

Economic Frustrations in Mud Village

Scenario

It is 1810. You live in a community that is located between an ocean and a large lake. There are hills between the lake and ocean. There are some people who are farmers but most of the people either work in the shops or the factories. The factories are located on the west side of the mountains. There are people in your community who are called the traders. They move the cloth that is made in the factories from their hilly locations down to the shop keepers. In addition they also bring cloth along treacherous paths, or trails through the hills and down to the ocean port to trade with ocean going ships. There they will buy some tea to sell to the shopkeepers. The shopkeepers sell goods to the residents of the community who are known as the laborers. The laborers work on either on the farms or in the factories. The laborers buy cloth and the tea from the shopkeepers.

Your community is hilly and heavily forested. Often trees fall down because the weather is often windy and rainy. Sometimes it seems like all it does is rain. There are many ponds and lakes in the community. In fact , your community has been nicknamed the ‘mud" village. However, there are many immigrants, who desire to move here and work in the factories.

Your community is going to have a village meeting to discuss any matters that may be important to the various groups of people. The factory owners will meet before the meeting and see if they have any common concerns to discuss. The shopkeepers, traders and laborers are also meeting in their respective groups to see if they have any concerns or problems. Each of the special (expert) groups will discuss their issue and how they may solve them. Then after the group meetings, there will be a general community meeting to decide if there is anything that can be done to improve their community.

===== end of scenario =====

expert readings on following pages.

Expert Reading
Traders
(Transportation Group)

As traders you are a frustrated group. You have plenty of customers, the shopkeepers and the factory owners, but you cannot keep up with their demands. The factory owners want you to load more cloth on to your horses, which you also want to do in order to make more money. However the horses are already taking as much as they can without collapsing. You have tried carts with the horses but the hilly paths down from the factory to the village are filled with fallen trees and mud when it rains. You have also tried using horse drawn wagons but they get stuck in the fallen trees and in the mud as they try to travel through the hills and valleys. The shopkeepers in addition to wanting more cloth from the factory also want bigger supplies of tea to sell. But again you can not keep up with the increased demands for the tea either. The route to the sea is also hilly, muddy and very treacherous. You are frustrated because if the the paths were in better condition you could carry more supplies in horse drawn wagons.

EXPERT READING
Shop Keepers
(Commercial Group)

As shop keepers you are a frustrated group. You have plenty of customers but you cannot keep your shelves full of goods. The traders are unable to move the cloth down from the factories to your store fast enough to keep up with the demand. The traders use horses to bring the cloth down from the hills along treacherous paths, into the village. You also have a difficult time keeping tea on your shelves. The traders also use horses to carry the tea into the village but it takes along time because of the long treacherous, hilly paths from the sea. It very difficult to keep ample supplies of tea on your shelf because your customers like it so much. Your are frustrated because you cannot keep adequate supply of goods on hand, such as tea and cloth to meet the demand of your customers. You could make a lot more money if only you had a plenty dependable supplies of tea and cloth in your store.

EXPERT READING

The Factory Owners

(Industrial Group.)

As factory owners you are a frustrated group. You have plenty of labor (workers) and a cheap power source to make cloth in your factories which are located in the western hills next to fast running streams. You are able to produce much cloth at reasonable price because of low labor costs and the water power to run your factories. Demand for your cloth is high, but you are having a difficult time keeping shopkeepers supplied with cloth. In addition you are having hard time getting enough raw material, because of the slow delivery of cotton and wool. The hills make it a treacherous and slow trip for the traders who use horses to bring the cloth from the factories to the shops, located in the village. Its also difficult for the traders to bring the cotton and wool to the factories as well. The frustrating part is that the everyone wants your cloth but you cannot get it to them fast enough and in large enough quantities. You could open up more factories and make more money if only the traders could work faster in bringing you the raw materials and shipping out your finished products.

EXPERT READING

Laborers

(Residential Group)

As laborers you are a frustrated group. You like to buy the cloth and the tea that is sold in the shops. But you always have to race to the store after work because the supplies of tea and cloth always run out. Further you are frustrated because the shop keepers keep the price of the cloth and tea very high, especially during the rainy season. Because the demand for those products is high, the shopkeeper can sell the tea and cloth at a high price. So you can never buy all the cloth and tea that you would like when supplies of those items are available, because the cost of those products are too high. The traders are unable to move the cloth down from the factories to the stores fast enough to keep up with the demand. The traders use horses to bring the cloth down to shops in the center of the village where you buy your goods. Tea is also expensive because the traders have a difficult time keeping the shops supplied with plenty of tea because of the long treacherous, hilly path from the sea.

