ERNATIVE EXTENSION STRATEGIES FOR NATIVE PULATION IN THE UPLANDS: A CASE OF THE ATA IN CANGGUHUB, MABINAY, NEGROS ORIENTAL

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Introduction

The unique cultural characteristics of the native upland tribpulation requires a unique approach in bringing extension to this particular population group. The usual Commuganization (CO) approach requiring local population's unterpart appears inappropriate for the natives. With the political organization of the natives, the CO apwill generally contradict with the philosophy of the indipolitical system of the native tribal population.

The requirement for local labor contribution runs counter to tives' daily process of food procurement. In the light of this paper asks an essential question, how can we bring services to the native upland population without neunning the risks of contradicting the natives' peculiar characteristics? Put in another way, what alternative or approach in extension can we use in our attempt to the natives?

The alternative ideas proposed in this paper were derived experience with the Ata in Barangay Cangguhub in the ality of Mabinay, Negros Oriental. The site is around 87 northwest of Dumaguete City. The project in this site of the Silliman University Research Action Development in the Uplands (SURADPU). It is an experimental signed to test various extension strategies and agrofomodels appropriate for agriculturally marginal upland com-The project has been in the site for slightly over four and our regular monitoring effort on the developmental now provides adequate data from which we can infer approaches compared to present classical extension

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CLASSICAL PARADIGM FOR EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Community development project has to be community base As such, it is recommended that the evolution of communi development project should take a bottom-up direction. There a a number of motivations why such process of evolution is pr ferred. It is argued that such condition will improve communi participation since a strong sense of community ownership project will be developed. In addition, members' participation w be long-lasting since the local members' involvement in the pr ject is not artificially caused by an exogenous factor such as t presence of the project's technical men.

In order to anchor development project in the communi community organization approach has become the by-word extension effort. In fact, it has become the panacea to all dev opment activities. It is a must to all extension programs. Fundi agencies always require the existence of community organizati as pre-requisite for fund approval for fund request or at le forming it at the initial activity of a project after its fund s port has been approved. Hence, community organization te to be generally considered as a foolproof ingredient for devel ment undertaking in the community.

Such perspective has led extenison workers to believe that co munity organization is a requisite for all development progra It has prevented the extension workers from critically analyz such view in the context of a specific project and a specific gr of clientele population.

Since the development technicians have already develo bias towards community organization, they tend to impose t requirement on the clientele population. The very essence of t process is already inconsistent with the philosophy of involv local population in planning to determine their own resolution and processes of development. As a consequence, the local po lation has not been given adequate assessment concerning th own desire for community organization in the context of t local people's existing indigenous political system. Under t paradigm, the people's existing political system is taken for gr

the interest of meeting the requirement for community or-ation. Hence, the approach, in principle, becomes top-to-om. While this paradigm assumes the practice of a bottom-up ess as an ideal approach to development, it has in fact indeed, en that ideal.

The classical paradigm denies the significance of the specifi- of project and the specificity of people. It tends to lump all cts and people together without regard to the peculiar na- of a project and a people. Hence, the requirement of commu- organization is universally expected from all development ef- It tends to unify development process and approach even a condition of diverse potential clientele population and opment projects. Such model is reductionistic hence it tends disregard specific nature and qualities of a population and requirements of a specific project. Actual conditions, er, require strong need to adjust general development pro- and approach to specific conditions of people and of projects.

On the basis of input, the classical model strongly denounces out, since it will only develop overdependence of people on project. Hence, any inputs by the project in terms of goods sh are always considered as dole outs. The classical model recognizes tecnological input as legitimate contribution of opment project to the local population. Under all circums- the model assumes that consumable inputs of project be the people's counterpart. This universal demand on is realistic since it does not recognize the context which ticular input is required.

Project demands and requirements have to be situated con- and under such consideration cash and good inputs may ecessarily constitute as dole outs. In short, the nature of the and the nature of the clientele population have to be un- to properly identify whether cash and goods inputs gitimate or not. The classical model does not require this of evaluation. Instead, on an priori basis, it universally that all consumable inputs are dole outs. Cash should be only in a form of loan. Under this definition, subsidized ntribution of farmers is not considered a legitimate input.

It is a dole out. Since the only counterpart that the local popul tion can afford to contribute is labor, subsidized labor contrib tion should not be encouraged. It should totally come from t clientele population. The critical question that has to be asked i "is clientele population under all circumstance capable of provi ing the necessary labor for development efforts?" Put it in an ther way, the following questions have to be asked seriously:

1) Under what circumstance of clientele population wh subsidized labor contribution of the people is legitimate?

2) Under what circumstance of a project when subsidiz labor contribution of the people is legitimate?

There are questions that are never asked under the classi cal model of development process when specific strategies a identified for a particular project. As its philosophy, it is accep ed without critically assessing the context under which sub dized labor takes place.

THE ATA: THEIR BACKGROUND

The discussion on the background of the Ata in the imm diately preceding paper provides the context under which t project has been implemented. Hence, this discussion is n longer repeated in this paper. For reference purposes, the read is advised to relate this paper to the preceding one.

THE ATA FARMING SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PROJE

SURADPU involves two sites for testing farming syste development approach. One is in Lake Balinsasayao of the m nicipality of Sibulan and the other is in the Ata settlement Cangguhub, Mabinay, Negros Oriental.

Since one of the concerns of SURADPU is to explore t reactions of various population groups under different ec gical setting, the selection of the Lake Balinsasayao farm and the Ata as the recipients of the program is appropriate. Fi the Lake Balinsasayao farmers are culturally different from t Ata. The first group consists of lowland Malay Cebuano farm

the coastal areas of Negros Oriental, who migrated to the ... searching for farm and farm opportunities. On the ... hand, the Ata are native Negrito tribal population who ... born and grew up in the upland communities. The first ... is largely known as Christians while the second, animists.

...econd, the two sites are ecologically different. The Lake ...sasayao area still has around 40 percent of its forest cover ... while the rest have been cultivated by the farmers through ... and burn technique. The farm lots are under different ... of ecological succession since farmers try to fallow their ... sequentially. The Ata site, on the other hand, is completely ...ested. Farm plots have been cultivated for a number of ... without the benefit of fallow. As a result, vegetational ... of farms between cropping period largely consists of shal- ...ted shrubs and ranked grasses. On the basis of altitude, ... Balinsasayao area is higher than that of the Ata site. ...rmer is around 800 meters above sea level while the latter ...een 300 to 500 meters.

...rming systems development were introduced to both sites ... four years ago. While the farm inputs introduced in the ... were generally the same, the approaches employed were ... In the Lake Balinsasayao area, a strong community or- ...tion was established. In fact, around one year was spent ... socially preparing the farmers for a community organi- ... Forming such organization among the farmers in Lake ...sayao had no competition with traditional social systems ... farmers have no such form of tradition. In a way such ...ion provided the farmers a vehicle for more social in- ...s during meetings. Through the organization, collective ... and activities were undertaken.

... the Ata, on the other hand, community organization ... introduced. This was followed since the Ata has a tradi- ... a loose sociopolitical system that maintains social order ... population. For possible competition with tradition, ... proceeded without creating a new system of commu- ...nization. As a cultural group, we have to respect their ... Tradition should not be eroded by imposing on them a ...politica structure.

Another methodological difference between the Lake Balin sasayao and the Ata farming systems development projec is on the labor input of the farmers into the farms. Th Lake Balinsasayao farmers provided all the labor require ments in the development of their farms without any subsid from the project. Since they practice food storing, they do n have to face the problem of starvation when their labor is com mitted to the development of their farms which does not provid immediate production. In short, the Lake Balinsasayao farme can afford to invest their labor on farm development for futu return without facing the hazard of hunger. Under this conte full labor counterpart from the farmers can be appropriately e pected.

On the other hand, the Ata do not store food since there not much to store. As we saw earlier, their food production is lo Hence, food quest remains to be a daily activity of the Ata ju like when they were still nomadic hunters, collectors and fishe Unlike the Lake Balinsasayao farmers, the Ata cannot afford invest their labor on the farm that does not provide them imm diate food reward. Labor inputs into the development of the farm for an extended period of time will surely compete wi their daily food quest. Hence, subsidized labor for farm devel ment among the Ata is most appropriate. The Ata context, the fore, requires that they should not be expected to fully shoul the labor cost in farm development since they cannot afford.

The classical approach in extension program is employed the Lake Balinsasayao farmers while an alternative method employed for the Ata. The choice of these particular methods the two groups of subjects is legitimated by the respective soc context of the two groups of population.

The farming systems development of the Ata involves phases. The first phase consists of the introduction of soil c servation measures. When the first phase is over, the teach process moves to to the second phase, cropping systems deve ment. The unit of approach is the household farm. Since decision making concerning farm use and development is lar handled by the household, the plan and the implementatio

ming systems development were targeted to the household and to the community. This is based on the assumption that a sehold has a peculiar food need, labor capability and farm constraints and opportunities. Therefore, plans for farming opment have to be seen on the basis of the household.

Soil conservation inputs include a number of techniques. techniques are designed to achieve three results. *First,* to nt the remaining top soil from eroding. *Second,* to restore soil through decomposition of biomass derive from vege- that are used to help keep the soil from erosion. *Third,* aintain and improve soil fertility by trapping runoff and by nutrient cycling from various vegetations introduced vent soil from erosion.

On sloping farms where abundant rocks are available, the Ata raged to introduce contour rock walling. Otherwise, contour ing or canal system is introduced. On a subsidized labor the Ata is paid 50 percent of the usual wage labor charging community to construct these measures. The subsidy that Ata get during their employment is used to provide them the ary food.

Contoured rockwalls, terrace and canal systems are strengwith the use of various plants along their sides. As feed for livestocks, the Ata are encouraged to plant napier as buffer plants together with *Leucaena leucocephala* and *dia sepium.* At a certain interval, fruit trees are also plant- keep the rock walls and canals intact. Planting activities of vegetation are no longer subsidized by the project. It is to- the responsibility of the Ata.

On cropping systems development, the Ata are encouraged troduce mixed cropping to reduce the risks or hazards of cropping, to improve the utilization efficiency of soil nu- to prevent the outbreak of certain diseases. Under this ion, it is assumed that the Ata will be able to improve production success level. The cropping systems development also other multiple concerns. First, the introduction of ap-

propriate cropping systems is assumed to also help reduce so erosion. Second, it will improve soil fertility. And third, it wi help restore the lost soil through its organic decomposition.

Contoured alley and strip planting utilizing leguminous cro together with non-leguminous ones are encouraged. Throug the use of an agricultural worker, the Ata are taught the tec niques of employing the practice. The technical agent stays the site for 21 days a month directly relating with, and taking the Ata farmers.

Aside from the subsistence crops that are grown, the farme are advised to plant trees on areas where subsistence crops not grow well. This usually happens on steep rocky slopes whe more intensive agricultural activities are difficult to implemen These trees will eventually provide the Ata building materials a fuelwood in the future. Considering that there are no more fore in the area, the planted trees can also restore the vegetation cover of the non-arable spots.

All these development activities are implemented on a hous hold level. The field technician interacts with an individual farm concerning the latter's plan of activities for his own farm dev opment. The plan is designed on the basis of the farmer's co traints and opportunities. Likewise, the implementation of t plan is also done on a household level, not on the community. Su activities which are the major thrusts of the Ata project can implemented without necessarily having a community organi tion support. This is very appropriate for the Ata where a tra tional loose sociopolital system exists.

Farming systems development for the Ata is a direct int vention on their progressively declining farm production. T entry point is food production through the introduction of propriate soil management and cropping system. As an extens activity, it is intentionally implemented without the use of co munity organization. The deliberate exclusion of community ganization from the thrust of the project has been justified the following reasons. *First*, farming systems development

adequately implemented without having community organization since the activities and plans are operationalized on a household level as mentioned earlier. *Second,* as noted elsewhere in this paper, the Ata have a traditional loose sociopolitical system which provided them the freedom they need. Such sense of freedom should not be eroded by forcing them to form community organization. The bottom-up principle of extension planning requires that such tradition of the Ata should be respected.

The Ata project allows the farmers to have only 50 percent of their labor as their counterpart in the construction of measures that conserve the soil. The rest is subsidized by the project to allow them to survive at the time when the erosion control devices are constructed. This is justified by the fact that they do not store food as we saw earlier. To help the Ata help themselves, we have to keep them alive first. This, I think, is an ethical responsibility of any extension program. People first is a just policy.

So, what has been achieved in the farms of the Ata using the approach we just have described? Let us first look into the soil conservation devices constructed. Four types of soil protection measures have been established on the Ata farms. These are contoured hedgerows, contoured canal system, contoured rockwall and contoured terrace. Considering the strong character of the land, contoured rockwalling became the prevalent measure of soil conservation put up. This is followed by the contoured canal sys-

The construction of these measures covers 18 hectares which is around 86 percent of the total land area of the Ata settlement. Forty-eight percent of the protected land from erosion (18 hectares) is provided with contoured rockwalls, 44% with contoured canal system, 5% with contoured hedgerows and 2% with contoured terrace.

Along the sides of these soil conservation measures are various buffer plants grown. Thse include napier grasses, *Leucaena leucocephala* and fruit trees like jackfruit and mango. *Glerecedia* also was tried but not one survived after one summer period.

For cropping systems, various leguminous plants have bee introduced for mixed cropping with their staple crop, corn. The leguminous plants include peanut, mung bean, pegion, pea a bush beans. Mixed cropping is being practiced in almost all the 18 hectares developed by the 18 families.

In addition, vegetable production has been introduced to i prove their nutrition. Few farms have tried using compost fertilizers. As part of the soil fertility improvement program, t Ata are taught on making compost and they have been involved the process of constructing a compost site.

The accomplishment of the Ata project is comparable to t of the Lake Balinsasayao farmers. Just on soil conservation alo the Ata have covered 85 percent of the land area to be develope In fact, this is bigger than what the Lake Balinsasayao proj has accomplished. The latter has only covered slightly over percent of its total target area.

The output of the Ata project suggests that its implemen tion was not hampered by the absence of community organizati The individual household approach proved to be just as effect as when the point of entry and implementation is made thro the community organizaton as what we noted for the Lake Ba sasayao Project.

THE ALTERNATIVE EXTENSION APPROACH FOR UPLAND TRIBAL POPULATION

The Ata group of people is not necessarily a peculiar gr of upland tribal population. It is one of the numerous groups native population from the north, central and southern Phi pines. While these native populations are at present in their ferent degrees of change, the conditions are the same. They h their own traditional sociopolitical system while they are all ing to make a living under the condition of rapid and exte deforestation. Hence, the food production level of these p has declined tremendously affecting their daily food supply most upland tribal population therefore, food production for mediate consumption is a daily activity.

This is the context of upland tribal population under which development programs for the natives are implemented. context should be seriously considered in designing the approach for extension activity. Also, the thrust of extension program for the upland tribal population should address at the immediate food production problem of the upland native population.

Since the upland farms are generally marginal for agricultural purposes, and farms are the life support systems of the upland natives, extension program or these people should be directed towards the development of farming systems. This farming systems development should have at least two components as the Ata project suggests. First, it should have soil conservation development component. Second, cropping systems development should be introduced either simultaneously with soil conservation development or after it, as what had been experienced with the Ata. Of course, it is assumed that with this nature of development program, a provision for land tenure system for the natives is already provided for.

The extension approach for the upland tribal population should deemphasize the development of community organization since the natives have their own traditon which is either loose or highly structured. Such tradition should in fact, be supported and nourished to provide certain element of cultural continuity for the people in the face of massive sociocultural change. The absence of community organization in extension approach would continuously provide the desired freedom usually experienced in areas where loose sociopolitical system exist or a continuity of traditional structured sociopolitical systems such as those found among the natives in Mountain Province or the Muslims in the south. The creation of community organization designed for extension program purposes will only create conflict with tradition and generate confusion on the part of the local native population.

The Ata experience demonstrated a case where extension program can still be implemented without necessarily having formed any community organization. Since development pro-

grams for upland tribal population need to be addressed at th development of appropriate upland farming technologies to mak assistance programs relevant to the local upland condition. com munity organization becomes more unnecessary. As we saw ear lier, farming systems development can become appropriate an effective approach on a household level. Hence, community or ganization should not be the *sine-qua-non* for the implementatio of farming systems development for upland tribal population.

The other very important aspect of extension approach fo the upland tribal population is on labor subsidy. The questio that the classical extension approach will raise against labor sub sidy will be on dole out. The alternative approach which we hav employed for the Ata, on the other hand, argues that such sup port is not a dole out. Under the socioeconomic context of the up land tribal population, labor subsidy is an essential support to kee the natives alive while we are in the process of helping them he themselves. As stressed earlier, any extension program designe for the upland natives has the moral obligation to protect the liv of the subject. This is the underlying philosophy of labor subsi for upland tribal population.

As we saw earlier, labor subsidy in farming systems dev opment is not a doleout. For emphasis, the following reaso have to be noted:

1) The amount used to subsidize labor, produces inputs th are not consumable. Rockwalls, canal systems and terraces, ju to mention a few are permanent inputs on farms which will ha long term and lasting effect on farm production;

2) Any positive effect that these measures will bring in their farm production will have a multiplier effect towards e pansion of farm lands installed with soil conservation measur and

3) The subsidized activity produces a farm lot where int sive cropping systems can be implemented to improve farm pr ductivity.

A dole out assumes that whatever goods or cash extended to farmers are considered as consumables. They do not generate opportunities for bigger return in the future. The labor subsidy provided to the Ata obviously does not belong to the category of a dole out. It is a positive investment for future generation of income bigger than the subsidy that the Ata received. It is therefore for self income-generating.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper has demonstrated that the alternative approach to extension work among the Ata is just as effective, if not more, compared to the classical approach employed for the Lake Ba Kasayao farmers. The alternative approach is basically designed for native tribal population in the uplands whose traditions have established either a loose or a rigid sociopolitical system and whose economic system is generally characterized at present with low productivity. Under such circumstance, the approach has been found very appropriate as demonstrated by our own experience with the Ata project. This approach is characterized by the emphasis of community organization as a requisite for extension activities and the encouragement for the use of subsidized labor in implementing development activities in the farm. As discussed earlier, this labor subsidy is not a dole out since it has the capacity to generate more income from the farm in the long run. It is a form of investment designed for long-term payoff.

In the light of planning and implementing extension programs the following are recommended:

1) Extension programs should be critically evaluated on the basis of the nature of the program and the culture of the people to be involved for appropriate approach identification;

2) This critical evaluation should look into the appropriateness of community organization and full labor counterpart from the female population as requirement for program implementation;

3) The concept of dole out has to be reevaluated in the context of the capability of goods or cash extended to either directly or indirectly generate income in the long run. This long-run dimension of payoff is very critical for programs that are designed to stabilize and sustain productivity. Any subsidy that produces this result should not be considered as a dole out.

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