied with this state of affairs. As Moses Sunday, my Ugandan interpreter, stated: "I think we are all a little responsible. We

[6] It is interesting to note that a Javanese colleague pointed out that the Javanese terms in the above table are incomplete - and changed in their order:
* Leading in front: tutwuri handayani
* Educating in the middle: ing madya mangun (*membangun*) karso (*karsa = motivation, initiative*) - in the middle developing initiative
* Pushing from behind: ing ngarso sing tulodo (*teladan/tauladan* = example) - at the back (behind) you give good example.

have gotten used to this system so much, that we feel guilty ourselves if we do not offer a "gift" to an official who simply does his duty by issuing us a license."

Because he belonged to that group of people who did not follow a hidden agenda in their dealings with me, and because I was able to observe other people's interaction with him, my "common sense" allowed me to trust his report that people always wanted him to be chairman for various church and non-church associations. After experiencing local politics as a "Chairman LC 3" he had decided that politics was a dirty business and that he rather wanted to concentrate on the church, while also serving in the local land office. In this function he supported local people's claim to a piece of remaining government land in a swamp area against the contending claim of urbanites from the capital of Kampala to buy this same piece of land. I think it is reasonable to take this as an example of "actions conforming with words."

Trust is everywhere and nowhere

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