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98909

Defining Global-Local Linkages between Business, Economics and Civil Society (BEACS)

Final Report

GRANT #FAO-G-00-97-00033-00

**Mercy Corps International and
The Coalition for Christian Colleges & Universities**

Executive Summary

Mercy Corps International, in partnership with the Coalition for Christian Colleges & Universities, worked with a core group of 15 faculty from CCCU institutions to design, create, review, pilot test and produce 1200 copies of supplementary curriculum material entitled *Civil Society A Foundation for Sustainable Development*. The core group gathered for two workshops during the year in order to gain greater understanding of the subject matter, select module topics and discuss the content of the five modules. The resulting 135-page text was distributed to 710 economics, business, political science and international affairs faculty in the 91 CCCU member institutions. Additional copies were distributed to members of the development community.

The participating faculty and staff took the project into the classrooms on campuses of the CCCU by incorporating the material in many of their courses, and through 13 formal presentations and 5 articles. In their communities across the US, the core team presented project concepts through presentations to 4 church groups and 5 community groups, a radio broadcast, and 11 newspaper articles. Nine academic presentations and 7 academic publications related to the project are completed or scheduled. The project will reach the development community through distribution of the textbooks and articles, presentations and website.

Narrative Description of Project Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 Develop and Disseminate Curriculum Materials

Goal 1, Objective 1 -- Organize Project Workshops

Project staff selected, by application process, 15 faculty from 14 CCCU colleges and universities from across the United States to participate in the project and to author the curriculum modules. Each participant was provided with a large packet of published articles and working papers to be used as reference materials and reading on the subject.

The core faculty gathered at an initial workshop in November 1997 in Portland, Oregon. This workshop included orientation to civil society and the linkages to economics and business, exploration of the subject, selection of topics for the modules, and the assignment of working groups and topics. Two outside consultants joined the group via a telephone hook-up. The participants decided to make each 3-member team multi-disciplinary.

A second workshop was held April 17-19, 1998 in Techny, Illinois (Chicago) The time at this workshop was used to further coordinate and refine ideas, review and revise the draft modules Faculty expressed the importance of time to meet face-to-face with others in their groups to further revise the drafts The time was also used to share outreach activities and to identify and select faculty to co-author articles and make presentations at professional meetings Feedback from the faculty indicated that the interaction and constructive comments given at this workshop was very useful in the writing of the modules Some expressed frustration at the difficulties of writing in a group, although many also indicated that the multidisciplinary nature of the teams exposed them to new ideas and valuable professional relationships

Goal 1, Objective 2 -- Curriculum Modules

Participating faculty worked at least 1,549 hours over the course of the project to research, write and revise the curriculum modules Each module underwent an extensive review both internally by project staff, and by outside faculty members and other participants First drafts were initially reviewed by project staff and revisions made by the faculty The drafts were then reviewed by three other project participants, as well as two outside faculty members from different disciplines The review comments were passed back to the groups and the drafts further revised

Three of the modules were also pilot tested in six different classrooms (The other modules were not tested because drafts were not available early enough in the semester See Lessons Learned #1c) Each student was given a pre-test prior to reading the modules, and a post-test and questionnaire after the module was taught The instructing faculty was asked to complete a questionnaire as well The tests indicated that the students had increased their knowledge on the topics presented Most felt that the information was useful and pertinent to their studies In particular, many commented that the case studies and exercises were especially helpful In addition, some of the exercises and material were tested in classrooms by the authors themselves before the material made it into the final document

At the second workshop in April, each group made a presentation of their module and received feedback from the other participants This workshop was important to improve consistency, standardize definitions and fill in gaps The modules were re-written after this input and final drafts were submitted to Mercy Corps

Staff at Mercy Corps International supplemented the text with case studies drawing from its own experience, as well as that of other organizations Discussion questions and participatory exercises were developed for each module to enhance the impact of the text

The resulting 135-page text contains five modules that can be used together or independently in the classroom The text has been distributed to 710 business, economics, political science and international relations faculty at the 91 CCCU schools Additional copies are being distributed to members of the development community and other educational institutions

Goal 1, Objective 3 -- Outreach Within the CCCU

The faculty participants promoted the curriculum modules by creating a higher level of interest, discussion and understanding of the linkages between economic development and civil society within the CCCU member campuses and communities

Faculty surpassed the project goal of 10 classroom and campus presentations by sharing the project in 11 classrooms (230 students) and 2 campus symposiums (120 students) Several more presentations are scheduled for the upcoming academic year, including a presentation of the material at the Russian-American Christian University The Coalition reported on the project to all its members through two articles in its newsletter, which has a circulation of approximately 5,000 people By grant-end, only three articles (goal 10) were written for other campus publications, although more are expected to be published following the recent publication of the text

The information will be easily accessible through a summary of the chapters in the text that will be posted on the CCCU website in October 1998

Several of the faculty based their interim ("J" terms) and spring semester coursework around project concepts One faculty member based his January course on examining poverty by introducing an exercise on trying to determine existing levels of civil society and social capital and figuring out how you can create civil society, in order to reduce poverty Another introduced civil society as a key concept in his course as a result of this project His January term course for next year will look closely at the role NGOs play in developing and promoting civil society

Goal 2 -- Promote Public Dialogue

Goal 2, Objective 1 -- Business and Public Outreach

From the inception of the project, there was good coverage in the local media Eleven articles were placed in local and regional newspapers (with an average circulation of 30,000) describing the project and relating the importance of civil society and economic development to the local community

The topic was particularly well-addressed in a town hall in Kankakee, Illinois where a panel consisting of a faculty member, the county clerk who had also monitored elections overseas, and the vice president of a local company which worked in many foreign countries addressed the importance of civil society, the rule of law and their application to business and democratic society The event was covered in the local press and also covered on local cable TV

A second town hall was held in Huntington, Indiana for 42 area business people and students In this case, the participating faculty member incorporated material from the project and tailored his talk to relating a situation in a developing country to that of the local community The audience was quite interested and asked for a carry-on discussion to continue at a later date

Additional town halls, originally envisioned in the proposal, were not completed for several reasons. First of all, the academic year was well underway by the time the faculty were selected and started in on the project and it was "late" to get anything scheduled on the academic calendar. Moreover, since they were researching, writing, editing and reviewing the modules in addition to their other classroom and campus responsibilities, faculty simply did not have time to carry out such a large organizing project. In the course of the project it became clear that faculty could not organize an event of this size without substantial institutional support. Despite early promises to participate, institutional support was lacking for that type of effort. One faculty member was specifically told not to schedule such an event in order to avoid conflict with events that the college had planned. In the final project evaluation, several faculty members suggested that such a large outreach event should be placed at the end of this project, after the modules had been produced and they had had the time to better master the topic and could present the material well. This would also enable sufficient advance planning to coordinate with other campus events and schedules. Unfortunately, the project timeframe was too short to organize town halls after the modules were published.

Despite this shortfall, the faculty have reached out to the community in other ways originally not envisioned by the project staff but which have had a very strong impact. Using existing networks and venues to speak on the topic, the enthusiastic faculty made at least ten (10) presentations in community groups reaching at least 350 people. These have included meetings with local business leaders (2), church groups (4), a high school forum, a civic group, and a community development organization. In addition, one faculty discussed the topic on a radio show.

Goal 2 Objective 2 -- Academic Presentations and Publications

Once again, the grant period of 12 months did not offer a much lead time to get proposals scheduled and accepted in order to complete all of the academic presentations. At grant end there had been two (goal of three) presentations completed.

One faculty participant used ideas generated by the project as a basis for his presentation at the University of Economics and Finance in St. Petersburg, Russia. His audience, which included people from the business community, professors, students, representatives from the Russian Orthodox Church, the Mayor's Office and the St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly, were very receptive to the ideas he presented. He also made two speeches at a conference on business ethics in St. Petersburg on related topics. His presentations were so successful that he has been invited back for additional seminars on civil society linkages to business and economics.

Participation in the project by another faculty member led him to apply for and receive a research grant to investigate civil society and the third world. An outcome of his interest and research has been that he has organized a conference to bring together academics and the NGO practitioners on the topic of "Christian Faith and Third World Development: NGOs and the Promotion of Civil Society" for the spring of 2000.

In addition to what has been completed, there are at least 8 presentations scheduled to take place over the next year. These include presentations to the Association of Christian Economists (January 1999), and the Christian Business Faculty Association (October 1998).

Although there has been only one professional paper published to date, most of the papers presented at the professional meetings will be published by the professional associations. In total, seven project-related articles are expected to be published.

Goal 2 Objective 3 - Presentations and Publications in the Development Community

- The project has been described in two articles in the development education publication *Ideas and Information* (circulation 150), one during the early stages of the project (December 1997) and the second to be published November 1998.
- Mercy Corps' Director of Civil Society, Dr. Kim Maynard, made a presentation about civil society and development at the May 1998 InterAction Forum. While not specifically focused on the BEACS project, her presentation did touch on many of the concepts and ideas in the curriculum modules.
- A presentation by Lowell Ewert, Project Consultant, about the project, the principles of civil society and their relation to relief and development is scheduled for the Association for Evangelical Relief and Development (AERDO) conference in October 1998.
- Lowell Ewert has also been named by CIVICUS (a worldwide consortium of organizations interested in and working on civil society issues, of which Mercy Corps is also a member) to a five-member team from the US and Canada that is charged with developing a "code of conduct which defines a framework of overarching values and general guidelines for the conduct of CIVICUS members individually and as members of civil society organizations." This ethical code will define how NGOs and civil society organizations should relate to their constituencies, to other NGOs, and to the "state." CIVICUS has endorsed the three principles of civil society (participation, accountability and peaceable change) as developed by Mercy Corps and discussed (theory and application) in the modules.
- The Mercy Corps civil society team is planning on using a large portion of one or more of the modules in a new Civil Society Handbook that is being developed for use by all Mercy Corps staff worldwide and may be shared with other relief and development organizations.
- Mercy Corps plans to publicize the project with relief and development agencies, government agencies and its donors through information on its own website and through a mailing of the curriculum to approximately 100 other agencies (to be completed in October 1998).

Lessons Learned

The BEACS project was the first formal development education program undertaken by Mercy Corps International. In addition, it was the first project undertaken by the CCCU with an outside

agency As such, both organizations had the opportunity to learn a great deal through the process and will hopefully benefit in the future from this new awareness

1 Timeframe

- a *The Learning Curve* While many of the faculty who worked on the project had significant exposure to development and/or the basic concepts behind civil society, all were challenged by new ideas and linkages presented by the project There was a significant learning curve to be achieved (through the first workshop and additional research) which was not fully anticipated in the project design In addition, because of the multidisciplinary nature of the group, different definitions and approaches had to be considered and some consensus achieved before the final drafts were written

As a result of this learning curve, the modules produced were somewhat more general in nature than was originally envisioned However, given the newness of some of the ideas presented and the multidisciplinary audience sought, this may actually have been of benefit Many of the faculty would have liked to have had the opportunity to delve deeper on specific linkages/issues (and may indeed do so with their own research) Having a second project year would have enabled additional writing and research in these areas

- b *The Academic Year and Setting* Working closely with the faculty required an understanding and respect for the academic calendar Because the beginning of the grant year coincided with the academic year, project start up (faculty recruitment, project manager recruitment/hiring, 1st workshop preparation) had to be accomplished immediately More importantly, some faculty had difficulty placing additional campus outreach events (town halls, symposia) on the calendar Similarly, we learned that academic associations frequently issue a call for papers/presentation proposals a full year before the planned conference As a result, it was too late to get the faculty scheduled to speak at key forums during the grant year As we note above, however, many have submitted papers and plan to make presentations during the coming year Mercy Corps and other non-academic organizations must fully appreciate the longer-term planning and greater bureaucracy typical of universities when planning this type of project
- c *Module Production* Partly due to timing issues and partly due to regular workloads, faculty found it difficult to spend significant time drafting the modules while classes were in session (although many did a great deal of reading and research on their topics during the first semester) Most of the actual writing on the project occurred during breaks between courses In addition, many of the faculty found it somewhat difficult to write in teams, particularly in combination with tight publication deadlines As a result, deadlines were repeatedly pushed back to accommodate these constraints This made it difficult to fully benefit from a full peer review and pilot testing process, both of which could have added more to the final product than they did

In their final project evaluations, the faculty made several suggestions on how to overcome this problem Several suggested that the faculty should be given stipends, dependent on timely completion of the drafts Some suggested holding a 5-10 day

“summer institute” where the faculty would have time to discuss the concepts in depth, conduct additional research, and work independently or together on drafts. Others suggested assigning one faculty to do the writing of a module, with others giving input. Another idea was to create a detailed outline together, and then have a few writers create the text. One more suggestion was to have a core group write the foundational module first, then get the larger group involved in writing the remaining sections, using this first one as a base.

- d. *Outreach Activities* The conflicting academic and project schedules also impacted the outreach activities that could be completed. Presentations and publications that require a long lead time could not be completed before the end of the grant, although many have been scheduled and will occur post-grant. Faculty found it difficult (at best) to focus attention on research and writing and undertake the outreach activities originally envisioned. In addition, because of the newness of these concepts, some of the faculty were hesitant to engage in public presentations of this material before having mastered it themselves. Nevertheless, it is a testimony to the enthusiasm and commitment of the core team that so many outreach activities were completed within the project year – and many more are planned for the coming year.

Recommendation A two-year cycle would have improved the product and significantly enhanced the project’s overall impact. After completing the modules at the end of the first year, the curriculum could then be thoroughly pilot tested and revised during the second year. A third workshop at the mid-point of the second year would have enabled the faculty to further question and revise their modules. In addition, additional outreach activities would have been possible and faculty would have had more time to devote to these activities, once most of the writing had been completed. On a more emotive note, many of the faculty have fully immersed themselves into the project and would have like to have seen it continue another year in order to feel a greater sense of completion (and certainly a less rushed conclusion). We are hopeful that new projects envisioned by the CCCU will continue to engage them in this valuable dialogue.

2. Multidisciplinary teams The faculty chose to break up into multidisciplinary writing groups, instead of creating teams of writers from the same field. In the final project evaluation, almost all of the faculty commented that although writing in teams was quite a challenge to them, it was also academically stimulating. Many applauded the open, collegial environment of the workshops. Some have chosen to continue these alliances and work on projects together after grant end.
3. Partnership The partnership between Mercy Corps and CCCU was cited by the faculty as a good merging of academia and practice. The faculty and their institutions were familiar and comfortable with the CCCU. One of the greatest benefits of the BEACS project was the development of networks within the CCCU. As a result, additional new initiatives are planned, including an institute on Biblical Justice to be held during the summer of 1999 and a conference on “Christian Faith and Third World Development: NGOs and the Promotion of Civil Society” which is tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2000. This type of project and theme lends easily to a multidisciplinary approach and may lead to additional

partnerships/collaborations with other relief and development organizations. All of the faculty indicated in their final evaluations that the project topic (civil society and its linkages to business, economics and development) was highly relevant and of great interest to them and to many of their department colleagues.

- 4 Community Presentations Presentations to existing smaller community groups, such as Rotary Clubs or church study groups, may be a more effective way to present very complex ideas to a broader audience. Faculty felt very comfortable tapping into existing groups with their presentations and actively sought out these opportunities. These smaller fora also permitted tailoring of the topics so as to be more immediately accessible by the audiences. In addition, they may have facilitated more open dialogue and discussion on the key concepts and ideas. Holding a town hall, on the other hand, requires significant organizational time and effort and faculty were unable to complete this activity. In addition, such public events often require “headliners” to attract large numbers of attendees. Additional funding for outreach activities may have assisted in this area.
- 5 Funding Level The funding level was adequate for the project activities completed. Additional funding may have led to greater project impact in allowing project staff to travel to campus sights to make additional presentations or to bring in speakers that would attract larger and broader audiences. In addition, if we were to implement the idea of a faculty stipend (as recommended by a number of the core team) in the future, this would require additional funding.

Materials Produced

- 1 *Civil Society: A Foundation for Sustainable Development*
 - 2 *Instructor's Manual for Civil Society: A Foundation for Sustainable Development*
- [Note: The Instructor's Manual was produced with private funds from Mercy Corps International because the core team felt it was important to give instructor's who would be using the curriculum guidance for teaching the material in a Christian setting. No USAID funds were used in the production of this publication.]

Attachments

- 1 *Civil Society: A Foundation for Sustainable Development*
- 2 *Instructor's Guide to Civil Society: A Foundation for Sustainable Development*
- 3 Workshop #2 Agenda
- 4 Summary of Outreach Activities
- 5 Samples of news articles

BEACS WORKSHOP #2
April 17 – 19, 1998
Chicago, Techny Towers

AGENDA

Friday, April 17

- | | | |
|-----------------|--|---------------------|
| 8 00 a m | Breakfast, Japanese Cafeteria | |
| 8 45 a m | Welcome and Re-introductions | |
| 9 15 a m | Devotions | |
| 9 30 a m | Module 1 Foundations
Presentation and Discussion | Steve, Roland, John |
| 10 30 a m | Break | |
| 10 45 a m | Module 2 Development and Economic Fairness
Presentation and Discussion | Bill, Paul, Yvonne |
| 12 00 p m | Lunch, Japanese Cafeteria | |
| 1 30 p m | Outreach 1 Campus & Community Activities, Media
Updates and Planning | |
| 2 00 p m | Module 3 Stewardship
Presentation and Discussion | Jim |
| 3 00 p m | Break | |
| 3 20 p m | Module 4 Global Relations
Presentation and Discussion | Mark, John, Norm |
| 4 30 p m | Module 5 Building Community
Presentation and Discussion | Don, Bob |
| 6 00 p m | Dinner, Indonesian Dining Room | |
| 7 00 p m | Group or Team work (as needed) | |

Saturday, April 18

- 8 00 a m Breakfast, Japanese Cafeteria
- 8 45 a m Devotions
- 9 00 a m **Overall Module Review**
(Have we left anything out? Form and Content, next steps, etc)
- 10 30 a m Break
- 10 45 a m **Work Teams** – Module review, editing, revisions
- 12 00 p m Lunch, Japanese Cafeteria
- 2 00 p m **Outreach 2 Professional Presentations**
Updates and Planning
- 2 30 p m **Team Reports**, discussion (as needed)
- 3 30 p m Break
- 4 00 p m Work Teams continued
- 6 00 p m Dinner, Indonesian Dining Room

(evening sessions as needed)

Sunday, April 19

- 8 00 a m Breakfast, Japanese Cafeteria
- 8 30 a m Checkout
- 9 00 a m Worship
- 9 30 a m **Discussion Questions & Participatory Exercises**
- 10 30 a m **Closing Thoughts/Workshop Evaluation**
- 12 00 p m Lunch available, Japanese Cafeteria

OUTREACH SUMMARY

Local Newspapers

Goal 10 articles
Actual 11 articles

Coalition Newsletter

Goal 2 articles
Actual 1 article and 1 scheduled

Alumni Magazines and Other Coalition Member Publications

Goal 10 articles
Actual 2 articles completed and 1 pending

Academic and Professional Journal or Publication

Goal 3 articles
Actual 1 article plus 6 articles to be published after presentation at professional conferences

US Human Rights and International Development Membership Organization Publications

Goal 2
Actual 1 article and 2 pending

Presentations to Classes, Faculty, Campus Symposia

Goal 10
Actual 13 presentations and 2 pending

Presentation at Academic or Professional Conference

Goal 5 presentations (3 academic and 2 development)
Actual 2 completed presentations and 8 scheduled presentations

Town Halls

Goal 7 town halls
Actual 2 town halls

Community Presentations

Goal 0
Actual 10 presentations and 2 pending

Panel discussion shows link between economics and civil society

About 20 Olivet Nazarene University students turned out for a town hall meeting consisting of a panel discussion on the relationship between the business community and society

The meeting titled "Building Global-Local Linkages Business, Economics, and a Civil Society", was held March 31, 1998 in the auditorium of the Wisner Hall at ONU

Panelists were Bill Dean, ONU professor and chairman of the history department, Bruce Clark, Kankakee County Clerk, and Harry Simmon, VP and general manager of U S Filter Stranco

The panelists discussed the connections between business and commercial activity and the principles of a civil society, such as citizen participation, respect for human rights, and the rule of law

The meeting was to create more awareness of a project in which a federal agency is spending \$105,000 to help show students and faculty at Christian

colleges and universities the direct link to economic development and civil society

The grant to Mercy Corps International was approved last April by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation Based in Portland, OR, Mercy Corps is a non-profit, humanitarian organization which, since its founding in 1979, has delivered more than \$240 million in assistance to more than 45 nations

The grant is a result of four years of planning by Mercy Corps and the Coalition for Christian Colleges and Universities, a Washington D C -based association of about 90 schools nationally Mercy Corps and participating coalition schools will contribute the balance of the \$274,000 estimated project cost

Mercy Corps and the coalition will jointly develop five college-level curriculum modules that demonstrate the

linkages between economic development and civil society, and explore their relation to U S business interests Through two three-day work shops, a small group of pilot colleges and faculty will help design and produce a work book containing the five curriculum modules This workbook will be disseminated throughout the coalition member schools by Aug , 1998

Some topics discussed during the town hall meeting were, "What evidence have you seen which points to the importance of the "rule of law," as opposed to the arbitrary discretion of the government, as a foundational principle for both free societies and free economies?" and "Can American businesses and other non-governmental organizations promote the respect of basic human rights abroad? If so, how?"

The three panelists used their experiences from traveling aboard to answer the questions

Panelists also answered questions from the audience

Bourbonnais (IL) Herald
April 21, 1998
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Federal Money Spent Wisely

What is the relationship between economics, business politics, and civil society in the development of nations? That's what faculty members from 15 colleges in the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) are trying to find out. They have been brought together by of \$105 000 from the U S Agency for International Development

(USAID) to write curriculum materials for college use

Professor Hoksbergen represented the Department at the initial conference in Portland Oregon in October and is working with two colleagues from Dordt and Taylor on writing the first chapter of the book. 'The whole idea,' says Hoksbergen 'is to help students understand better how a

good society develops and how business plays a central role in that process. Hoksbergen envisions that the forthcoming curriculum modules will be useful in international business, economic development, and Third World development classes. The modules are scheduled for classroom testing this coming Spring semester



Area educators develop links on human rights, economics

By Mark Harper
The Journal Gazette

News accounts last week of Jiang Zemin's visit to Washington spotlighted issues on which the United States and China are in agreement and contentious.

China's president delivered words that struck a chord with Americans when he said China would continue moving toward democracy and a more open economy.

But his refusal to give ground on human rights concerns raised by President Clinton revealed a fundamental rift.

A group of U.S. college educators, including two area professors, has joined with Mercy Corps International to better understand how principles of democracy — such as human rights — are linked to business and economics.

Next week, Jim O'Donnell of Huntington College and Stephen Hoffmann of Taylor University will begin a yearlong curriculum development project.

They will be among 15 Christian college educators nationwide traveling to Portland, Ore., to kick off the

project titled "Defining Global-Local Linkages Between Business, Economics and Civil Society." The project is a collaboration between Mercy Corps International, a non-profit humanitarian agency, and the Coalition for Christian Colleges and Universities, an association of 91 colleges and universities.

A \$105,000 federal grant is financing the effort.

The Christian and capitalist perspective is that "open economies are kinder and gentler on human beings than other systems," said O'Donnell, associate professor of business and executive-in-residence at Huntington College.

That idea is embraced by most Americans, O'Donnell said.

Part of the project's goal is to develop a better understanding of how business, economics and civil society are interrelated, then translate that idea to people in burgeoning democracies.

According to Denise Crum, program manager for the college coalition, the links are not understood by international development agencies.

That leads to a separation between economic development and civil society principles, such as the

value of free and unimpeded participation in social matters by citizens, Crum said.

"This resulting separation of economic development activities and democratic initiatives is not only unnecessary, it is counterproductive and leads to less effective development," Crum said.

O'Donnell and Hoffmann said they hope the curriculum they help develop can have an effect in the United States and abroad.

Hoffmann, a professor of political science, said it is important to understand the cynicism of Americans and how businesses can help promote citizens' interests in civic matters.

The curriculum can also be a tool to help business leaders in other parts of the world see the links.

In the fall of 1993, Hoffmann taught political philosophy to students at a university in Nizhni Novgorod (formerly Gorki), Russia.

The growing cynicism among Russian citizens stems not from democracy, but the economic situation, he said.

"You can't have a democracy if that attitude festers."

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