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ASSESSMENT OF THE
BOY SCOUT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN
BRAZIL, PERU,
HONDURAS
AND GUATEMALA

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In my assessment of the Boy Scout Community Development Projects in Latin America, I concentrated on four major areas namely:

1. General Make-Up of the Scouts, Who are they? What social classes do they come from?
2. Community Development Projects Implemented by the Scouts. What kinds? Economic class of the intended beneficiaries?
3. Community Development Workshops and Materials. Progress made in developing country plans. Distribution of Community Development Materials to Associations.
4. Financial sources available to Scouts. Local and International.

In addition, I have included my recommendations and observations of the Scout Program in Latin America.

General Make Up of the Scouts

The majority of Scouts in Latin America come from the middle-income bracket. The cost of the uniform, yearly quotas and equipment required for camping activities is more than most Latin American boys can afford. The community development program has given the scouts broader exposure and has attracted boys from lower income classes but not in any significant numbers. There is no written policy on the part of the Scouts to recruit from one group as opposed to another. At the present, it would be fair to say, that the Scouting program appeals more to the middle-income youth.

Brazil seems to emphasize the uniform more than the other three countries that I visited. Brazilian Scouting officials have made attempts to make uniforms more affordable to lower income groups. These innovative methods of installment plans have been quite successful. In some cases in Peru and Honduras the only evidence of scout membership is the bandana. There was one case in Honduras where the uniform gave the impression that the Scouts were closely associated with the military. The project was a parks improvement effort done in cooperation with the military.

The general acceptance of the Scouts is impressive. They are well regarded from high level government officials to grass-root communities in which they work. Through their agreements with various government ministries and their work with Parent-Teacher groups, the Scouts have gained confidence and access to most communities.

Community Development Projects Implemented by the Scouts

In the four target countries, the Scouts have implemented a wide variety of Community Development Projects. Brazil and Peru are by far the most active in this area. The projects include Vocational Training Centers, Reforestation, Health Clinics, School Construction, Home Gardens, Orphanages, Recreational Facilities, Housing and Guinea Pigs.

The beneficiaries of the majority of these projects are, for the most part, from the low middle income bracket. The economic level ranges from the very poor families in Rio and Pueblo Jovenes in

Lima to middle income areas outside of Sao Paulo and Guatemala. In the poorer areas the Scouts are involved in School Construction, Housing and Medical Clinics. These projects seem to be based on sound community development theories and are genuinely supported by the community. There is little evidence of community involvement in the many reforestation projects. Though they are important, it would be difficult to label them as authentic community development efforts.

The commitment to the philosophy of community development is evident among the Scout leaders. They are well prepared and are anxious to follow up on theory they receive in the workshops. In some countries they have initiated follow on sessions to interchange opinions and discuss problems they encounter in the implementation of community development projects. Problems such as paternalism are frequently cited as obstacles and openly discussed at these sessions. Scout commitment to community development is strong in Brazil and Peru, less so in Guatemala and weak in Honduras.

Community Development Workshops and Materials

Selected Representatives from each country that I visited had participated in Community Development Workshops either on International or National levels. Regional workshops in Brazil are also common. The numbers trained from the community development workshops, to date, range from 25 to 120. They are for a 3 day duration and have been quite enthusiastically received. The country leaders of the community development workshop seemed to be well trained and have a good grasp of community development.

The Community Development materials produced and distributed by the Scouts Regional Director in Peru are on (1) Nutrition (2) Alphabetization (3) Home Economics (4) Appropriate Technology. Each country upon receiving these materials has the responsibility of reproducing and distributing them to their respective leaders. Brazil is in the process of translating the community development pamphlets to Portuguese. Guatemala selects certain articles to be incorporated in their monthly bulletin. Whereas in Honduras there is no means at the present to distribute the material. There is no question that the expense involved has hampered the effective distribution of the community development material. An attempt has been made to distribute the materials through the different Ministries of Education. It is difficult to say whether this effort will be successful.

Three year plans for community development have been drawn up in both Peru and Brazil. Guatemala is about to do this but as of yet haven't. Honduras to date does not have any long-range country community development plans.

Financial Resources Available to the Scouts

The Scouts have a very impressive track-record regarding fund raising. In all countries without exception this one aspect seems to be the most successful. Raffles, Bazzars, door-to-door canvassing, scout shops, personal contributions along with government subsidies provide the scouts with a good income. In Brazil and Peru some of this money is used as seed capital to initiate Community Development Projects.

The Scouts in Latin America have had limited contact with International Donor Agencies. A.I.D. and C.I.D.A. to date have been the principal donors. A Community Development Project in Honduras involving Vocational Education has been highly successful. Funding from C.I.D.A. will terminate this year and if an alternate source is not found, part of the school will be closed. The scouts attempt, to institutionalize the community development projects in which they are involved, has met with limited success. Those community development projects where the scouts come from the same community in which they work seem to receive more financial support from the community and have a better chance of becoming self sufficient.

Over the years the Scouts have had little contact with the various USAID's in Latin America. Most were unaware, up until recently, that the Scouts have received any assistance from A.I.D. whatsoever. The USAID people with whom I spoke were interested in the Scout efforts to become involved in Community Development and are anxious to hear of their progress. In general I found that the USAID's are open to the Scouts and would assess whatever projects that were presented on their own merits. Nicaragua is presently negotiating an OPG with the scouts.

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OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Scout Movement offers many opportunities and advantages to low-middle income youth of Latin America.
- The Scouts, as an Organization, are highly regarded.
- Scout activity in Community Development is not widely known.
- High degree of commitment to Community Development among Scout Leadership.
- Guatemala as a target country for accelerated Community Development activities is not a good choice.
- Paternalism is the major obstacle to Scout involvement in Community Development.
- Scouts should take more advantage of the social services they traditionally offer in order to gain entree into communities.
- More emphasis on Community Development follow up.
- Familiarization of Scout Leadership with USAID's PVO strategy.
- Less elaborate Community Development booklets.

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People Interviewed

Daniel Tagata
Scout Regional Director for Community Development

Ricardo Ortiz
Peruvian Director

Alfredo Graf
President of Peruvian Scouts

Octavio Cabada
Volunteer in Community Development Programs

Francisco Belaunde Terry
President of Parliament

Eduardo Villacorta
Mayor of Lima

Luis Felipe Alarco
Minister of Education

Bob Kramer
USAID/Lima

Renato dos Santos
Sao Paulo Director

Norma Delamo
Community Development Coordinator for Brazil

Ruben Traveres
President of Brazilian Scouts

Juarez Lopez Hauseen
Minister of Social Services

Roberto Correa da Costa
Community Development Specialist

Renato Fleming
Rio Director

Romeu Pires Osorio
Community Development Volunteer

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Raimundo Rocha Filho
U.S. Embassy

Mauricio Elvir
Director in Honduras

Guillermo Idiaquey²
President of Honduran Scouts

Medardo Quiroy
Director in San Pedro

Julio Schotthauer
USAID/Honduras

Jan
USAID/Honduras

Jose Pinto
Director in Guatemala

Juan Nieman
President in Guatemala

Marta de Pineda
Community Development Coordinator in Guatemala

Mike Hutson
Program and Training Executive for Central America

Eliseo Carasco
USAID/Guatemala

Tom Sterkel
USAID/Guatemala

GROUP INTERVIEWS

Interviewed Scouts in all four countries

Interviewed C.D. Leaders in Sao Paulo, Brazilia, Rio and Lima

Interviewed C.D. Project Directors in all four countries

Interviewed Members of Inter-American Scout Commission

Interviewed Ministry of Agriculture & Education officials in
Peru and Honduras