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WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

People's Research for Empowerment
& Community Change (PREACH):
An Experience in PAR

Gender Advocacy In Urban Poor
Communities: Experiences from the
Women CREATE

Pakikipagtulungan sa Independent
Movement ng Pasay

Towards Strengthening Community
Extension Services

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FOREWORD

As part of the extension mechanism of CSWCD, the Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO) shares in the effort to operationalize the College Vision-Mission-Goals by providing assistance to marginalized communities and groups. Its activities focus on training, research, advocacy and networking.

This edition of the CSWCD Journal showcases three (3) community extension projects which REDO has undertaken for almost a decade:

1. PREACH (People's Research for Empowerment and Community Change) - 1988 to 1990;
2. Women CREATE (Women's Consciousness Raising through Education and Action Towards Empowerment) - 1987 to 1993;
3. Community-Based Grassroots Training Program in Pasay - 1995 to present.

A synthesis paper entitled "Towards Strengthening Community Extension Services" attempts to highlight REDO's extension experiences and likewise cite problem areas and challenges in sustaining these concerns.

In the context of the service-oriented academic programs of the College (namely: Community Development, Social Work, Women and Development), community extension is a built-in component in its teaching, research and extension functions. The Field Instruction Program has been the major venue for the faculty and students to pursue extension activities as part of curricular objectives.

The 70's and 80's witnessed how CSWCD's varied activities have responded to the social development needs of the larger society, outside the confines of the classroom. The Office of Research and Publications (ORP) and the Office of Continuing Education and Extension (OCEE), REDO's predecessors, had various projects which had a social action component. The faculty and students have also historically embarked on many service-oriented endeavors in addition to academic-related fieldwork.

REDO, for its part, also strives to institutionalize community service within its current program concerns. In view of the University's limited resources, however, there is a need to review lessons from its past projects as basis for formulating a more responsive and feasible community extension program.

People's Research for Empowerment and Community Change (PREACH): An Experience in PAR*

EMMANUEL M. LUNA

Introduction

The basic problems of the Filipino people - massive unemployment, underemployment, mass poverty and dependence on foreign economy still remain. Philippine society is still plagued by inequality in wealth and power which breeds social conflict. And since the more immediate concern of majority of Filipinos today is economic upliftment, people's power must be translated into people's participation in the planning and implementation of economic programs that truly serve the needs and aspirations of the majority. Thus, the importance of building self-reliant and self-determining people's organizations cannot be over-emphasized.

While there have been countless development projects and researches implemented by various agencies, these have not significantly improved the impoverished conditions in the countryside and in the urban centers. This failure is partly due to the fact that the people directly affected by these projects were not asked to participate in the research and in the planning and implementation of the projects.

*Based on a participatory action research (PAR) directed by Emmanuel M. Luna and Romeo C. Quieta, "People's Research for Empowerment and Community Change" (PREACH), funded by the Office of Research Coordination, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City, 1990.

In line with the thrust of building self-reliant communities, research has to serve as a practical instrument in developing the people's potential for their socio-economic upliftment and empowerment. This action-research project, therefore, was conceptualized as a tool for improving the lives of the poor, the disadvantaged or those who have less access to the basic services and economic opportunities. As an academic institution engaged in developing a new breed of community organizers and social workers who are better equipped with knowledge and skills that are more responsive to the changing conditions and demands of Philippine society, the College of Social Work and Community Development initiated this action-research as an extension service to depressed communities.

Project Objectives

The People's Research for Empowerment and Community Change (PREACH) was an action-research envisioned to contribute to the understanding of community conditions and the development of appropriate actions that can assist the people in their empowerment and initiating community changes. The general objectives of the project are:

- First, to develop a community-based data bank on the socio-economic, political and environmental concerns which shall serve as the basis of people's action in uplifting their conditions;
- Second, to develop the people's potentials necessary to effectively carry out innovative changes in the community;
- Third, to initiate, strengthen, and assess the community organizing activities undertaken in connection with this participatory action research; and
- Fourth, to develop and test-out a mechanism for the integration of the research, extension and teaching activities of the College through participatory research.

Given these objectives, it was expected that the action research would result in the following outputs/impacts:

- * Improved data base for the community members' use in their efforts to uplift their conditions.
- * Developed leadership and organized groups to respond to their immediate and long-term needs.
- * Improved understanding and commitment to participatory research among the people and the academe.

Methodology

The research adopted the community organizing process as summed up in the following activities:

1. *Community Entry, Integration and Preliminary Social Investigation*

This was not just a preparatory phase to the data gathering, but more importantly, the foundation of the researchers'/organizers' involvement with the people in the community. It was at this stage where the project staff established rapport with the people, got the feel of the community and identified with them. The preliminary social investigation facilitated the process of defining the specific direction of the research. Thus, while the socio-economic, political and environmental conditions were determined, the areas needing more emphasis and focus were identified by the people themselves.

2. *Identification and Training of Local Researchers and Community Leaders*

Contact persons and community leaders in the research area were given trainings on leadership, planning, research and organizing. They were also formed into core groups and were

mobilized to respond to the community problems and needs.

3. *Focused Social Investigation and Data Gathering*

Based on the existing needs of the community, the researches undertaken by the local researchers and leaders were focused on the formulation of project proposals, participatory census and data gathering to enable them to organize and implement community activities. The data gathering employed different methodologies like informal discussion, survey, group interviews, focused group discussion, observation, and workshops.

The researches undertaken in the area were not a "one-shot-deal" thing. As the need for more information surfaced, more data gathering took place. Also, all the research outputs were compiled and consolidated to come up with the community-based data bank.

4. *Establishment of Mechanisms For Action*

The research outputs became inputs to the community in resolving the problems and needs. In mobilizing people to act on the identified issues and needs, organization of committees and even sectoral groups were initiated. Community planning was done to ensure effective implementation of identified solution to the problem. At this stage, the project staff acted as facilitators and trainers.

Establishment of linkages with other organizations, government and non-government institutions was facilitated by the project staff to ensure coordination, cooperation and support. In a way, this served as a preparation for the phasing out of the project.

5. *Evaluation, Summing Up of Lessons and Program Endorsement*

Toward the end of the project, the project staff, with the active involvement of the people synthesized and evaluated the

experiences, lessons, research outputs and other gains from the project. To avoid abrupt phasing out, the task of community organizing was endorsed to government and non-government organizations with whom the project had established linkages.

PREACH started its operation in November 1988 and ended in May 1990.

Research Framework

People's Empowerment: The Expression of Pro-People and Transformative Development

To men and women who are committed to the development of people's potential and in transforming the pyramidal socio-economic and political structures, the popular adoption of participatory approaches can be considered as a significant gain. People's participation has become an integral component of several programs, even among government-initiated ones. Concomitant with the widespread acceptance of participatory development is the ascription of different meanings to the term, even to the extent of using it for the maintenance of the status quo.

The pro-people and transformative nature of participatory development is concretized as the people themselves collectively act to initiate changes for their betterment. As Julius Nyerere, former president of Tanzania, and former chairperson of the South Commission, puts it:

... People cannot be developed, they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible for an outsider to build a man's house, an outsider cannot give the man pride and self-confidence in himself as a human being. Those things a man has to create in

understanding of what he is doing, and why; by increasing his own knowledge and ability, and by his full participation -- as an equal -- in the life of the community he lives in. (Nyerere, 1973)

Poverty is a result of unjust socio-economic and political structures and to mitigate it, these structures have to be transformed to give way to people's development. To alter the basic power relationship and obtain greater access to society's benefits, wider participation and higher level of performance among people's organizations have to be sustained (Taruc, 1980).

Usually, the people belonging to the lower strata of the society, those who are in poverty are powerless, unless they are organized. They do not possess power like wealth, education and influence. Instead their power lies in the fact that they belong to the majority. When they are organized, they can wield power to change their condition (Palacios, 1977).

Addressing people's needs is not an easy task. Transferring power from the hands of the oppressor to those of the oppressed is hindered by the people's culture of silence as a result of centuries of domination. How can this be shattered? Maglaya (1982) recommends organizing the people to confront their oppressor and win victories for themselves. Organizing people for power will help establish participatory and powerful people's organizations to achieve both a liberation of consciousness and the creation of actual instruments of power. Power then becomes the people's means of finding redress to their grievances and acts against the conditions that oppress and dehumanize them.

Morales (1986) provided a meaning of empowerment that can transcend individual or group centered development towards the more macro social system.

By empowerment we mean a long-term strategic process of transferring economic and social power from one center to another and/or creation of new centers of

socio-economic power complementary to or in competition with the tradition centers.

Empowerment, therefore, is a dynamic process of shifting the balance of social power from one center to another and/or creation of one social class or group of classes and may very well also imply the shift in the economic or political importance of one area or region to another, resulting in a different configuration

Power redistribution means transferring substantial decision-making power to the people. This implies harnessing of the people's own potentials to enable them to take responsibility for their own development. Self-reliance and self-management are seen as inherent in the process of community development (Morales, 1986).

Three types of rural organizations were then suggested by Morales to empower the people, namely community organizations, mass-based sectoral organizations, and socio-economic organizations or corporations.

With the comprehensive goal of people's empowerment and the complexity of its process, the role of external institutions in a local community is to facilitate the creation of conditions and opportunities so that the people's potential may develop and find expression. Without belittling their capacity in doing development tasks, the people and their organizations have to grow into self-managing groups. At the outset, this requires support from external sources to facilitate the development of the people's potentials for leadership, organizing, management of socio-economic undertaking, technology development and in doing investigations or researches to guide them and to serve as basis of their actions.

Participatory Research as a Tool for Empowerment

The people themselves have to learn or develop skills in research methodologies to ensure their control and full participa-

tion in development process. Similarly, the professional researchers themselves have to learn from the people's conditions and experiences. The emergence of alternative research approaches, that is, data gathering not for data gathering's sake, but as an approach to community organizing ... problem centered and is directed towards the resolution of problems affecting the community (Torres, 1987) was born out of the dissatisfaction with most traditional and academic-centered researches that seldom benefit the people (Simbulan, 1985). Thus, there were even expressions that researches done for mere intellectual curiosity's sake is neither prestigious nor fundable (Castillo, 1974).

The popularity of participatory approaches has been greatly influenced by the Freirian theory of dialogical method of social analysis and conscientization.

If I perceive reality as the dialectical relationship between objectivity and subjectivity, then I have to use methods for investigation which involve the people of the area being studied as researchers. They should take part in the investigations themselves and not serve as passive objects of the study This method of investigation which involves study - and criticism of the study - by the people is at the same time a learning process. Through this process of investigation, the level of critical thinking is raised among those involved (Freire, 1970).

An annotated bibliography on participatory research by Veneracion, et. al. (1984), provides a good summary of how Hall, one of the early advocates of PR, realized the fundamental shortcomings in the social science research methods where human behaviour is studied by adopting the methods of the natural scientists in studying plants, animals, chemical and physical properties. Hall (1978) then defines participatory research as a three-pronged activity: a method of social investigation involving the full participation of the community; educational process; and a means of taking action for development (Veneracion, 1984).

Participatory action research that combines social investigation, conscientization and collective action is considered as a tool in empowering the poor because it is geared towards educating and organizing the underprivileged for power (Almazar, 1987). As Guerrero, et al. also put it:

... research design, research orientation or bias ... emerges or evolves result of the dialogues and interaction with all the people affected by the research effort. PAR stresses the dialectic process of action, reflection, and back to action. Thus, PAR tends to be corrective, ameliorative and interventionist in its approach, but interventional with the full involvement of all people affected by these interventions. Action-intervention follows, and oftentimes become part of the research process (Guerrero, Tungpalan, Caragay, 1989).

Systems or models to operationalize the participatory action research have also been developed. Applying the Freirian model, Hope and Timmel (1984) make use of a non-formal listening survey to surface generative themes that become the center of dialogical discussion to heighten people's awareness and, subsequently, to draw them into action. A model that adopts PAR at the community level has been developed to institutionalize the problem-solving process by developing the capabilities of the people in research, planning and implementation. Known as Community Information and Planning System or CIPS, the model is being used by several NGOs in their projects (Polistico, 1988). The PAR approach of the Asian Social Institute utilizes dialogue or group meeting as an alternative form of data collection technique. Through qualitative, non-directive, free-flowing explanation by the respondents, the data collection becomes a dialogical interaction between the project team and the community residents (Tan, 1982).

At the University of the Philippines, College of Social Work and Community Development, community-based researches and programs have been integral undertakings since the 1970's though the term PR was not yet popular. This has been made possible by integrating research undertakings in community

organizing activities done in connection with fieldwork instruction. Later, more action oriented researches were developed which used community organizing as a method.

As observed in most of the researches undertaken, the research problems and designs originally come from the professional researchers, and these served as an entry point to the community in facilitating access to socio-economic services and organizing activities. As the research project progressed, community problems, needs and issues that surfaced as a result of social investigation became the new research problems which the community residents and the professional researchers worked on to come out with corresponding actions.

There are three considerations for the College's institution of community-based programs, particularly those involving field instruction: first, is the perceived necessity of praxis in the learning process of social work and community development students; second, the College's recognition that the University should become responsive to the needs of the Filipino people, especially the poor and the disadvantaged; and lastly, the belief that the people should be actively and responsibly involved in their own development (Alcid et. al., 1981).

The built-in component of developing the people's capabilities makes participatory action research more complicated, but more relevant than a conventional and knowledge-centered research. Its fruits are much more fulfilling as one sees a formerly stagnant and passive community grow into a progressive and self-managing social unit, with the people becoming more capable of determining and pursuing the kind of development they believe is just and most appropriate.

The PAR Process

The matrix in the next page outlines the major phases undergone in the research.

THE SOCIAL INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSES PHASES IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

RESEARCH PHASES	GENERAL DIRECTION	TIME FRAME	CONTENT	DOMINANT METHODOLOGY	ROLES	
					PROJECT STAFF/COs	COMMUNITY/ PEOPLE
I. Pre-entry Social Investigation	Generation of Information necessary to understand the community prior to entry of project to the area.	Prior to community entry (November 1988)	Socio-Economic and Political Profile of region, province, municipality and community Development programs	Review of existing literature, documents and reports about area Ocular visit and survey	Primary actors and users of the information	None Subject of the research
III. Integrative Social Investigation and Analysis	Generation of information necessary to properly relate with people and behave in the community Identification of potential leaders	Upon community entry and onward Very dominant during the first few weeks after the entry (Late November onward)	Socio-economic and political conditions of the community People's perceptions on the research project and research staff Leaders, leadership roles, patterns and characteristics	Informal discussion held during house to house visits, "pag-iis-tambay" and other integrative activities Group meetings Participation in socio-economic activities	Co-actors in data generation Primary users of the information	Co-actors, but not users of the information

RESEARCH PHASES	GENERAL DIRECTION	TIME FRAME	CONTENT	DOMINANT METHODOLOGY	ROLES	
					PROJECT STAFF/COs	COMMUNITY/ PEOPLE
III. Participatory Social Investigation, Analysis and Action	Surfacing and analysis of community problems, needs and issues that have to be attended to Training and development of people's capability	When integration of external researchers/ COs have been achieved When people themselves voice out their concerns (January, 1985 and onward)	Community resources Community problems, needs and issues Project proposals development Strategies and methods of mobilizing the people	"Pulong-bayan" Committee meetings and other small group meetings Groundwork and follow-up Formal training On-the-job training Structure building	Facilitators Trainors Technical advisers Co-users of re-search results	Actors Co-users of re-search results
IV. People-Initiated Social Investigation, Analysis and Action	Resolution of community problems, needs and issues upon people's initiatives Strengthening of people's capability and mechanisms for participation and empowerment	When people attain capabilities and basic orientation in social analysis and organizing and mobilization	Same as above (Action-oriented social investigation and analysis)	People's analysis and reflection Community meetings, dialogues, negotiation, review of documents, documentation and mass mobilization	Observers Advisers	Actors End users and beneficiaries of the re-search-action results

A. Program Entry and Initial Organizing Activities

1. Program Entry

The actual entry of the program in the barangay took place after the Municipal Mayor acknowledged the program's intention in the area. Through his facilitation, the program staff was properly introduced to the barangay officials who accommodated the first batch of students. As outsiders trying to become new members of the community, living with the formal officials of the barangay had been advantageous in establishing credentials; that the new faces in the community were legitimate program staff and volunteers. The initial integration activities were done by going around the community, accompanied by the youth and children of the formal leaders. House to house visits, informal talks with the people, "pag-iistambay" and the like were done to facilitate the integration and conduct of social investigation. Meetings per sitio were also done to formally introduce the program and individuals involved.

On the part of the program staff and students, it was a very difficult period because of the problem of distrust the people generally had with the outsiders. There were even circumstances where the program staff and students were frankly asked by the residents if they were members of the New People's Army.

Aside from person to person and house to house integration, meetings per sitio were also done to formally introduce the program and the individuals involved. However, the fear and suspicion among the people did not easily subside. The same condition prevailed until the coming of the second batch of students, which have taken much of the time and effort of the program.

Despite the stereotyped branding, the program

pushed on. Precautionary measures were done to avoid encounters with a pseudo-military man who kept on creating fear even among the staff and students. There were even instances when this man pointed his gun to the students while telling them to leave the community.

In another sitio where subversive branding was not a problem, a series of community meetings transpired. In the initial community meeting held in summer, the people identified three problems and needs which they wanted to act upon, namely the construction of one well, construction of three public toilets, and hog-raising to augment the family income. Three committees were formed by the people to be responsible in planning out actions to meet the needs, but with the understanding that the deepwell project would be prioritized.

In the succeeding week, the committee on deepwell construction started the collection of donations from the residents and from outside sources. However, the amount collected was not sufficient to finance the project. Some leaders of the committee outrightly expressed that the program staff should finance the remaining balance, but this was discouraged since it would just reinforce their dependency.

2. Community Entry of the Second Batch of Development Workers and Students

Since the program was already operating, the formal entry of the second batch of staff and students was not difficult. The staff formally entered the community by paying a courtesy call to the Mayor and the Barangay officials. The first three months had been geared towards establishing rapport with the people through house to house visits and participation in social and economic activities. To facilitate integration, the students who previously stayed in a staff house

were distributed to host families.

Separate "Pulong-bayan" meetings in the most depressed areas of the barangay were held to orient the people about the program. Also, it became a venue to facilitate discussion on the community situation and to arrive at some recommendations about the identified problems and needs.

Except in one sitio where committees had been formed, working committees were later on formed in other sitios to handle each particular project or activity suggested. These series of meetings also facilitated the integration of the staff with the people.

The integration process was affected by the people's impression and suspicion that the staff were radicals.

Some factors that contributed to these were the following:

- a. The community survey conducted by the first batch of students

In an effort to come out with a community study, the community survey done by the first batch of staff and students was given a totally different meaning. Since the survey included questions on the ownership of bancas, carabao, land, etc., the people mistook it as an effort to inventory the community resources that can be "channelled to the rebels". Even the spot map prepared by the students was given the same interpretation.

- b. Previous experiences of the people with the rebels

Since many of the residents came from rural areas in the Visayas and Mindanao

where rebels were a common sight, the community residents said that the activities of the staff and the volunteers were similar to those done by the rebels. Mere association of the activities with the rebels contributed to the unlikely perception by the people.

- c. Conscious effort of individuals to discredit the program due to personal interest

A more enlightening reason that can explain the continued suspicion, despite the explanations done by the student and staff, was the branding of the latter as subversives by a pseudo-military man in the area. This man did house to house visits and discouraged the people in the community from entertaining the staff and students. As it turned out, the man was an extortionist who did not want his business to be disturbed. The people themselves were afraid of him because of his delinquency and the outright display of his gun. Fearing that the staff and students might expose and oppose his wrongdoings, the pseudo-military man tried to discredit them by calling them subversives.

It was acknowledged that whatever organizing initiatives the project would undertake would remain futile unless the people's trust was gained. Hence, the strategy pursued was to gain more transparency by showing to the people the project's concern in facilitating development in the community. While confronting and correcting misimpressions and responding to people's queries, the project staff concentrated on the more important concern which was to work with contact leaders who were interested in

pursuing developmental activities responsive to the community's problems and needs.

B. Identification of Contact Persons and Training of Leaders

During community integration, the staff and students, acting as community organizers (CO), made conscious efforts to identify contacts who could provide and/or validate information about the community and its people, and who could later on act as local researchers and community leaders. Initially, the Barangay Captain and his councilmen were formally approached. The 'tambayan' and informal discussions in house-to-house visits proved to be a good venue for the staff to ask the people to name persons whom they considered as leaders. The staff were also able to identify leaders in the community by recognizing those who had shown deep interest and active participation during community meetings and project activities. Lastly, the leaders were identified through the people themselves who elected their leaders during formal meetings.

Some of the criteria used in identifying the leaders were the following:

1. credible and with wide sphere of influence in the community;
2. responsive to change as shown by their interest in new ideas and participation in the activities;
3. comes from the low or middle-income group;
4. articulate with basic communication skills; and
5. manifests interest and concern for the poorer sector of the community.

Most of the leaders identified had a low level of social consciousness. Although there were some residents who were more socially and politically critical about their present situation,

the staff could not just simply associate with them as this might reinforce the impression on them. The staff also considered the leadership style of the people who were political personalities. They were political-party-oriented and looked up to personalities for their political orientation. Prior to the holding of the barangay elections one summer, the staff took the initiative to integrate with the candidate who had the highest probability of winning the election to facilitate integration and coordinative work with the new barangay council. This proved to be successful since the new Barangay Captain became very supportive of the program after the election.

Since the people generally attended meetings when the people they considered as their leaders were present, the staff ensured the presence of the leaders during "purok" and committee meetings. With high attendance, the occasion became an appropriate venue for the Staff/CO to meet the people, establishing greater credibility of the Staff/CO and enhancing greater cooperation in dealings with the community residents.

As the CO/project Staff gained the friendship and trust of the contact leaders, education and redirection of certain concepts were infused. Among the methods used in doing this were the following:

1. Discouraging the people from approaching political figures in sourcing funds on a personal basis;
2. Involving non-leaders in activities to hasten the development of their leadership potential; and
3. Establishing mechanisms for actual practice of the leader through participation in committees, organizations and projects preparations.

In coordination with other non-government organizations which had a support program through community education in the same locality, formal trainings were conducted to synthesize

educational inputs/learnings the people had gained during informal meetings like committee work, groundwork and assembly meetings.

The formal training activities primarily served as venues to synthesize the concepts in leadership, organizing, and project development which were topics of discussions and actions during casual conversations and committee meetings. Also, relevant concerns not discussed during casual and informal meetings because of the inappropriateness of the situation and the lack of "timing" were included in the formal training. This type of activity normally resulted in action plans to implement socio-economic projects or organizational plans.

There were attempts to include topics in training that aimed to promote social awareness and conscientization on political and local issues. This was done carefully through the use of proper language. Community antagonists were properly selected so as not to offend the participants. Thus, the people were able to identify the oppressors in the community such as the large fishpen owners and the proponents of development programs that adversely affect them. They were pinpointed to be the reasons for the small catch in the lake. However, these were not extensively deepened due to certain constraints. Having been able to remove the initial impression that the staff was subversive, it was very difficult to discuss critical issues in a larger group. Since the staff recognized the "budding" condition of leadership and organizing efforts, unwarranted discussion of sensitive community issues with the people who had just placed their trust on the organizers might prove ineffective. Conscientization therefore was approached on a one-on-one basis rather than in a public and heterogeneous group composed of individuals with different perceptions and values to organizing work.

C. Social Investigation and Analysis

There were four phases observed in doing social investigation and analysis. The first phase was the **Pre-Entry Social**

Investigation in which the program staff generated information about the community and its background to facilitate entry into the community. This was done through the review of the socio-economic profiles, documentation of development programs and reports on the previous organizing activities done in the area. Ocular visits and initial talks with the contact persons also facilitated the understanding of the area. This understanding served as input to the formulation of tentative plans and schedules by the program staff.

Upon community entry, that is, when the staff started to live with the people in the community, **Integrative Social Investigation** and Analysis took place (see the matrix). Social investigation and community studies were done by the staff, now acting as community organizers (COs), to aid them in their organizing work. More specifically, the social analysis done in this phase helped in:

1. Interpreting and appreciating community events at the research project;
2. Determining entry points for doing participatory investigation where the people would have greater involvement;
3. Coming out with strategies and tactics on how to relate with the people in the community; and
4. Identifying potential leaders who could also be developed into local researchers.

As integration activities progressed and the confidence of the people was attained, the approach in social investigation became more participatory by involving the contact persons in data gathering. However, the results of these investigations remained primarily in the hands of the COs. The information gathered was continually assessed, confirmed and reassessed to guide the COs in their moves, particularly in relating to people and handling certain community issues.

The integrative investigation of the staff paved the way towards the third phase, **Participatory Social Investigation, Analysis and Action** which is educational and action-oriented. The experience of the people and the COs in this phase included the investigation necessary to resolve community issues and to prepare proposals for socio-economic projects, as well as the participatory community census. As discussed in the following section on the mobilization of people to meet community problems and needs, several projects were implemented later. At the same time, it became an educational experience for the people as they learned the basics of planning, management, and organizing.

The fourth phase in the P.A.R. is the **People-Initiated Social Investigation, Analysis and Action**. This is the phase when the people themselves, out of their own initiatives, resolve to act on their problems, needs and issues. They conduct community research and analysis to guide them in their actions and to strengthen their capability and mechanisms for instituting community changes, thus people's research for empowerment and community change.

Historically and traditionally, the conduct of community census was a "top-down" activity where the need, the instruments, and the use of the results were largely in the hands of the people in the decision making positions. The community people usually ended up as objects and respondents only. Also as observed during initial stages of stay in the area, the community had no census of its own. Population was projected using the old census data and the municipality's population growth rate.

At first, the COs felt that they needed a community-wide census to enable them to come up with a more solid and comprehensive basis for education and action. However, this was not done during the early phase because the people were more concerned with concrete projects that would respond to their immediate needs. Since the demand for socio-economic projects were very valid, and because the program had come out with some concrete output in the community to sustain credibility,

project-based mobilizations were carried out rather than the participatory community census (PCC). The groundwork was laid however, for the leaders to see the importance of a community census.

D. Building and Strengthening Organizational Mechanisms for Participation

Developing the capability of the community to enable them to pursue their development requires mechanisms so that the people will be able to participate in the development process. Community structures like people's organizations, committee systems, network and alliances are examples of mechanisms which have been proven as effective means of harnessing participatory development. As experienced by the program, the task of building and strengthening organizational structure was done through the following:

1. Formation of small group issue-specific structures

At the early stage of the community organizing program, the type of structures that emerged were small groups with about 4-8 members who were concerned with handling a specific project or issue in small clusters within the community. The small groups were action oriented in the sense that they aimed to respond to the immediate concerns of the community or group of households in the community. These concerns included deep well construction and repair, doormat making, basket making, garbage dumpsite issue, repair of a chapel, and benefit dance fund-raising project.

2. Formation of sitio-based neighborhood and sectoral organizations

Unlike the small group formation which was composed mainly of the people who were affected or concerned about a specific issue, problem or

need, the neighborhood and sectoral organizations had greater memberships. They were concerned with the various aspects of the area and had coordinative and facilitative functions in resolving the perceived problems and needs.

3. Strengthening and consolidating existing organizations

In other sitios where the residents were relatively more well off, the strategy adopted by the COs was the strengthening of existing organizations, particularly the youth. These areas were more urbanized, physically and in terms of occupational structure. While there were people who are still engaged in fishing and related activities, majority were already in the service and industrial sectors.

4. Establishing linkages to facilitate access to resources

At this stage of organizing, the community and the organizations that emerged were not capable yet of building resources to implement their own development programs. The program also was not a long range program that could sustain the support to the community. Thus, to generate and facilitate access of the people to the resources needed, training of leaders in negotiating and linking with development agencies was done. As experienced, the project proposals developed by the people had been a very useful tool in linkage building.

Local initiatives to establish linkages, specially with other people's organizations in other barangays and at the municipal and provincial levels were also encouraged. The outside organi-

zations with whom the people established linkages was something which the local organizations decided by themselves.

E. Community Mobilization in Responding to Community Needs

The "pulong bayan" done in each sitio was successful in generating discussion at a sitio-level. Among the basic problems and needs mentioned were the need for deepwells, toilets, livelihood projects, proper sanitation, the repair of chapel, roads, the dumping of garbage in the vicinity, the poor catch in the lake, the water lilies, and so on. To have something to start with after each meeting, committees were formed to take charge of specific problems or related problems. Membership of the committees were constituted through volunteerism. If nobody volunteered, the members were elected at large.

The committee formed in each sitio became the partners of the COs in further analyzing the problems identified. Planning with the people was later done until simple project proposals were completed. These proposals became the tool of the people in approaching agencies and individuals for resource solicitation. In cases where project proposals were not needed, the committee came out with simple letters stating the plan or intention of the solicitation.

Towards the second half of program implementation, the identification and planning of community projects was done through development workshops. The same method was done to finalize the proposals.

Resource generation was done through the following methods:

1. Contributions from the residents in the area;
2. Solicitations from people outside of the community;
3. Holding of a benefit dance;

4. Presentation of the project proposals to development agencies, including the CSWCD program, Office of the Mayor, and other offices in the municipality and the Parish.

Since there were funds available in the program for community-based projects, delegates from the community were trained to present their proposals and negotiate for funding. Thus, during the meeting with some program staff, the people had to defend their proposals. Through this process, the people were able to implement development projects. The role played by the program staff was to facilitate the venues for discussions, planning, and resource generation. Also, assistance was provided in some technical aspects like formatting of proposals, typing and ensuring technically and financially viable projects. This assistance could be considered as on-the-job training to the people since the staff's inputs were given during the actual discussion with the people concerned.

Another way by which mobilization for community projects was done was by assisting existing organizations in coming out with an action plan through leadership trainings. Efforts were made to strengthen the organization through training, groundwork, and follow-up activities to motivate and sustain the member's interest.

F. Linkage Building and Program Phase Out and Evaluation

The program formulated a phase out plan, in coordination with other concerned entities. The objectives of the phase out was to tap and establish linkages with different agencies which could provide support for existing groups and projects in the area.

1. Strategies in formulating the phase out plan

- * Series of consultation meetings were done with the Mayor's Office and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. The focus of the consultation was more on

program complementation by the two lead agencies operating in the area.

- * Dialogues with some of the leaders of the sitio-based organizations were conducted at identifying the groups' future plans.

2. Mechanics of the phase-out plan

The community-wide core group served as the coordinating body to all sitio-based organizations. The program provided technical assistance in terms of monitoring of group development and project implementation.

3. Participating institutions for the phase-out

The following groups were tapped to assist the program even after the phase-out:

- * A partner NGO in the area
- * Mayor's Office
- * Department of Social Welfare and Development Region IV
- * Parish Church
- * Provincial People's Organization

4. Evaluation

One of the comments expressed by the volunteers who were fielded in the area, and who had been a part of the process, was that the organizing work was output-oriented. This observation came during the period when trainings were held almost every weekend; when proposals for a number of socio-economic projects were being prepared and followed up; when participatory census was on-going; and other projects like deepwell, public

toilets, etc. were being implemented. There were, indeed, voluminous tasks being done.

Despite the number of staff and volunteers covering the whole community, the workload seemed to be overwhelming. As observed, after the completion of one activity, the next day was set for the preparation for the next activity.

As a consequence, group assessments and reflections with the people had not been given sufficient time. By the time the community organizers and the people involved were about to assess and reflect, they already felt exhausted, leaving very little time for assessment. On the other hand, the staff and volunteers were able to experience group assessment and learn from the process.

A formal evaluation, like the participatory evaluation of the basket weaving project, was held in summer but this was not repeated in other undertakings. Reflections and assessments were done on an individual basis and group assessment was inadequate. As experienced during the evaluation of the basket weaving project, the people were open to the idea of evaluation, even to criticism and self-criticism. Unfortunately, the voluminous tasks during the succeeding periods railroaded the process towards the more action oriented tasks.

Thus, there was the need for balancing action with reflection. Aside from the activities and trainings they have undergone, a more systematic reflection and assessment would have been equally educational for the people and the staff.

Different schemes were used for the evaluation:

- * One on one evaluation with the COs
- * Small group evaluation with the COs
- * General evaluation with all the involved leaders and participants
- * Team Evaluation
- * Project Level Assessment and Evaluation
- * Summative Evaluation by all the Volunteers-Staff Involved

THE OUTCOME OF THE P.A.R. EXPERIENCE

A. ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNITY-BASED DATA BANK

1. ***The development of a community-based data bank involves a long process of developing the people's capability in having access, control and use of the information necessary in the resolution of community problems and issues.***

As external catalyst, PREACH had identified four phases in assisting the people in developing a community-based data bank. This has been elaborately discussed in the PAR process.

2. ***The Laguna Lake area is under pressure because of competing and conflicting uses. The rapid urbanization and industrialization has had detrimental effects on the environment of the Lake and on the people dependent on it.***

The sector that is mostly affected by the deteriorating conditions of the lake are the small fisherfolk and their families whose sustenance greatly depends on the lake. In most cases, the catch is good only for a day's meal.

It is significant to note that the occupational structure of the people in the barangay indicates a decreasing number of families depending on the lake. Forty-two percent of the married residents in the area are skilled laborers engaged in work not related to fishing while only 24.5% are fisherfolks, fish vendors, fishpen workers or dock workers. Among women, 24.6% are working in non-fishing related occupations compared to 7.8% fish vendors. The figure for the other household members is 29.8% to 10.10%, in favor of the off-lake occupations. This can be attributed to the diminishing capability of the lake to provide a viable source of income and the accessibility of Metro-Manila where the service and industrial sector can absorb migrating labor.

3. ***The inadequacy of the lake as a viable source of livelihood is aggravated by the people's inability to maximize available resources.***

For one, the small fisherfolk's access to the lake resource is limited by the large fishpens in the area. Going out into the deeper and interior part of the lake becomes more difficult and expensive due to the circuitous path they have to take. The positioning of the big fishpens has made pathways narrow and dangerous. Small fisherfolk are not allowed by the fishpen owners to go near the pens, or else they shall be shot.

4. ***Social services to ensure a more livable and less difficult environment are lacking.***

Especially in Purok 6 where the poor families concentrate, the housing and environmental conditions are very poor. When the PREACH project started, only one household had a toilet in a sitio of 39 families. In two(2) other sitios with about 100 families, only three had toilets. The ratio of source of drinking water to users was one (1) well to about thirty (30) families.

Worse, some of the wells were contaminated. Communicable diseases broke out in the late 1988 and early 1989 which resulted in the death of some children and in the illness of a number of residents.

While the area is serviced by a cemented road, this does not reach the far sitios. Thus, during rainy season, the road is muddy and at times impassable because of the flood.

Education for children is difficult not only because of economic reasons but also because of the long distance and difficult path the children have to pass through in going to school.

Housing cannot be improved because majority of the residents are squatters. Investment in housing is considered unwise because of the possibility of eviction. This is also the primary reason why many were reluctant to construct toilets in their own houses.

5. ***The people of the community have a generally low level of socio-economic and political awareness as evidenced by the following:***
- a. preference for individual work rather than collective efforts, particularly in economic undertakings;
 - b. attributing the causes of their poverty to such factors as lack of education, "gulong ng palad", and other personal limitations, than relating it to the socio-economic and political structures that perpetuate oppressive relationships;
 - c. passivity and dependence on traditional leaders and "politicos" for the resolution of community problems; and

- d. initial distrust of organizers and change agents, and their tendency to be easily overwhelmed by the baseless "red scare" propaganda.

These conditions have resulted in difficult organizing work and conduct of the participatory research. Considering the dominance of individualism over collective concern and action, mobilization of the people took place after a long process of groundwork, motivation and re-education.

B. ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE'S POTENTIAL TO EFFECTIVELY CARRY OUT INNOVATIVE CHANGES IN THE COMMUNITY

- 1. ***A balanced and complementary mixture of formal and experiential trainings provides a more appropriate means of developing people's capability.***

Capability building done in connection with the PREACH Project had been based on the prevailing needs and situation arising in the community. While formal trainings on leadership, project proposal making, organizing and research were conducted, the more experiential approach provided actual situations for enhancing the people's knowledge, skills and attitude. In fact, the former were used as venues to synthesize learning already obtained by the participants during "on-the-job" or experiential trainings. The latter included skills in facilitating, committee work, research, project proposal making, fund negotiation, policy formulation and technical skills in door-mat making, basket weaving and swine raising.

- 2. ***The development of critical consciousness among the contact leaders had been adversely affected by the "red scare" and branding of PREACH staff and organizers, who were all from UP, as subversives.***

Having a critical consciousness, or the ability to analyze the different social forces that maintain the existing socio-economic and political system and how these affect an individual's position in society, is an attribute that a community leader must possess. This is a prerequisite for individual transformation and subsequently, empowerment. While the task of developing critical consciousness was perceived as a responsibility of the PREACH staff/organizers, the situation did not warrant a more sustained effort towards this. The staff/students found it difficult to focus on this because of the red scare directed against them. They were oftenly told by formal leaders and some men not to do conscientizing activities, nor even associate with people who were branded by some people as "local subversives and radicals".

As an adjustment to the usual tactic of branding people who work for innovative changes as radicals, conscientization activities were undertaken on a one-on-one basis. It was also realized that this task can be best done by the local people whose social awareness had been developed, rather than the external organizers.

C. ON STRENGTHENING AND ASSISTING COMMUNITY ORGANIZING EFFORTS DONE IN CONNECTION WITH THE PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

1. ***How the people of the community responded to the integration and organizing efforts of COs and researchers highly depended on the benefits and advantages the people perceived they would get in the process of integration and organizing.***

Generally, there were two groups who had different reactions to organizing and research efforts by PREACH staff and students. On one hand there were those who believed that they would be benefitted as individuals, as a group or as a community. They were more open and willing to participate in the PREACH project. On the other

hand, the people who believed that the organizing effort would be a threat to their interest and consequently, a disadvantage, did not just act as observers but worked actively against the PREACH project and organizing effort as a whole.

Individuals who looked forward to personal gains and had lesser concern for the more common benefits were the next group of people who became less active in the organizing process. As their personal interests were exposed by the people themselves, these opportunists became critical of the initiatives and joined the group of antagonists.

2. ***Given the limited resources of the research project, small socio-economic projects were instituted with the active participation of the concerned residents.***

However small, projects such as doormat making, *kaing* making, piggery, beautification of the chapel, deep well repair and toilet construction were the results of the people's planning and action. These were identified by them, planned by them, negotiated for funding and implemented by them. As organizers, the PREACH staff and students assisted the people by facilitating group meetings for planning, ground-work for fund negotiations and motivating the people to actively participate. Technical tasks such as documentation and typing were, however, undertaken by the PREACH staff/students.

These small projects had brought in some financial gains, and more importantly, an experience in collective work they can replicate when similar situations come.

3. ***Collective efforts based on temporary and immediate concerns are bound to last only as long as these concerns exist.***

Collective efforts and experiences are a good "resource" to bank on, but these have to be sustained to ensure continuous, progressive and effective organizing. The initial collective undertakings in the form of impact projects were short-lived because they were concerned only with the temporary tasks and responded only to the immediate needs. Thus, the organizational mechanisms for actions such as committees and small groups for fund raising, chapel beautification, deep well and toilet construction, doormat and *kaing* projects were also short-lived.

There are several reasons that can be cited for this. First, the subversive branding and military harassment experienced by the project staff hampered the latter in pursuing and developing critical consciousness among the people. Secondly, the people simply wanted programs that can benefit them, minus the "social awareness and consciousness things". On the other hand, the PREACH staff and students had no concrete resources for the programs, but only capabilities for building and enhancing commitment, skills, social awareness and pro-people and collective consciousness. As a tactical move, the external researchers and students responded to the people's desire to venture into socio-economic projects.

4. ***A basic but simpler mechanism for people's involvement in the area was instituted.***

A simpler, less ambitious set-up was formed to continue what had been started. Support and outside agencies, whether government or non-government, might contribute to the flourishing of the core group, but the fact remained that this group would turn into self-managing group only if the members and leaders were committed to collective work as a means to achieve a common vision.

D. ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF MECHANISMS FOR THE INTEGRATION OF COLLEGE'S RESEARCH, EXTENSION AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES

1. ***The PREACH experience has shown that the teaching function can be done, hand in hand, with the extension program by providing a venue for fieldwork instruction for both social work and community development.***

From the second semester, 1987-1988 to summer 1990, the program was able to field forty-two (42) students. The maximum number of students that could be placed in the program was determined by the staff while the selection of the students was determined by the Office of the Fieldwork Instruction of each department. On the other hand, a total of seven (7) faculty members were involved as field supervisors.

In addition to the integrated fielding of students, the PREACH project was a frequent venue for Diliman-based SW and CD classes needing exposure in community setting. This was facilitated by several factors. Because it was a college-based program, arrangements could be easily made. However, in some instances, this also becomes a weakness as some protocol in holding exposures were not observed by some exposurists. The accessibility of the place made the area attractive for overnight or one-day exposure.

2. ***Four areas for integration of the social work and community development fieldwork program have been identified, namely:***
 - a. Program Orientation - coming out with a unified program orientation that meet the expectations and conform with the vision of the two disciplines in servicing communities.

- b. **Area Placement --** placing the students in one area under the same program. During the first semester of implementing the project, the SW and the CD students were placed in separate areas or communities as requested by the faculty who felt that the integration in the placement should be done at a slow and step by step phasing. In the succeeding semester, only one community was taken as project site and students from both disciplines worked together in teams.
- c. **Methods of Supervision --** integrated supervision of students from the two departments can have two schemes:
 - o Team supervision by faculty supervisors coming from each department. Through joint supervision, differences in methods or styles can be discussed and ironed out with the students from both departments.
 - o Single faculty supervising both the SW and CD students.
- d. **Academic Requirements --**the two departments can come out with common knowledge, skills and attitude expected to be learned and experienced by the students in working with communities. Thus, despite differences in the curriculum, course requirements of the student will not have wide disparity.

Integration of the various areas should lead to a greater appreciation of community work and of the other discipline. As Quieta observed during the project evaluation "our experience would indicate that we can really integrate the field placement of the SW and CD students under one administrative supervision by the field placement agency. As proven, the same learning opportunities can be provided to SW and CD students. The only dif-

ference is the curriculum. The unit loading differential between the CD and SW has implications to the amount of time spent for field work and supervision by faculty. If we really would like to have a holistic kind of integration, then we should move towards standardizing the practicum courses of both departments. It should be noted that the college has so far been successful in integrating CO courses and the same thing can be done to attain full integration".

Recommendations

1. ***Considering the increasing number of organized sectors and communities, external support organizations which have greater access to development resources (fund, technology, information, etc.) have to develop support programs which are in line with the needs and demands of the organized communities:***

Support organizations such as the academe, non-governmental organizations and other institutions wishing to assist communities in their development have to continue their efforts but the specific situation, needs and demands of the community should always be primal in program development. The tendency of unorganized communities to be dependent or mistrust development initiatives by outsiders should also be kept in mind. In this situation, the PAR program must focus on the basic organizing work, with the help of local community organizers to facilitate the whole process.

For organized communities, the role of outside institutions like the academe is to serve as support group to the people's organization. The PAR program can augment the needs of local organizers by providing them the necessary supports in terms of material assistance, skills development, linkages, etc. Instead of playing an "offensive" stance in the community with respect to the kind of program to be implemented, these support organizations can be reactive to the people's needs and demands, thus ensuring a more appropriate development cooperation.

2. ***More researches and resources for extension have to be directed to action-oriented researches where the people from depressed communities can be involved, trained and mobilized towards the resolution of their problems and issues.***

Participatory researches which are community-based should be a priority in the research agenda. Documentation should focus on both the output and the processes undergone to further refine methodologies in doing PAR. There is a need to allot more resources for participatory researches because these do not only cater to the academic needs of the researchers, but can also be instrumental in educating and mobilizing the people for their development.

Identification of the partner community prior to the development of proposals as well as the involvement of the local people in the conceptualization and designing of the program are necessary in order to ensure the appropriateness of the PAR program to their needs. Simultaneously, it will empower people as they learn the skills in project development and research methodologies.

3. ***Implementation of participatory action research requires more flexibility. Conceptualization of an action research project, therefore, should provide a general direction in which the people can have a chance to participate and redirect the research agenda in their favor.***

In a participatory research, an outside researcher serves as a facilitator, catalyst, promoter and a learner. Academicians or university researchers must be willing to take these roles. The scheme should ensure involvement of the people in the implementation. The possibility that the idea conceived in the proposal or design might change due to varying community situations should be an inherent assumption. At the same time, there is the need to formulate a system of managing PAR projects which allow greater flexibility but without sacrificing the quality of the output and the resource allotted for the research.

4. ***While socio-economic projects can be used as impact projects to uplift the people's conditions, these projects should also be used as instruments in enhancing social awareness and in transforming oppressive structures and relation at the micro level.***

The Philippines needs more participation in economic production, particularly of goods and services that would respond to the basic needs of the poor majority. Launching socio-economic projects, therefore is a must. However, these initiatives should not be left as mere production of goods and services, but should also be able to enhance social awareness and consolidate groups in the community. Support have to be provided to initiatives that promote collective actions and which can challenge oppressive economic and political relations such as usury (5-6 mode), dependency on political elite (the barangay captain, mayor, congressman or governor), abusive trading relations (comprador and middle men), and destructive competition and monopoly. Linking small socioeconomic enterprises of the people with larger and more stable enterprises with the same orientation should be sustained. The support system has to be made viable and operational.

5. ***Participatory research and extension programs that will be carried out by academic institutions should not only be supported by material and non-material resources, but should also be capable of coming out with stands or positions regarding certain issues pertaining to the community.***

Working with communities entails dealing with issues of varying magnitude. Some issues are easy to handle and PAR staff can easily make positions on them. However, there are community issues where concrete positions are required from the PAR proponents, but the latter could not come out with these because of the inadequacy of the structures and unclear processes to be undergone. For example, the proliferation of large fishpens near the lake shoreline is an issue that will confront the owners, and possibly the politicians in power. However, based on the PREACH experience, this issue was not projected because of the unpreparedness not only of the community, but of the project as well. Can the academe come out with an institutional stand against practices, policies and programs of the

"power elite", or of the government, if these are not supportive of the people's agenda? If yes, how? As usually practiced in some sectors of the academe, collective or institutional stand are not made in the pretext of "academic neutrality" but such noncommittal is actually just a way to evade confrontation with those in power, if not to support them. We believe that this practice should end when a stand has to be made in support of the poor, the oppressed, the deprived and the exploited.

6. ***Coordination with both the government and non-government organizations increases greater opportunities for the people to avail themselves of the resources, addition to the enhancement of better working relationships among the project implementors.***

Once again, the PREACH experience proved the advantage of working together with non-government and government organizations to maximize the benefits that can be redirected to the community. Experiences show that much of the material and non-material resources which should have benefitted the poor do not reach them because of so many obvious reasons. If the people are organized and equipped with skills in resource generation, investigation, negotiation and even confrontation, much of these resources can be enjoyed by them. For programs which have short-term duration, coordination with the local institutions can provide support mechanisms and continuity upon the termination of the program.

7. ***The integration of the social work and community development field instruction should be laid down as one of the College thrusts.***

The integration of the field instruction of the two departments in a community setting will help in strengthening the College orientation and program in community organizing. It will facilitate greater appreciation of the two disciplines and will help in the maximization of the College's resources. The integrated fieldwork committee should be revived, but its members should be composed of the people who are actually involved in the implementation of the integrated fieldwork program.

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Gender Advocacy in Urban Poor Communities : Experience from the Women CREATE Project*

LETICIA S. TOJOS

Introduction

Women have always been central in the development process. As conduits in the delivery of social services, they became indirect beneficiaries. For instance, their capabilities have been enhanced so that they could be better mothers. They were provided skills trainings to enable them to supplement their husbands' incomes. The direction of assistance has always been towards enhancing their performance in reproduction.

However, women can be a potent resource in community management. Their participation in the improvement of their own communities and the country in general will make a difference, having seen how creative they worked to provide the best for their own families.

The Women CREATE Project was a pioneering endeavor of the Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO), College of Social work and Community Development (CSWCD) in advocacy, gender sensitization and mainstreaming. In the midst of differing views about gender sensitizing, the project team listened to feedbacks and recommendations of the grassroots women leaders themselves and the agency implementors whom they networked with and anchored the activities on those suggestions. They tried various ways of reaching out to women and men so that they themselves would know the specific context of their target groups. The participation of the stakeholders provided direction in the trainings and advocacy activities which the team pursued.

**The Women CREATE Project was implemented in 1987 to 1993 in cooperation with UBSP and UNICEF.*

The five years experience of REDO has been very fruitful. The team has been involved not only in building the capabilities and changing the attitudes of grassroots women but also in advocating the gender and development framework among agency implementors and local government executives. The work has not been easy but the potentials in the development arena can not be discounted.

This sharing of experiences is really meant to provide advocates with insights and realizations which the team gained from its years of exposure to community work.

Project Description

Through the encouragement and fund assistance from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the REDO, then OCEE, conceptualized and later implemented a five-year project entitled "Women's Consciousness Raising through Education and Action Towards Empowerment" or Women CREATE. As part of the Urban Basic Services Program (UBSP)*, it aimed to increase the awareness of grassroots women leaders (GRWLs) about their situation so that as a group, they would institute changes in their lives to enable them to participate in development work with effervescence. The UBSP sites covered were Olongapo, Manila, Quezon City, in Luzon; Bacolod, Cadiz, Cebu, Iloilo, in the Visayas and Zamboanga, Davao and Cotabato in Mindanao. It was later reduced to five (5) areas -- Bacolod, Cadiz, Cebu, Iloilo, and Quezon City which showed greater appreciation of gender concerns.

Initially, the general objectives of the project were:

- a) To strengthen women's understanding and analysis of gender issues;
- b) To increase women's knowledge and understanding of

*Urban Basic Services Program aims to provide social services to particular communities in selected urban sites efficiently and effectively. Through the convergence of social services in identified localities, agencies provide greater access and wider coverage in their utilization.

national issues as they relate to their specific conditions and problems;

- c) To equip women with leadership, planning and training skills and enable them to assume a more significant role in development in partnership with men; and
- d) To strengthen the capability of the women leaders to manage resource centers that will meet the needs of the urban poor women.

Specifically, the project aimed at:

- a) Looking into and assessing the women's level of awareness of their issues and problem;
- b) Developing pilot training programs to raise women's consciousness on gender specific issues and problems relating to development;
- c) Enhancing participation and strengthening the leadership, training and management skills of women; and
- d) Institutionalizing the training program through a network of urban resource centers for women in the islands of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Activities Undertaken for the First Two and a half Years

For the first two years, these objectives were pursued. With the help of local government units, Grassroots Women Leaders (GWRL) from specific barangays where the UBSP operated were identified to attend the trainings provided by the project. With the belief that enlightened grassroots women would act to solve their problems, the project focused its efforts mainly on raising the women's level of awareness as well as enhancing their capabilities in addressing their concerns in the ten (10) cities previously mentioned.

In the selected areas the implementors were requested to act as facilitators in the hope that their exposure to these trainings would raise their own level of consciousness and would motivate them to do their advocacy in these communities.

In the third year, a mid-term evaluation was conducted to assess the team's consciousness raising efforts among the GRWLs. This was done through a consultation among the Visayan graduates held to find out how the participants benefitted from the trainings and how they used their learnings.

It was an opportune time because the team wanted to know what the gains of the projects were as well as the problem areas. After two and a half years of operation these concerns were raised:

- a. Were they making a dent in uplifting the status of women?
- b. Was there a realization among the agencies involved on the need to address women's concerns in order to maximize their participation in development work?
- c. Were the team's strategies effective?
- d. Were their consultations realistic?

The consultation with the GRWL, the dialogues with implementors and the team assessment yielded vital information which provided direction for the succeeding years of operation.

The Women CREATE provided the participants with a venue to focus on their concerns as women. Through interaction they were able to verbalize common difficulties and similar ways of coping with situations. This sharing opened their eyes to a new reality -- that they, as a sector, were seen as subordinates and that this was not something natural. It was contrary to what they knew, to what their parents, the school and the church taught them. It was poles apart from media's representation of women even today.

It can therefore be said that the trainings conducted were able to raise the level of consciousness of the GRWL about their plight. It was definitely an achievement. There were, however, some drawbacks which should be highlighted at this point.

Although there was an awakening on the part of the GRWL about their situation, doing something about what they learned was another matter. The institutions, especially their own families, were too "big giants" for them to handle. Individuals, though, did their own advocacy at the personal level by assisting friends, neighbors and relatives who went to them for help regarding marital problems. But that was all.

Those who attended the Women CREATE trainings also verbalized that they did not know how to translate what they learned into concrete group action. The implementors who helped in facilitating the trainings did not provide the assistance expected of them by the team. Looking at what happened, this expectation seemed quite unrealistic considering the number of sensitivity sessions they have attended.

Being a pioneering effort, the capability building component was to a certain extent gender blind. Unaware of the importance of integrating the Women in Development Perspective in their Organizing and Project Management Modules, the team used the generic ones. Thus the questions of the women "Anong gagawin namin? Paano namin gagamitin itong natutunan namin?", "Hindi namin alam mag-umpisa dahil baka magalit sa amin ang mga lalaki", were indeed valid.

Project Implementation for the Succeeding Years

The team modified its objectives based on the problem areas identified by the GRWLs and the implementors. Consciousness-raising efforts both at the level of GRWLs and implementors were continued. Gender responsive modules integrating the Women in Development perspective into their programs were also developed.

To facilitate the learning process and to build the GRWLs' confidence as trainors/advocates, materials were developed -- a giant puzzle showing the situation of Urban Poor Women, a scroll depicting the history of women's movement, and a board game similar to "snakes and ladders". Alongside, the team came up with a video documentary of the project entitled "Babae: Harapin ang Hamon ng Panahon", two primers entitled "Likhaang Kababaihan: Isang Gabay sa Pagsasanay Ukol sa Kababaihan at Kaunralan Para sa Maralitang Kababaihan sa

Kalunsuran" and "Reyna o Biktima?".

The team, in consultation with the Unicef Program Officer, then instituted a number of modifications to make the Project more meaningful to the beneficiaries. In general, efforts were directed towards building the capabilities of the GRWLs and the implementors to enable them to integrate the WID framework into the UBSP. This strategy hoped to institutionalize the project's endeavors and to achieve a multiplier effect within the locality/ies.

1. Focusing the Project to five (5) cities

Considering the limited funds and number of the staff, the area coverage was reduced to the five cities which showed openness in taking on the issues of women and integrating these concerns in their own programs. These were Bacolod, Cadiz, Iloilo and Quezon City. With this strategy, the team would have greater opportunity to enhance the knowledge, attitudes and skills of the GRWLs and provide the needed technical support to the LGUs as well.

2. Organization of Committee on Women as part of the UBSP Inter-Agency Committee(IAC)

Through the encouragement of UNICEF, the UBSP in each city set up their Committees on Women both at the Inter-agency and the barangay levels to make sure that the women's concerns were addressed. Through a representative, the team participated in the regional assessment of the program implementation of the cities and in the planning sessions by suggesting more concrete gender responsive activities.

3. Reaching out to the Implementors

Cognizant of the importance of the Inter-Agency Committees, the team conducted orientation courses for the committee members to enhance their understanding of the situation of women and make the more supportive to the strengthening of

programs that would assist women.

Concomitantly, the team timed their monitoring visits to coincide with the Committee on Women or IAC meetings to reach out to the members and continuously advocate for the integration of the WID Perspective in their programs.

Moreover, knowing how critical the participation of the implementors and the women in any endeavor, the team actively participated in the selection of training participants, scheduling of activities and drawing up the training content based on their needs.

4. Active Networking with Women-Oriented Institutions

Aware of the GRWLs' need for continued technical assistance in their endeavor to uplift the status of women in their localities, the team sought agencies which had similar concerns and exerted efforts to link them to the UBSP - IACs. The expansion of the UBSP network to include gender responsive offices would help ensure the sustainability of the project in the communities after the phase out of Women CREATE.

These strategies were operationalized in the five cities including other activities toward a concerted effort to address gender issues. Considering the varied conditions and needs in each city, the GRWLs and the UBSP-Committee on Women representatives, assisted by the team, chose the suitable and meaningful activities for their specific areas.

A. Bacolod

After the women CREATE trainings, the eight graduates formed themselves into a group and met regularly for several months. All along these initiatives were not supported by the UBSP Committee on Women. They could not sustain their meetings because they did not know how to go about sharing their learnings to their communities. There were also two (2) members

who left Bacolod to look for employment opportunities. When the team learned about this, a reunion of graduates was held a year and half after the training to help the remaining GRWLs make concrete plans.

It was decided to establish linkages with development agencies within Bacolod. Thus, a meeting was arranged for them to get to know the various agency representatives. It was attended by five (5) graduates and twelve (12) agency representatives. After a lengthy discussion about the endeavors of the group, commitments were later elicited for possible long-term projects that can be done in collaboration with the UBSP staff. This was an important development for the project because it would have meant a consolidated effort by a community group and several agencies in working towards the upliftment of women's status. This also indicated the commitment of the trainees to do something to address gender issues in their areas. Unfortunately, this was not followed-up by the UBSP staff and nothing came out of this initiative.

For a while, the UBSP staff remained lukewarm about working on this concern because they found this an added burden to them. The interest of the staff took a more positive turn when a new gender sensitive local government executive actively involved herself in the concerns of the UBSP towards the end of the project. With her initiatives, many city policies and programs were pushed. Some of these were the banning of pornographic films in the city theaters and the setting up of a Women's Crisis Center in Bacolod. Henceforth, efforts to mainstream gender concerns in the city programs were ongoing.

B. Cadiz

In Cadiz, the team worked hand in hand with the UBSP Committee on women because the Mayor-UBSP Manager and the UBSP Coordinator were themselves involved in uplifting women's concerns not only in their municipality but in other areas as well.

A perspective setting course was conducted among implementors to provide them with a gender sensitive orientation. The team hoped that their appreciation of the WID framework would encourage the institution to follow-up and assist the GRWLs in developing more gender responsive programs. Simultaneously, advanced courses in "Advocacy" and "Community Organizing" were conducted for implementors and GRWLs to strengthen their skills in coping with the tasks expected of them. In community visits, orientation meetings with the barangay chairs and other officials were set up to convince them about the necessity of giving importance to the women and their concerns because of their important role in the family and the community.

However, when a change of administration occurred in the last year of project operation, all ongoing endeavors identified with the previous Mayor were discontinued including the UBSP. The LGU staff were either re-shuffled or terminated. The new staff had no idea about the project since there were no available records of it. The GRWLs, on the other hand, continued on their own initiative so as to cope with the situation they and their families were in.

C. Cebu

In Cebu, the Inter-agency Committee maintained a close linkage with "Lihok Filipina", a women-focused non-governmental organization. Together with Lihok Filipina, the team conducted a Perspective Setting Course for Implementors. In addition, courses on "Women's Organizing" and "Advocating the Women in Development Perspective" were also conducted for the GRWLs upon the request of the IAC to help them in their work.

Sharing of experiences and strategies were done with the implementors and women's group to enrich each other's work in their areas of involvement. When the team shared their experiences in reaching out to the men in Quezon City, both the implementors and the GRWLs requested for a similar activity in their areas. However, the team encouraged them to do it on their own initiative to make it more effective since they would be more

knowledgeable of the cultural nuance of marital relationship of the Visayans.

They took up the challenge and gave particular focus on violence against women and came up with a community based strategy to help victims of violence, the "Bantay Banay".

During visitations to the UBSP communities, meeting with women's groups were held to share with them the experiences of organizations in other localities. These disclosures made them realize that women in other areas are similarly situated.

D. Iloilo

Similar to Cebu, the Women CREATE team linked closely with the UBSP-IAC Committee on Women and the UBSP Coordinator in order to help them mainstream the WID Perspective in the Network's programs and services. To enhance the implementors' appreciation of the situation of women and provide them with a framework for assisting them, a Perspective Setting Course was held. Trainings were likewise conducted to enhance the leaders' skills in organizing work and advocacy. These were coordinated by the Pagkakaisa Foundation, an NGO which headed the Committee on Women.

During monitoring visits, meetings with women's groups and with the agency representatives were held to assist them in their areas of difficulty and to share with them some of the strategies operationalized in other municipalities.

When the community worker of Pagkakaisa Foundation left Iloilo, the GRWLs led the group and assisted them to go into livelihood projects to augment their family income. Although the strategic needs were not given attention, the initiative shown by the women to sustain group efforts to meet their practical needs is commendable.

e. Quezon City

The proximity of Quezon City to REDO proved advantageous because the team was able to visit communities and to touch base with women's groups and with the IAC representatives with greater frequency. Technical assistance was also provided to requesting community organizations.

The Basic Orientation Courses (BOC) for GRWLs were continued to help broaden the participants' awareness on women's situation and encourage them to do something about their problems. These were done in newly opened UBSP barangays.

To concretize partnership between men and women in home management and development work, the "Huntahan sa mga Kalalakihan" series were held. The first two sessions included men only while the third had both male and female participants. The said activities created in both sexes an appreciation of each other's problems and how to support one another in "crisis" situations.

In the community-wide session, panelists of both sexes from the UBSP communities in Metro Manila and from different professions shared their problems and their coping mechanisms to maintain harmony in their own homes. These pioneering efforts had a positive effect on couple's relationship. Majority of them became more considerate of their wives although the set-up in the relationship continued. However, these were not continued because of budget constraints.

Other cities learned of these activities and requested similar sessions. The team, however, encouraged the WID lead agencies in said areas to conduct these themselves in order to make the activities suit their particular cultural context. Later, Lihok Filipina-Cebu initiated their own Huntahan which likewise produced remarkable results in terms of relationship changes between husbands and wives and among family members.

Information dissemination were also conducted in commu-

nities, such as the celebration of the "Women's Rights Day" where the newly approved Women in Development Law was discussed with the GRWLs and the community assembly in Culiati where the problems of illegal recruitment and incest were tackled.

As seen from the experiences of the Women CREATE team, efforts of the last two and a half years were really focused on institutionalizing the concerns of women in the programs and services of the UBS Network:

- * Implementors and GRWLs were involved in doing training needs analysis as well as in the conduct of the trainings.
- * Representatives of the Committee on Women were likewise tapped as resource persons in the trainings.
- * The team provided capability building to both GRWLs and implementors to enable them to actively address the issues of women in their cities.
- * They took every opportunity to conscientize their partners in development work. The awareness building were done at the levels of the communities and the inter-agency networks.
- * The cities were encouraged to come up with their own advocacy materials to facilitate the appreciation of gender concepts and the WID framework by the local communities as well as the information dissemination among the community members.
- * To emphasize the importance of sustainability in advocacy work, the project implementors were constantly made aware that gender sensitization is a continuing process of unlearning and re-learning changing attitudes, beliefs and practices.

Reflections/Learnings

The Women CREATE Project has been a challenging endeavor because CSWCD-REDO was one of the first institutions which undertook gender sensitization and gender mainstreaming. It was also one

of the first institutions which involved men in the sensitization efforts. The experiences served as opportunities for learning, for understanding Filipinas better particularly the cultural context of their situations. The insights are invaluable.

Firstly, development workers have to accept that tradition is hard to break. Not knowing the effect of new ideas or structures in their lives, people will always cling to practices and beliefs they are familiar with even if these may not be in consonance with their experiences. In this regard, one-shot trainings or conscientization activities will definitely not be effective in changing the deeply embedded beliefs, attitude, and practices of women in general. There must be a systematic mechanism for providing follow up support to the communities that development workers interact with. Corollary to this, advocates must be creative in undertaking activities which will convince people about the reality of gender related concerns and its implications on women's situation.

Secondly, raising awareness of agency representatives is as important as increasing the level of knowledge and changing the attitudes of GRWLs or the community as a whole. The urban poor women leaders in the areas where the project was implemented still looked at social development workers as authority figures who provided them the needed assistance. Therefore, this signals a need to orient these workers to deconstruct their roles so that they can be more facilitative in empowering the GRWLs.

Thirdly, the Committee on Women which the UBSP created at the agency and community levels to ensure that the issues concerning women are addressed is definitely a good idea. They must, however, be functioning committees and must closely integrate their efforts.

Fourthly, the need to identify "people of significance" is a given in Philippine culture. The acceptance of an idea may be facilitated if advocates are able to get the support of people who matter in the local government units. He or she may be able to make the local government machinery work for the benefit of the said sector.

Fifth, the task of conscientizing will be difficult if the men are not involved or are excluded from the process. Filipinos, especially the

women, are not confrontational and are very patient. More often than not, they will accept the situation that they are in even if it has become unsustainable and will do everything to make their marital relationship work. Although there may be some women who may challenge their husbands' dominance in the family without explaining the issues, this effort may be counterproductive because, more often, it could breed conflicts rather than understanding between couples. It is, however, a fact that Filipino men will not give up their position of privilege when said conflicts and abuse are anticipated.

Recommendations

The potentials of grassroots women are vast. Given the right opportunities, women can contribute significantly to the nation's growth. Their commitment can not be questioned because through the years, women have always been in the forefront of development efforts. Addressing women's specific issues will not only redound to their benefit but also to the country's progress as a whole.

The government has a responsibility to create opportunities for the upliftment of women's status and improvement of their conditions. A review of the development initiatives and efforts to help alleviate the situation of women, however, reveal that the goal of equality between men and women is still way beyond the reach of Filipino couples.

A. UNICEF's Support to Women's Development

UNICEF's commitment to support the advocacy project of Women CREATE is commendable. It gave the institution a chance to conscientize GRWLs and implementors, so that they can improve their lives, and enhance their programs to make them more gender sensitive.

However, while there was support for advocacy projects for women, traditional programs strengthening the stereotypes between genders were still supported nationwide. Mothers, to a large extent, were still expected to attend nutrition classes and bring their children to health centers for immunization. Skills trainings revolved around sewing, food preservation, and manicure, among others. Non-

traditional skills that would enable mothers to earn more were not tried out. The concept of the day care center as a support system for women has not been demonstrated. This seeming ambivalence has not improved the situation of women in the barangays which were studied.

It would, therefore, be more beneficial for women's development to ensure the integration of gender concerns in the different programs. This can be seen in the inclusion of gender sensitive indicators in the community-based monitoring system (CBMS) of each locality. Furthermore, the involvement of women in non-traditional skills trainings may be encouraged through fund assistance. Support systems for women like day care centers and community kitchen, among others, should also be given support. More importantly, continuous conscientizing efforts must be pursued.

B. Role of Local Agencies in Improving Women's Status

The UBSP is a network for pursuing social development. Institutionalizing it will benefit the city. Resources are limited and with active collaboration of all agencies in the area, these said resources may be maximized to help more people. At the same time, the beneficiaries of the program will not always be dependent on the agencies for their needs. Elitism among the COVs as well as intrigues resulting to favored recipients will be minimized.

The continuing existence of the Committee on Women which will actively advocate the WID framework within the Inter-Agency Committee level hopes to ensure the implementation of women-oriented programs in the different communities. The membership of NGOs with a track record for its endeavors in improving the plight of women must be sought.

Implementors must be creative and must facilitate the conceptualization of programs and projects which may be non-traditional but which will be more beneficial to women. The linkage with institutions which were previously not tapped, like the DOST for appropriate technology, must be established.

While tedious, organizing the women in the barangays will be

more advantageous in the long run than providing them individually with services. Building and enhancing their capabilities in leadership, project management, and organizational work will have long term benefits for themselves and for their communities.

C. Grassroots Women Leaders (GRWL) Advocacy for the Women in Development (WID) Perspective on their Own Communities

Change is a process and will therefore take time. Thus, the capabilities of GRWLs must be built and/or enhanced on a continuous basis so that they will feel more confident in their advocacy work and in the projects they will be setting up in their communities. Consequently, it is a must that old UBSP areas be consistently followed-up.

Skills demonstrations are important in encouraging the women to come up with their own endeavors. Exposure to different ideas and to different institutions will enable them to get new knowledge about programs which they can implement.

All in all, the efforts of Women CREATE planted the seeds of awareness among the GRWLs and the institutions belonging to the UBSP Network. Although this was a first initiative, achieving its objectives and even institutionalizing its endeavors look promising, because recommendations for strengthening the WID Program were made and agreed upon in the five (5) cities during the project evaluation. It is, therefore, up to the cities to pick up this challenge to enable these seeds to grow and bear fruits.

Women CREATE will continue pursuing its advocacy efforts among GRWL, agency practitioners and policy makers. The improvement of women in order to enhance their status and be active participants in their own development will continue to be its main agenda. The lessons learned from the project's five years of experiences will help them in their task ahead.

Trainings and other advocacy activities must continue. Local women-oriented and feminist organizations must be placed at the forefront of these endeavors because they know the language and culture of their own people. Use of learning situations which are near

the hearts of the trainees will have more impact and can be a stronger motivation for action.

Underlying these efforts is the need for parity in the relationship between men and women. Unless there is equality in class and gender relations, majority of the people will remain marginalized. The strategies for development will have to be open to changes in relationships, structures and systems within a given society.

Pakikipagtulungan sa Independent Movement ng Pasay*

**ROBERTO P. ALABADO III
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Panimula

Masasalamín sa ngayon ang mabilis na pagsulong ng mga bansang nakahanay sa mga umuunlad o developing countries. Ang daloy ng mabilis na urbanisasyon ay makikita sa kalakhang Maynila kung saan ang pag-unlad ay mararamdaman saan mang sulok. Ito ay kaalinsabay sa programa ng pamahalaang Ramos na kilala sa tawag na "Philippines 2000" o ang pagbukas ng ekonomiya sa pandaigdigang kalakan para mapabilis ang pag-unlad ng bansa at mabigyan ng trabaho ang maraming Pilipino.

Ngunit sa harap ng mabilis na pag-unlad sa kalunsuran ay lalo namang napag-iiwanan ang mga kanayunan. Ang prayoridad ng pamahalaan ay industriyalisasyon tungo sa pagiging "Tiger Economy" ng bansa. Kung kaya't habang patuloy ang pagbuhos ng mga oportunidad at pagpasok ng mga makabagong teknolohiya sa kalunsuran, nananatili naman ang mga kanayunan sa kawalan ng mga pangunahing serbisyo at oportunidad ng mga magagandang trabaho. Resulta ay ang patuloy na pagdagsa ng mga tao mula sa kanayunan tungo sa mga pangunahing lunsod tulad ng Maynila.

Ayon sa IBON *Facts and Figures*, walumpu't limang porsyento (85%) ng kabuuang populasyon ng *Metro Manila* ay galing sa probinsiya. Malaking bahagi nito ay dumadagdag sa sektor ng mga maralitang tagalunsod. Salat sa pera, salat sa kaalaman. Kung kaya karamihan sa kanila ay nagiging puwersa para sa mga pangpersonal na serbisyo

**This started as a community-based training program but was later expanded to include other extension activities of REDO. The program was implemented in 1995 and is still ongoing up to the present.*

na lamang, tulad ng pagpapakatulong, paglalaba at paninilbihan sa mga bahay-aliwan (IBON *Facts and Figures*, March 1995). Subok man sa katatagan nila, nanatili silang walang kapangyarihan kung kaya't sila ang kadalasang nabibiktima ng mga pagbabagong dulot ng industriyalisasyon at komersyalisasyon sa lungsod. Sa huli, sila ang karaniwang talunan.

Sa ganitong konteksto namin ilalahad ang naging karanasan ng Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO) ng Kolehiyo ng Gawaing Panlipunan at Pagpapaunlad ng Pamayanan (CSWCD) sa pakikipagkapit-bisig sa isang komunidad ng mga mararalitang tagalunsod sa Libertad, Pasay.

Ang Komunidad ng Barangay 88 at 91 ng Pasay

Madaling tandaan ang lugar. Napakalaki ng palengke para hindi mapansin. Sa harap nito ay isang malaking department store. Kung papasok ka sa komunidad, pwedeng dumaan ka sa palengke o di kaya sa gilid nito. Pagpasok mo pa lang, amoy mo na ang malansang isda at makikipagsiksikan ka sa mga manininda at mamimili papasok. Mapapansin kaagad ang ginagawa ng mga tao tulad ng pag-iigib, pagtitinda ng gulay at isda, paglalaba o ang mga umpukan sa kalye.

Sa pagpasok sa looban, makikita ang mga nagsisiksikang bahay na yari sa plastik, kahoy at yero. Sa labas ng mga ito ay makikita ang mga nanay na hawak ang mga anak o di kaya'y naglilinis habang nakikipag-usap sa mga kapitbahay o pumipila sa mahabang linya ng mga balde papunta sa gripo. Madilim sa looban at napakaliit ng mga daanan. Pero para sa kanila, ito ay isang biyaya. Una, malapit lang ito sa palengke na pinagkukunan ng hanapbuhay nila. Pangalawa, may malalapit na pampublikong paaralan kung saan puwedeng makapag-aral ang kanilang mga anak.

Ito ang mga barangay 88 at 91 ng Libertad, Pasay, isa sa mga pinakamataong lugar ng kalakhang Maynila. Ang barangay 88 ay may sukat na 2.5 ektarya na kinapapalooban ng humigit-kumulang 1,515 na tao o 250 na pamilya. Ang barangay 91 naman ay may sukat na 1.5 ektarya na tinitirhan ng 1,600 na tao o 228 na pamilya. Pangunahing pinagkakakitaan ng mga tao ang pagtitinda sa palengke. Ang iba

naman ay nagtatrabaho sa pabrika, naniniilbihan bilang traysikel, dyip at taksi *drivers*, samantalang ang iba naman ay pumapasok sa mga opisina.

Mahirap man at abala sa paghahanap-buhay, ang mga tao ay nananatiling mulat sa mga isyung kinakaharap nila. Pinakamatingkad dito ang problema nila sa lupa at pabahay. Kung kaya't sila mismo ay nagtaguyod ng mga samahang magbubuklod sa kanila upang magkaroon sila ng lakas na humarap at labanan ang mga problemang kinakaharap nila.

Bumuo ang mga tao ng mga lokal na samahan sa bawat purok ng barangay. Ang mga ito ay ang: Bayanihan tungo sa Kaunlaran Homeowners Association (BAYANIHAN), Nagkakaisang Mamamayan ng Sporting Club (SPORTING), Samahang Magkakapitbahay ng Sporting (MAGKAKAPITBAHAY), P. Villanueva at Kabalikat. Kaalinsunod nito, bumuo sila ng isang pederasyon, ang Pederasyon ng Maralitang Tagalunsod ng San Rafael o PAMANTASAN, noong Marso 1995.

Isa pang aktibong organisasyon sa mga barangay 88 at 91 ay ang *Independent Movement* o IM, ang *umbrella organization* ng iba't ibang samahan sa nasabing lugar. Ang IM ay itinatag noong ika-8 ng Mayo, 1994 ng ilang mga kumandidato at nahalal na miyembro ng lokal na konseho. "Independent" dahil wala silang kinabibilangang pulitikal na partido.

Isang makitid na daan sa Brgy. 88 ang papunta sa opisina ng IM. Maliit lang ang lugar; ang opisina ay binubuo ng dalawang kuwartong maliit. Dito ginaganap ang mga pagpupulong ng samahan o di kaya'y mga karaniwang kuwentuhan lang, at ito rin ang opisina ng kanilang kooperatiba kung kaya't hindi ito nawawalan ng tao.

Malaki ang ginagawa ng IM sa komunidad. Ang pangunahing pinagkakaabalahan nito ay ang *anti-gambling campaign* laban sa natalong kapitan na nagmamay-ari ng mga pasugalan sa barangay. Tinututukan rin nito ang iba pang problema sa komunidad tulad ng droga, edukasyon, kakulangan ng sapat na trabaho, kalinisan at kapayapaan. Nang kalaunan, nagtayo rin ito ng isang kooperatiba

bilang samahang pang-ekonomiya na nagpapahiram ng pera at iba pang serbisyo sa mga miyembro nito sa mababang singil.

Pagpasok mo sa looban ng Barangay 91 ay makikita ang *Day Care Center* ng PAMANTASAN. Ito ay naitayo ng samahan sa pakikipagtulungan sa Kabalik at Pag-unlad (KAPPAG), isang NGO sa komunidad. Ang nasabing NGO ang nagbigay ng mga boluntir na mga guro. Maliban dito nakatutok din ang KAPPAG sa kalusugan, pag-oorganisa at pagtatayo ng kooperatiba. Ang mga anak ng mga miyembro ng PAMANTASAN ay libreng nakakapag-aral dito. Maliban sa pagiging *Day Care Center*, ang lugar ay ginagamit din para sa pagpupulong ng mga lokal na samahan. Dito rin ginaganap ang ibang mga gawain ng samahan tulad ng *medical missions* na inilulunsad ng ilang grupong kaugnay nila.

Ipinagmamalaki ng PAMANTASAN ang day care center bilang pangunahing proyekto nito. Isa pang pinagkakaabalahan nila ang patuloy na pakikipagnegosasyon sa may-ari ng lupa para maibenta ito sa kanila.

Ang usaping pulitika ay hindi rin naihihiwalay sa buhay ng IM. Karamihan sa mga miyembro ng konseho at ang bagong halal na kapitan ay mga kasapi ng IM. Ang Presidente nito ang nangungunang konsehal. Sa barangay 91, ang bagong halal na kapitan ay aktibong miyembro rin ng PAMANTASAN. Ito ay nagpapakita na malaki ang naitutulong ng isang organisadong puwersa para makipaglaban sa mga pulitikong may pera. Higit sa lahat, alam ng tao kung sino ang mga totoong naglilingkod sa kanila.

Ang IM at PAMANTASAN ay nakapagbigay na ng maraming pagsasanay para mapalakas ang kakayahan ng mga miyembro nito. Ito ay nagagawa dahil sa pakikipag-ugnayan nito sa ibang organisasyon ng mga mararalitang tagalunsod at NGOs. Naniniwala sila na ang tuloy-tuloy na pag-aaral ay susi para hindi mamatay ang samahan. At ang pakikipagkapit-bisig nito sa ibang institusyon at samahan ay isang paraan para mas lalo pang mapalaki ang boses nila laban sa mga demolisyon at pang-aapi sa mga maralitang tagalunsod.

Ang Pakikipagkapit-bisig

Mula nang maitatag ang IM ay nakikipag-ugnayan na ito sa iba't ibang NGO at ahensiya upang maging katuwang sa pag-unlad ng kanilang samahan at komunidad. Ang Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO) ay isa lamang sa mga ito. Napag-alaman ng IM ang mga programa ng REDO sa pamamagitan ng iba nilang kaugnay na mga organisasyon/ahensiya. Matapos ang ilang tawagan, pumunta at nakipagpulong ang isang taga-REDO sa mga lider ng komunidad upang magkaroon ng panimulang talakayan ng mga programa ng dalawang institusyon. Ipinakilala sa komunidad ang mga adhikain at mga gawain ng REDO bilang bahagi ng UP CSWCD sa pakikipagtulungan sa mga komunidad at mga organisasyong pantao habang itinataguyod ang sama-samang pag-unlad ng lipunan. Isinalaysay naman ng mga lider ang kasaysayan at mga isyu't pangangailangang kinakaharap ng komunidad. Sa aspetong ito maaring simulan ang pakikipagtulungan ng dalawang institusyon.

Noong Setyembre 1995, nilagdaan ng dalawang organisasyon ang isang kasunduan tungkol sa pagpapatupad ng isang programang pang-edukasyon para sa komunidad. Ang pangunahing responsibilidad ng IM ay ang paghahanda ng magsisipagdalo at mga aspeto ng pagsasanay katulad ng pagkain at lugar, habang ang REDO ang maghahanda para sa mga teknikal na gawain. Ang pamamahala ng buong programa at responsibilidad ng dalawa kung saan magkakaroon ng sama-samang pagpapalano, pagsusubaybay at pagtatasa.

Sama-samang Pag-aaral

Ang pagtukoy ng mga pagsasanay ay nagmula sa mga konsultasyon at pagpupulong sa pagitan ng mga nabuong komite sa edukasyon ng IM at ng REDO. Inihanay ang mga gawain ng mga organisasyon at ang mga kakailanganing kasanayan ng mga lider. Mula dito, nalaman ang mga kakulangan ng mga lider upang gampanan ang kanilang mga gawain. Sa ganitong paraan, ang mga pagsasanay ay nakatuon sa pag-unlad sa kaalaman, aktitud at kasanayan ng mga lider sa komunidad sa gawaing pagpapaunlad. Ang mga modyul sa pagsasanay ay masusing pinag-aralan ng dalawang panig upang

tumugon sa mga pangangailangan at sitwasyon ng komunidad. Upang mabigyan ng pagkakataon ang bawat organisasyon sa komunidad na makadalo, iminungkahi ng IM na ang bawat lokal na organisasyon ay bigyan ng representasyon sa mga pagsasanay.

Ang unang pagsasanay na inilunsad ay ang Sama-samang Pamamahala ng Pamayanan na dinaluhan ng iba't ibang sektor at organisasyon ng komunidad. Sumunod dito ay ang Panimulang Pagsasanay sa Kooperatiba para sa mga opisyaes ng kanilang nagsisimulang kooperatiba. Sa pagsasanay na ito isinagawa ang konseptong *study tour* na kung saan ang mga nagsipagdalo ay bumisita at nakipagtalakayan sa mga opisyaes ng dalawang iba pang kooperatiba. Ang pagbisita sa ibang mga kooperatiba ang nagsilbing daan para maiangat ang kanilang kamulatan at kasanayan sa gawaing pangkooperatiba.

Upang tugunan ang gawaing pagmumulat at pagpapalaganap ng impormasyon sa loob ng komunidad ay naglunsad ng isang seminar sa pagsusulat ng newsletter at sa pagsasalita sa publiko. Nagtulong-tulong ang iba't ibang organisasyon sa pagkalap ng mga balita at impormasyon para sa pahayagan. Kasunod nito, nakapaglabas ng sariling pahayagang pangkomunidad ang samahan.

Ang mahalagang leksyon sa karanasang ito ay ang pagtataguyod sa *study tour* bilang epektibong behikulo para sa gawaing pagpapalaganap. Ang regular na lingguhan at masusing pagpupulong ay isang mahalagang bahagi ng programa na hindi puwedeng ipagpaliban. Sa pamamagitan ng mga talakayan naisagawa ang *training needs analysis*, *training preparation* at ang ebalwasyon ng mga natapos na mga pagsasanay. Ang regular na pagdalaw sa komunidad ay nagsilbi ding okasyon upang lalong humigpit ang samahan ng mga taga-REDO at ng mga tao, pagpapakinis ng mga proyekto at pagtukoy ng iba pang aspeto ng pagtutulungan sa pagitan ng komunidad at ng REDO.

Gawaing Ekstensyon

Bukod sa gawaing edukasyon nagkaroon din ng pakikipagtulungan sa pagpapalakas ng mga lokal na organisasyon tungo sa gawaing pagpapaunlad.

Nariyan ang pagtulong sa pagsasaayos ng mga plano at programa ng mga organisasyon. Nagkaroon ng pakikipagtulungan sa gawaing pag-oorganisa ng mga kabataan. Tumutok ang isang *staff* sa pag-oorganisa ng grupong ubod hanggang sa pagpapalawak ng kasapian ng kabataan. Naipakita ang lakas ng kabataan nang ipanalo nila ang ilang posisyon noong nakaraang eleksyon ng Sangguniang Kabataan.

Pakikipag-ugnayan ng Komunidad sa Unibersidad

Naging kabalikat din ng IM ang REDO sa pagbubuo nito ng mga ugnayan sa iba't ibang sektor ng akademya. Sa pangangailangang pangkalusugan, nakipagtulungan ang Ugnayan ng Pahinungod - Diliman upang makapaglunsad ang dalawang organisasyon ng mga mag-aaral ng dalawang pagamutang bayan sa komunidad. Ang Kolehiyo ng Gawaing Panlipunan at Pagpapaunlad ng Pamayanan ay nakapagpadala rin ng anim na estudyante sa loob ng dalawang taon upang maging katuwang ng mga tao sa gawaing pagpapaunlad.

Upang magkaroon ng kamulatan ang ibang tao tungkol sa kanilang sitwasyon at karanasan, naglunsad din ng mga *exposure visits* sa komunidad. Ang mga estudyante ng CSWCD ay nakipamuhay sa kanila at ito ang nagsilbing pagsasanay ng mga lokal na lider sa pakikipagtalakayan ng mga isyu sa kanilang komunidad. Bukod sa mga estudyante ng UP, may mga estudyanteng Hapones ng Nihon Fukushi University na dumalaw din sa komunidad upang makipamuhay.

Naging katuwang din ng komunidad ang *College of Public Administration* sa paglunsad ng mga gawaing tumutugon sa kanilang mga kagyat na pangangailangan. Sa pamamagitan ng pakikipamuhay at pakikipagtalakayan ng isang klase sa komunidad ay nakapaghandang ito ng isang pananaliksik ng mga ahensiya at NGO na maaring lapitan

ng komunidad sa kanilang problemang pabahay.

Ang mga pakikipag-ugnayan ay nagsilbing daan para maiparating ng komunidad ang kanilang sitwasyon sa ibang mga tao. Nakapagbuo din ito ng mga kongkretong proyekto para sa ikauunlad ng pamayanan katulad ng mga pananaliksik at pag-oorganisa. Nakatulong din ito sa lider upang mahasa sila sa pakikipagtalakayan at gawaing edukasyon sa komunidad.

Mga Kasalukuyang Gawain

Makaraan ang dalawang taon, patuloy pa rin ang pagtutulongan ng dalawang organisasyon. Patuloy ang pagdalaw at pakikipagpulangan sa pagitan ng komunidad at REDO. Tumutulong pa rin ang REDO sa pakikipag-ugnayan ng komunidad sa iba't ibang organisasyon sa U.P. Sa kasalukuyan ay isinasaayos ang pakikipag-ugnayan ng *Urban Poor Desk* ng *Paralegal Volunteers Organization* ng *UP College of Law* at ng komunidad para sa aspetong legal ukol sa kanilang mga isyu sa pabahay. Ang mga estudyante ng *College of Public Administration* ay nagbabalak ding maglunsad ng pagsasanay tungkol sa Local Government Code para sa Sangguniang Barangay.

Ang patuloy na paglakas at paglawak ng organisadong puwersa sa komunidad ay masasalamatin sa resulta ng nakaraang lokal na eleksyon. Naipanalo ng IM at ng PAMANTASAN ang kanilang mga kandidato sa dalawang barangay. Sa ganitong paraan ay maaari nang ipatupad ng liderato ang pamamahala sa kanilang komunidad na tunay na mula sa tao at para sa tao.

Mga Aral Mula sa Karanasan

Nakabatay ang programa sa sitwasyon at kagyat na pangangailangan ng komunidad.

Sa gawaing ekstensyon, ang akademya ay kadalasang meron nang dala-dalang programa na ipatutupad na lamang sa mga komunidad. Ang prosesong ito ay nagpapahiwatig lamang nang hindi pagsalig sa kakayahan ng komunidad na ipahayag

ang kanilang sariling pangangailangan at programa. Ang karanasan sa Pasay ay nagpapatunay na ang kalagayan ng komunidad at programa ng mga lokal na samahan ang siyang dapat maging batayan kung anong uri at anyo ng programang pangkomunidad ang ipatutupad ng mga tumutulong na ahensiya.

Ang partisipasyon ng komunidad sa buong aspeto ng programa ay esensyal upang ito'y maging mapagpalaya.

Ang partisipasyon ng komunidad sa programa ay hindi lamang sa implementasyon kundi sa buong proseso ng pagpapatakbo nito. Sa ganitong paraan ang komunidad ay nabibigyan ng pagkakataon na magkaroon ng sariling pagpapasya at ang ahensiya ay nagsisilbing *catalyst* lamang. Dito maipapakita na ang komunidad ay may sariling buhay at kakayahan na iangat ang sarili mula sa kahirapan at ang ahensiya ay katuwang lamang.

Ang pakikipagtulungan ay hindi natatali sa isang aspeto lamang kundi kailangang maging komprehensibo. Dito makikita ang kahalagahan ng pakikipag-ugnayan sa iba't ibang ahensiya at organisasyon.

Ang programa ng pakikipagtulungan ay lalong lumalalim sa paglipas ng panahon. Maaaring magsimula ito sa isang aspeto lamang tulad ng pagsasanay ngunit kakailanganin din nitong lumawak at sagutin ang pangangailangan sa iba't ibang aspeto ng pag-unlad ng isang komunidad. Sa sitwasyon na hindi kayang sagutin ng isang ahensiya ang pangangailangan, maaari makipag-ugnayan ang komunidad sa iba pang ahensiya na siyang makakatugon sa problema. Ang pagkakaroon ng isang malawak na ugnayan na panlabas ang siyang magpapalakas ng suporta sa komunidad tungo sa pag-unlad.

Ang pakikipagtulungan ay maaring magkaroon ng iba't ibang anyo batay sa kakayahan ng bawat panig.

Kalimitan ang ahensiya ang siyang umaako ng mga gastusin sa programa. May mga pagkakataon na mayroong

limitasyon sa pondo. Sa isang magandang programa ay maaaring magkaroon ng hatian hindi lamang sa responsibilidad ngunit pati na rin sa mga gastusin ng programa. Sa isang pagsasanay, ang mga magisispagdalo ay maaari nang magbaon habang ang mga trainers ay handang mag-alay ng pagod at talino. Hindi kinakailangang maglabas ng malaking pera sa ganitong paraan. Kailangan lamang ang ahensiya at komunidad na maglaan ng oras, talino at determinasyon para sa pagpapatupad ng programa.

Rekomendasyon

Upang lalong mapahusay ang pakikipagtulungan ng Kolehiyo at ng REDO sa mga komunidad, ang mga sumusunod ay ang mga rekomendasyon ng mga *staff* na hanggang sa kasalukuyan ay nakikipagtulungan sa komunidad:

1. *Magkaroon ng mas mahigpit na pakikipagtulungan sa pagitan ng akademiko at mga programa ng REDO upang maging tuloy-tuloy ang takbo ng ganitong programa.* Ang karanasan na nakukuha sa komunidad ay panggagalingan ng mga teyorya't kaalaman para sa mga talakayan sa loob ng silid-aralan habang ang mga talakayang ito ay naisasakongkreto sa mga aral na natututunan sa pakikipagtulungan sa komunidad.
2. *Magtalaga ng sapat na pondo para sa mga gawaing serbisyong pangkomunidad kahit man lang para sa pagsasanay at pagbibiyahe ng mga Research and Extension Professional Staff (REPS) dahil kalimitan, ang pagdalaw sa komunidad ay pagkatapos pa ng oras sa opisina at tumatagal hanggang sa kalaliman ng gabi.*
3. *Palawakin ang programang pangkomunidad sa dalawa pang lugar.* Ito ay makakapagbigay sa kolehiyo ng mas malaking pagkakataon na maglingkod sa mga komunidad at sa mapalalim ng karanasan at kaalaman sa gawaing pag-unlad. Maaari ring magpadala ng mga estudyanteng nasa FI program upang magsilbing mga organisador ng komunidad habang ang REDO ang mamamahala sa mga teknikal na gawain tulad ng pagbibigay ng mga pagsasanay at patuloy na paggabay sa mga gawain.

4. Ang programang pangkomunidad ang siyang pandayan ng REDO upang mapahusay ang kasanayan nito sa paglilingkod sa sambayanan. Kasabay nito, *kailangang makapagsulat at makapagpalaganap ng mga materyales sa wikang Filipino. Kailangang makapaglunsad rin ng mga makamasa, panibago at epektibong pamamaraan sa edukasyon para sa mga lider ng komunidad.*
5. Maliban sa pagbibigay ng mga pagsasanay sa komunidad, maaaring *palawakin ang gawaing pagpapaunlad ng REDO tulad ng pag--oorganisa at iba pang gawain. Makakatulong ito ng malaki para sa pagpapanday ng kaalaman, aktitud at kasanayan ng REDO bilang extension office ng Kolehiyo na naglalayong maglingkod sa sambayanan.*
6. Bilang ahensyang nagsasabuhay ng mithiin ng Kolehiyo, hinihiling ang *institusyonalisasyon ng programang pakikipagkapit-bisig sa mga maralitang sektor ng lipunan sa pamamagitan ng pagsuporta at integrasyon nito sa mga regular na programa ng Kolehiyo.*

Towards Strengthening Community Extension Services*

MA. THERESA V. TUNGPALAN

Introduction

The University is mandated to perform three (3) functions -- Teaching, Research and Extension. Extension aims to reach out to other sectors outside the academe and impart benefits and learnings to the larger community.

Extension is in the lifeblood of CSWCD, having adhered to the theory and practice of participatory strategies, social action and people's empowerment for almost three (3) decades. Its emphasis on gender and ecological concerns resulted from its continuing pursuit of relevance and service in response to the people's agenda.

Historically, too, the Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO) has long struggled in redefining the traditional mold of what an extension office is, within an academic unit. In view of the current debate regarding the scope and limits of REDO's support functions, a review of its past involvements in community extension can assist in delineating its future programs.

This paper has three (3) concerns:

1. To reflect and identify lessons from REDO's experiences in undertaking community extension projects;
2. To synthesize these experiences; and
3. To share these views to other groups engaged in similar endeavors.

**A synthesis paper of three community projects conducted by REDO.*

Highlights of Activities

PREACH, Women CREATE and the Pasay Extension Project were all managed through REDO (OCEE in the case of PREACH). There were variations, however, in terms of program focus, mechanisms for implementation, and fund sources. This section focuses on the major community extension approaches and methods as culled from the project documents.

1. Establishing Partnerships

Local partners proved vital in ensuring program legitimacy and community acceptance. In all three (3) projects, the local government units, particularly at the municipal and barangay levels, provided the necessary support upon program entry.

In the PREACH project, however, the barangay connection was not enough to dispel suspicions regarding the program's "subversive" character. On the other hand, UNICEF's presence in the Women CREATE project was an advantage in formalizing linkages with the local governments of the different project areas.

For Pasay, partnership with the peoples' organization was pursued alongside giving due recognition to the barangay officials. This contributed in sustaining organizing work.

2. Social Preparation

The communities covered by the projects were at varying stages of organizing. The PREACH area was at the formation stage, while Pasay was already at the consolidation stage. Although the communities covered by Women CREATE had initial organizing experience, women organizing was a new arena for them.

The organizing stage of each community was the basis for the social preparatory activities undertaken. In all three (3) cases, these activities resembled initial steps in the organizing process -- i.e., community integration, consultations, identifying key lead-

ers, preliminary social analysis, and orientation/groundwork regarding project concerns. Although the projects started with specific focus, these were validated and refined as social preparation progressed.

3. Specific development interventions in response to community needs

Community needs were varied, complex and dynamic. Despite set project objectives, its operationalization had to be attuned to the situation-specific concerns. Using PAR as entry point, PREACH worked its way through community organizing, training and livelihood interventions.

Women CREATE started with ten (10) areas nationwide which was later reduced into five(5) areas. Its initial project focus on gender sensitization and training was later expanded to gender mainstreaming, establishing support structures and advocacy based on the mid-term evaluation results.

In Pasay, the work was first conceived as a grassroots training program. However, as needs became more evident, technical assistance also covered community publications, organizational building, waste management, cooperative and networking.

4. Organizational development

Community organizing was considered a core program component in all three (3) projects. At the outset, only PREACH incorporated direct organizing as part of its project objectives. For Women CREATE and Pasay, organizing work by other programs was deemed complementary to its project concerns. Though not directly involved in grassroots organizing, these two projects relied either on existing programs (Urban Basic Services Program for Women CrREATE) or on local organizations (Independent Movement for Pasay) to spearhead organizational development. Nevertheless, REDO still made additional inputs to assist in organizing activities.

The organizational forms were varied. The local groups PREACH worked with were either sectoral, area or project-based. In Women CREATE, the women were organized geographically, with loose linkages with other communities. These linkages, however, were largely project-based. In the case of Pasay, the umbrella organization was community-wide, with different affiliate organizations based on specific sector (youth), project (cooperative) or issue (land).

In all three projects, these organizations existed outside the formal barangay structure yet functioned alongside it.

5. Building Support Mechanisms

Each project had its own lifespan: PREACH took more than two (2) years; Women CREATE had a 5-year proposal but was extended for another year; while Pasay was initially a 6-month agreement and renewed several times upon request. Thus, support structures were necessary to sustain and follow-up project results after project completion. Support mechanisms took different forms, depending on the capabilities of the local groups and program projections.

Part of the support structures in PREACH was the formation of different activity-based and sectoral groups, linkages with concerned entities (i.e., church, NGO, DSWD, municipal government), and provision of seed capital for small-scale livelihood projects. In Women CREATE, the training of project implementors, strengthening of inter-agency committees, community advocacy, and networking were aimed at assisting the trained grassroots women to continue their efforts. In the case of Pasay, assistance toward further organizational consolidation and establishment of linkages with other service institutions were part of the effort to strengthen local mechanisms to respond to their needs.

6. Academic Concerns

As an academic institution, CSWCD's extension efforts

and its academic program had to be closely linked. PAR, gender advocacy and mainstreaming, and community-based training were considered pioneering areas for academic scrutiny as well as development practice. In all three projects, documentation and evaluation were built into the operations to draw experiences and lessons which became inputs to the theory-practice continuum.

Part of the project operations of PREACH and Pasay was the fielding of CSWCD students. In the case of PREACH there was a conscious effort to test out the feasibility of an integrated field placement for students across departments; in Pasay, the field placement and exposure program were incorporated only after the project stability was attained. It likewise assisted in specific community concerns.

7. Funding

The community extension projects reviewed were not funded under the regular CSWCD operational funds. PREACH and Women CREATE were special projects with outside fund support. PREACH was funded through UP-ORC while Women Create received UNICEF support. The Pasay project (originally focused on community trainings) was conceived to be financed through other resource generating projects of REDO, community resource counterpart, and services from other agencies/groups.

Reflections: Are We Moving Towards the Right Direction?

The call for greater relevance and service must not be addressed only through curricular concerns but must also encompass CSWCD's research and extension work. This section on reflections puts the practice of community extension of REDO into focus. It hopes to summarize major gains, gaps and prospects as we aim to move forward in our tasks.

1. Redefining Extension Work

The UP Charter has no clearcut definition regarding

the range of possible extension work which its different units can do. But community extension definitely has a place in the academe.

"Extension services shall include the conduct of short-term non-degree courses and similar programs. These activities may be initiated by the unit or in cooperation with persons or agencies, local or foreign..."(1984 Revised University Charter, Chapter 3, Sec. 4)

"(Extension includes) Proposals for conduct of community or similar extension services, in response to requests of other agencies and contracts for professional and technical services..." (Ibid., Sec. 12)

The concept paper on the merger of ORP and OCEE into REDO in the early 90's carried the concern for community extension a step further. At this juncture, community extension was considered as one of REDO's major tasks, and as a complementary concern alongside its academic programs.

"(Through the College academic programs and extension activities) various approaches and strategies have been introduced, tested out, and evaluated based on concrete experiences ... at the community level ..." (page 1)

"Research and extension programs provide a medium for integrating development theories and practice, validating its effectiveness and relevance ... at the grassroots level ... " (page 1)

Community-based Extension Services was thus named as one of the major thrusts of REDO.

In the mid-90's moves to transform REDO into the Center for Participatory Development started. As conceptualized, community extension shall be one of the four (4) core programs of the Center whose major functions include capability-building, advocacy and networking, and technical support services. This is consistent with CSWCD's avowed commitment to people's empowerment and social transformation.

The practice of community extension through the years,

thus, has veered away from its traditional notion which connotes expert consultancy or transfer of technology from professionals. It has expanded to include varying degrees of involvement in community organizing and other specific development interventions which are innovative, participatory and service-oriented. As community service within the participatory development framework, community extension is similar to a "problem-posing dialogue" which Freire had long advocated in place of extension as "cultural invasion".

2. Partnership with Marginalized Communities and Groups

Relationship with local groups tend to be characterized by partnership rather than dependence. Partnership requires sharing among equals, rather than a patron-client relationship. This is ensured through participatory and capability-building approaches.

The areas served by the community extension projects reviewed were selected based on the resource capabilities of the programs along with other considerations. Yet, CSWCD's partnership towards serving the most marginalized communities and groups continue to be a prime consideration in community extension. This is part of the effort to reach out to sectors who are most in need and are least served. These areas are in need. At the same time, they are also accessible, able to provide some community counterpart, and are beneficiaries of other development programs.

3. Merging Community Service and Academic Concerns

Curricular programs and community service go hand in hand, as CSWCD programs have proven through decades of practice. In fact, without community service, the three academic programs (Community Development, Social Work, Women and Development) would also lose its reason for being. There have been varied arrangements for carrying out this merger:

*Placement of fieldwork students in project areas

- *Testing-out and evaluation of specific development strategy
- *Project documentation as part of teaching materials development
- *Establishing linkages with POs, NGOs and GOs
- *Community practice and actual social service assistance to communities and programs

4. Managing Community Extension Programs

The three (3) community extension projects practiced flexibility and inductive learning. They did not rely on packaged development process and expert knowledge. On the contrary, a greater part of its program scope as well as management mechanisms were influenced by participatory approaches and resource maximization.

*For program development, the bottom-up planning processes were validated and proven responsive to community needs. The project-based and issue-based approach seemed common to the three projects. However, its strategic implications to community welfare and organizational consolidation were considered imperative. Aside from organizing, experience had shown that livelihood and networking concerns were equally important amidst poverty conditions (as part of sustaining factors for community initiative).

*Resource complementation was resorted to by tapping inter-unit involvement within the College and by linking with other service institutions. The College alone cannot respond to emerging community needs. Thus, mechanisms for coordinating with other groups need to be systematized.

*Mechanisms toward institutionalization were also worked out at two levels:

>At the community level for project continuity (i.e.,

leadership development, organizing, linkages with other agencies)

>At the unit level (REDO) for possible follow-up and/or expansion efforts (i.e., program development, fund sourcing)

At present however, gains have been minimal due to limitations in long-term strategic planning, insitutional support and resource generation. Advocacy efforts are imperative even within the University bureaucracy.

5. Micro Solutions to Macro Issues

One of the recurrent questions in community extension practice is: *To what extent have we made a difference in the lives of the poor?*

There were outputs, all right. But, these remained at the local level --- small-scale and short-term in terms of impact.

With the increasing demands and complexity of development issues and community needs, how can an academic-based extension program be maximized? Do advocacy and networking efforts beyond the community level make a difference (i.e., policy advocacy, campaign support, etc.)? Do we, as part of the academe, have the capacity to move on to this task? And, do we have the political will to take sides with regard to particular issues and gear our programs along these concerns?

Challenges and Recommendations

Community extension offers a lot of significant opportunities for service learning and grassroots capability-building. CSWCD, drawn by its social commitment and curricular concerns, is being challenged to maximize this potential. Alongside other CSWCD units, REDO finds itself amidst this call to assist marginalized communities and groups in the context of its pro-

grams. However, specific areas need refinement.

1. Developing adequate community support mechanisms to provide better chances for project continuity:

- *Provision for project turn-over to the local groups
- *Capability-building towards self-management of projects
- *Referral mechanisms with local agencies and LGUs

2. As an extension unit, resource build-up should be addressed as support to long-term planning instead of short-term community assistance:

- *Resource complementation with other agencies
- *Fund assistance from funding institutions
- *Maximizing community counterpart

3. Institutionalizing community extension services would require more systematic efforts on the part of the College. Several possibilities could be considered:

- *Regular University fund support
- *Advocacy within the University system
- *Joint projects with other UP units and development institutions (which are strategic/purposeful in nature)
- *Program development, complementary to other College programs

4. Sustaining development efforts imply strategic planning in terms of defining priority issues and program scope:

- *Formulating medium and long-term plans
- *Networking with the larger social development community (national, ASEAN, international)
- *Focusing on specific development agenda

Through the years, REDO has developed its capabilities to respond to varied extension opportunities. Community extension provides the necessary balance between theorizing and

networking at the macro level, on the one hand, and field practice and responding to specific community needs on the other. Indeed, without community extension, "practicing what we preach" and "learning from the people" become mere rhetoric.

Or worse: if REDO is confined to being a mere support entity to the College academic programs ----- its potential to channel community extension into the twin purpose of theorizing and service may be negated. Perhaps, what is called for is focused programming for each unit to strengthen its capabilities within a unified vision.

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Women CREATE
Pasay: Grassroots Training Project

2. REDO Concept Papers

ORP-OCEE Merger
Center for Participatory Development

3. Proceedings: CSWCD Strategic Planning, 1996 & 1997

4. 1984 Revised University Charter (Draft)

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