

CAMPBE

Integrated Approach to Local Rural Development

Report of an Interdisciplinary Seminar
Makati, Philippines
31 March - 3 April 1975

Editor: Marilyn Campbell

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A Multipronged Approach to Rural Development: the College of Agriculture Complex of Xavier University, Philippines

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The Xavier University College of Agriculture Complex is a multipronged agency for rural development that began in 1953.

The overall aim of the college is to help achieve the fullest human development possible for the more than 70% of the Philippines population who live in rural areas.

In addition to the College of Agriculture proper, with its experiment stations, Xavier University has the following integral units: (1) an extension service; (2) a cooperative-credit union promotion division; (3) an Institute of Market Analysis; (4) a Rural Communications Center; (5) a Rural Development Survey and Advisory Service; and (6) the Southeast Asia Rural Social Leadership Institute (SEARSOLIN). These are described below.

Extension Service

This service bridges the gap between the formal university procedure results and the small farmer. It is an educational and motivational instrument in imparting the "ways" and "whys" of rural development.

The major areas of concern are: (1) farming; (2) cooperative organization; (3) home industry; (4) health, nutrition, hygiene, and sanitation.

The extension effort consists of a "team" approach to allow for a simultaneous impact on the multiple problems of development. The team consists of an agricultural technician, a rural institution organizer, a nutritionist, and a nurse.

The method has largely been through regularly scheduled seminars whose content has

been designed to impart knowledge and thereby to whet the appetite of the rural peoples for still further, continuing self-improvement. A further key function of this educational process is to unearth the natural leaders and to imbue them with a greater sense of responsibility for their community growth and to heighten their leadership skills for that role.

The extension program, in one phase or another, has helped in rural development in 19 provinces of the country, in Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao.

Cooperative-Credit Union Promotion

Twenty years ago, Xavier University embraced the genuine cooperative as its major rural institution instrument for development not only as an economic tool but particularly as an instrument of change. Credit unions were established to enable the small farmer to have the means of acquiring any of the wide range of inputs needed for increased production.

As well, Land Survey Teams have been formed to help the small farmer establish his title to the land, which he can then use as collateral if he requires a large long-term loan from a commercial banking institution.

Cooperatives such as the Cattle Producing and Marketing Cooperative, the Poultry Cooperative, the Automotive Service Cooperative, and the Agricultural Supply Cooperative, were established to allow small farmers to have access to expensive equipment, trucks, fertilizers, agricultural chemicals, veterinary medicines, hand sprayers, etc.

To enable the small farmer to receive a considerably larger share of his output, marketing cooperatives have been formed that, through sharing the cost of transporting the products, fertilizers, etc., help to gain a greater return for the farmer.

Institute of Market Analysis

In 1965, Xavier University set up the first Institute of Market Analysis in the Philippines. Its first function is to provide an on-going, long-range daily collection on prices and volume of more than two dozen of the more important food commodities coming into the Cagayan de Oro market. These data, cross-checked with information of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, are used to chart price fluctuations in these prime commodities covering varying periods up to 3 years and beyond. Digests of price and volume information are broadcast several times daily over three stations and with such information varied planting programs can be quite safely proposed to the small farmers for maximizing their profit.

A second function, jointly with the Agronomy Department in particular, is to study what some of the possible new export crops might be that could be grown efficiently and what regional or worldwide markets could absorb them.

Rural Communications Center

Since there has been a tremendous growth in the use of smaller transistor radios by small farming families, even in the more remote barrios, it was felt that this medium should be used for farmers' education.

In this Center, various types of technical education programs are scripted, produced,

and multiplied to bring the small farmer the recommendations stemming from locally applied research in agriculture. In addition, materials related to cooperative and better farming practices are published.

Rural Development Survey and Advisory Service

Various units of government and church administration, e.g., provinces and dioceses, recognizing the need for planning prior to launching any developmental program, have asked for our assistance in formulating priorities and practical procedures, and extended surveys and rather exhaustive suggestions have been undertaken for 11 provinces and dioceses. In some instances we have been asked to provide the initial supervision of the plans adopted.

SEARSOLIN

SEARSOLIN, started in 1964, provides a 7½-8 month course consisting of lectures and extended field observations aimed at a deepening of the principles of effective rural social leadership and a sharpening of their skills in utilizing several of the major developmental tools.

Candidates have come from 14 countries of South and Southeast Asia.

Eighty-five percent of the program is on a scholarship basis, and the sponsor of the trainee is asked to contribute 15%.

Subjects covered in the course include human social principles; rural community development; group dynamics; developmental economics; cooperatives; agricultural production; social change; social survey; leadership; political science; credit unions; and agricultural economics.