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Small Enterprise Advisory Services (SEAS) Project

Final Report

April 1st, 1992 - August 31st, 1992

CARE International in Swaziland
SEAS Project Status Report

USAID Co-operative Agreement
No. 645-0232-A-00-0013-00

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I. Administrative Information

A. Small Enterprise Advisory Services (SEAS) Project
CARE International

B. USAID Cooperative Agreement - No. 645-0232-A-00-0013-00

C. August 31, 1992
Covers the period - April 1, 1992 - August 31, 1992

II. Project Overview

The goal of the SEAS project is to improve the social and economic well-being of the poorer people of Swaziland. We attempt to accomplish our goal through services to indigenous partner organisations who provide assistance to small entrepreneurs. Through the institutional development of these organisations we ultimately aim to impact the economically disadvantaged people outside the formal economy in small scale enterprise development.

Specific outputs of the SEAS project are: stronger partner organisations through management and staff development, plus assistance in reviewing organisational structures from the view of effective delivery of services. The project makes available to our partner organisations technical services and training specifically in the areas of computer use and systems and the publication of business management and technical training materials.

III. Project Performance for the Period

This report covers the five month period from April 1st to August 31st, 1992 and effectively ends SEAS project activities. Most of the activities planned for this period were completed and all activities covered in the SEAS project workplan have been finished.

The following is a narrative summary of activities undertaken with each partner organisation during the period.

Asikhutulisane - Paul Hebert of the International Executive Service Corps (IESC) was available to the Credit union for five weeks in June and July. During his stay Mr. Hebert reviewed the performance of Asikhutulisane vis-a-vis the 5 year strategic plan developed in May 1991. The C.U. has displayed predicted growth in assets and memberships and is progressing per the plans. Some shortcomings were noted in Mr. Hebert's report which were pointed out to the staff and board during training sessions. Mr. Hebert spent considerable time in discussion with the General Manager regarding opportunities for career development. The general feeling about

Asikhutulisane is that they are a successful indigenous organisation which still has room to grow and has the necessary skills and resources to be sustainable without outside assistance[1].

BMEP - CARE's involvement with BMEP during this period was quite extensive and we feel, quite productive. CARE sponsored a consultancy involving the Institute for Social and Economic Development from Iowa, USA which resulted in the development of a five year strategic plan for BMEP. The plan was well received by USAID, BMEP and CARE and now serves as the core of a new proposal for funding. Many aspects of the plan are already implemented.

A CARE Training Advisor has been seconded to BMEP during the entire period covered here. He has made many significant contributions to BMEP in terms of programming, evaluation and assessment and staff training. Additionally he added an element of leadership and maturity to which the young staff of BMEP responded favourably. The SEAS Training Advisor will remain at BMEP until the project agreement expires on October 15th.

A CARE Advisor has spent half-time with BMEP during this period developing extension methodology and staff development.

In recent weeks much progress has been made in developing a systematic approach to extension work but during the early part of this reporting period extension had a lower priority and therefore progress was slow. BMEP recognises that extension is the weaker segment of its total programming efforts and is now responding to the need for improved services.[2]

Home Economics - The focus of CARE's involvement with Home Economics during this period was the development and strengthening of the organisation in delivery of services to clients. The CARE Advisor spent many hours working with the staff of Home Economics on a five step, client centered organisational development program. The program leads the organisation to focus first on service delivery meeting client needs and defining their role and structure accordingly. Much progress was made and the process is on-going. But as is always the case with Home Economics they are subject to many organisationally imposed disruptions which make it difficult for them to commit time and resources to the extent desired to complete the organisational development process. Other activities with Home Economics, principally lesson plans for income generation, and the ZAP-1 loan scheme are essentially finished.[3]

BWAS - The revolving loan scheme became operational in December 1991. During this reporting period CARE's involvement with BWAS was to monitor the loan scheme, provide services when asked, and to sponsor an audit of the scheme after six months of activity. The audit was to be the key indicator of action to be taken on

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1 see - "Asikhutulisane Savings and Credit Society,"Report Paul Hebert, June 1 - July 8, 1992

2 see - Appendix - "Final Report: Training Activities with BMEP" - Dan Mullins August 1992

3 see - Appendix - " Final Report: Training Activities with Home Economics" - Dan Mullins August 1992

the disposition of the second tranche of money earmarked for the fund. Unfortunately, the audit displays poor fund performances and lack of organisation controls.

Recent conversations with USAID, the original donor, confirm that the second tranche should not be added to the fund but instead used to assist BWAS develop a stronger organisation better equipped to service the needs of its members. The responsibility for control of the fund and directing the organisational development efforts will be entrusted to the Swazi Business Growth Trust per instructions of USAID.

NGO Assembly - The 5 step organisation development plan developed by CARE is to be carried forward by the co-ordinating council of the NGO Assembly following CARE's depart from Swaziland.

CARE has worked through the process with the Assembly in view of their services to clients. In addition staff of the Assembly have been trained to present the plan to other organisations. This activity will become a regular part of the Assembly's offerings and will be a beneficial service to its members.[4]

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4 see Appendix- "Final Report: Training Activities with the Assembly of NGOs" - Dan Mullins, August 1992

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6		
Project Outputs	Cumulative Progress From Beginning of Project		Progress During Reporting Period April 1 1992 - August 31, 1992		Planned Progress for next Reporting Period	Date Action to be Completed	Person(s) Responsible For Action
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual			
Improve service delivery of partner organizations	***Asikhutulisane***						
	Improve communciation to members	Design and produce 4 educational booklets "Lending Policy and Guidelines" "Membership Benefits "Common Q & A on credit unions" "Credit union philosophy Nov 1991 Produce credit unions newsletter Nov 91			No further activities planned		
	Improve computerised financial management system	*System developed* 350 hours format staff training Follow-up on program implementation and staff training 20 additional hours of training provided					
	Assist with the development of lending Policies and Procedures	IESC Consultancy Re: loan policies and collections and collections May 1991	Review adherance to policies	Reviewed June 1992 see Hebert report			
	Assist with the development of investment Policies and reset management.	Policies developed Property appraisals conducted	Review adherance to policies	Reviewed June 1992 see Hebert report			
	Home Economics: Improve training skills of Home Economic officers	Seas/Home Ec working groups formed June 1991 Attended and documented all courses offered to Zenzele groups Three 5 day workshops conducted on "Design of Income Generation projects					

Part III - Project Implementation Report April 1 - August 31, 1992

SEAS Project NO. 645-0232-A-00-0013-00

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	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual			
	Improve training skills of Home Economic officers (cont.)	12 instruction units written and field tested Fourteen workshops conducted in "Sewing Machine Maintenance and Repair" (179 participants) Published Marketing Game for staff and field training					
	Assist Home Ec. to develop small business loan scheme and savings club	Policies and Procedures developed. Forms developed. Established ZAP-1 Board of Trustees. Workshops held for training Home Ec officers	Continued assistance to loan scheme	Two workshops (20 participants) trained in loan scheme management			
		Integrate Loan Scheme Admin into Business Management Training Presented loan scheme to Zenzele groups First loan issued March 1992	Management review of organziation mission and goals Review of service delivery process	Two meetings held with Home Ec management staff			
	Organziation review based on service delivery to customers	Management review of organziation mission and goals Review of service delivery process	Mission statement, Goals and objectives set	5 step organisational process implemented with Home Economics			
	BMEP: Extension skills of BMEP staff	Needs assessment by CARE Advisor Four day workshop on extension methodology Staff training in extension methods	Develop a systematic process for training	Systematic Extension process developed and implemented			

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	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual			
Management Development for Partner Organizations	Improve training skills of BMEP staff	CARE training advisor assigned full-time to BMEP	Needs assessment evaluation of full-time program design of specific training activities for rural groups		CARE Training Advisor will remain until Oct 15, 1992		
	Study policies and procedures and recommend improvements in loan program	Needs assessment and evaluation "A study of small business loan scheme BMEP" completed June 1991	Consult on loan program	Activity completed			
	Assist with the development of BMEP Resource Centre	CARE sponsored tour to 6 organizations in S.A.					
		Trained BMEP staff in use of Resource Centre and other SED Resources					
		Resource Centre Database System developed, data entered staff trained February 1992	Additional coaching in database system as required	Activity completed			
	BMEP improve staff computer skills	280 Hours of formal training (4 people) on MS-DOS, Lotus, Wordperfect)	additional coaching as required	Activity completed			
		16 hours Desk-Top Publishing training	additional coaching as required	Activity completed			
		12 hours of DBase coaching 192 hours informal training	additional coaching as required	Activity completed			
		Turbo-cash financial package installed, staff trained and data entered					
	BWAS: Improve access to credit for women entrepreneurs through a revolving loan fund	Developed policies and administrative procedures	Develop policies and procedures	Published Dec. 1991			

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Management Development of Partner Organziations	***BWAS:*** Improve access to credit for women entrepreneurs through a revolving loan fund (cont.)	Train board and credit committees 80 hours of board of credit committee training Disbursed E 64,000 (50,000 loan fund) Loans issued (50,000) Office Manager hired Jan 1992	Audit of Loan Fund	Audit completed July 1992	Plan disposition of second traunch with USAID		
	Asikhutulisane: Board training	3 days workshop conducted for 11 board members	IESC Consultancy	Completed Hebert Report July 1992			
	Computer training for Manager	74 hours formal training in DOS, Lotus, Wordperfect and dBase					
	Investigate management training opportunities	36 hours training in graphics, and Desk-top publishing					
		Investigate consultancy as an approach to on-the-job management training	consultancy through IESC	complete			
	Develop 5 year strategic plan	Plan developed May 1991	Review progress on strategic plan	IESC consultant review completed sec Hebert Report July 1992			
	Home Economics: Computerization of management systems	Equipment donated to Home Ec July 1992					
		Two training sessions held Sept 1992 on use of computers					
	Management training in improving organization effectiveness	Four sessions (11 people each) Focussing on systematic methods for improving organizations	Revised Mission Statement Formulate Goals and Objectives Review structure and delivery process	in process			

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	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual			
	BMEP:						
	Board of Directors development	Discussed roles/responsibilities Technical issues	role and composition of the board will be evaluated				
		Present board with a performance management system					
	Develop a 5 year strategic plan a 20 day consultancy for the development of the plan	Presented to AID March 1992					
		Institute for social and economic development made a study of BMEP and its future role in SED Swaziland					
	Develop appropriate management information systems	assessment of accounting needs completed comercial software installed	Turbo cash installed data entered and staff trainied study management requirements for info	activities complete			
	Develop MIS system for training and extension reporting		study process of data collection	activities complete			
			develop appropriate system for reporting	activities complete			
	BWAS:						
	Training of Board, staff and credit committees on management of revolving loan schemes	Five meetings were held on policies, procedures for operating a credit program			Remaining traunche to SBGT for BWAS Organisational Development		
Establish a SEAD network	Coordinating committee organized through the assembly of NGOs	Coordinating committee organized through the assembly of NGOs	Guide Assembly of NGOs Board through development process methodologies in the SEAD	Assembly has been trained and is using the process with other organisations			
	Hold Networking Seminars	Networking seminars held on "sustainability of NGOs held in August 1991 55 participants from 2 organizations	offer organisational development services to NGOs as required assistance to NGOs				

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	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual			
Production and distribution of technical and business management training materials		Three small group sessions held (10 participants each) to identify areas for possible interventions in SED Begin intitutional development assistance to NGOs Provide development assistance to NGOs where appropriate					
	Development of Asikhutulisane's ability to disseminate materials						
	Design and publish informational pamphlets and newsletter	Design and publish informational pamphlets and newsletter 4 pamphlets produced and newsletter Train manager on Desk-top publishing					
	Produce Home Economics Business Training Guides	Developed and field tested 12 training guides	Finalise 12 training guides	Published and Distributed			
	Produce educational pamphlets						
		Sewing machine guides published English and siSwati	Marketing Game adapted and published	Published and Distributed			
		Savings Club Booklets produced	Published Basic Woodworking Tool Maintenance	Published and Distributed			
		ZAP-1 Administrative and Application Handbook produced BWAS Administrative Handbook produced					

SEAS Project Status Report - April 1st , 1991- August 31st, 1992

Summary of Formal / Informal Training

Subject	Dates	Number of People Trained	Hours of Classroom Instruction	Hours of Classroom Practical	Total Training Person/Hours
Asikhutulisane Savings and Credit Co-operative Society					
Credit Management & Loan Delinquency Control	Jun-92	15	6		90
BMEP					
Development Extension Process	2-Apr 14-15 July 21-Jul 28-Jul 11-Aug	5	48		240
Computer Accounting Training & Coaching	April - May	3	160		480
Home Economics					
Loan Scheme Training ZAP-1	April & July 92	5	16		80
Organisational Development Process	29-30 April 10-11 June 20-Jun	8	40		320
Business Management Training	12-Aug	20	3		60
Assemby of NGOs					
Credit & Savings Schemes (4 organisations represented)	25-Jun	7	4		28
Organisational Development	27-28 May	6	16		96
	16-17 June	6	16		96
	29-Jun	3	8		24
	14-Jul	3	8		24
	21-Jul	3	8		24
	27-Jul	20		8	160
	30-31 July	20		16	320
	6-Aug	3	8		24
	13 - 14 August	40		10	400
	27-Aug	3	8		24

IV. Implementation Issues

Our experiences in organisational development have convinced us that two major obstacles to developing strong organisation tend to go unrecognized.

The first obstacle falls out of the organisational structure and focus which is frequently not optimized, and in fact sometime opposes, the delivery of services to customers. An organisation which may appear strong, well staffed and funded, can be marginally effective when viewed from a customer focus.

The second obstacle to organisation building which we have encountered falls out of an inappropriate leadership style to what the situation demands. To address these issues the following activities were initiated.

Action	Date Action Completed	Person(s) Responsible for Actions	Status
Develop a process for organisational self assessment based on service delivery to clients	Outline developed April 14, 1992	Project Manager and Training Advisor - SEAS	Complete
	Instructional units developed and tested May 15, 1992	Project Manager and Training Advisor - SEAS	Complete
	Train staff of NGO Assembly to present instructions to their members June 15, 1992	Project Manager and Training Advisor - SEAS	On-going
Develop instructional units and self assessment on situational leadership theory	Outline developed June 15, 1992	Project Manager and Training Advisor - SEAS	Incomplete
	Instructional units developed and tested July 15, 1992	Project Manager and Training Advisor - SEAS	Incomplete
	Train staff of NGO Assembly for presentation to their members Aug 1, 1992	Project Manager and Training Advisor - SEAS	Incomplete

V. Conclusion

Thus ends the activities of the Small Enterprise Advisory Services of CARE Swaziland. We have finished the work laid out in the workplan and one can point to certain successes. But was the project a success? Was it an effective project? What should have been done differently?

If we subject ourselves to the same scrutiny with which we judged our partner organisations we would in fact find some of the same shortcomings noted in

implementation issues. The SEAS project was predicated on a perception of a need which grew out of STEP project activities. For the most part the project was adequately staffed, funded and the organisation appeared to have the right structure.

Initially the project lacked the client focus necessary to produce customer satisfaction. Although a need was identified and activities undertaken to meet that need our customers didn't quite see it the same way. In some cases they didn't "feel" the need and in fact, did not "want" the services provided. But the "we know what's best" philosophy prevailed and services were provided even though at times the relationships were adversarial a trichotomy developed with strained relationships existing between the project and the donor, and the project and the customer and in some cases between the donor and the end user of our services. This does not spell out a formula for success.

Over time relationships became better. Personal animosities dissipated and some semblance of a cooperative spirit emerged. As the quality of project outputs got better the relationships also grew stronger until at the end of the project SEAS services were being sought out - particularly in areas like publications of technical materials, training program development and the organisation development program aimed at NGOs. Unfortunately a lot of time was lost in the early days of the SEAS project and so we are now just reaching a performance level which should have been reached much earlier.

But there were lessons learned and what we have learned goes to confirm the wisdom of our 5 step client centered organisational development program. The SEAS project, staffed with competent people, well equipped and funded, with a sophisticated, professionally written proposal suffered serious start-up problems because the process was wrong. It should have begun with a client focus and a common goal shared amongst all of the partner organisations. This should have been followed by the development of a strategic plan around the delivery of specific services designed to solve client's problems. The organisations would then be structured accordingly, for the effective delivery of services. It appears that the proposal was in fact a marketing effort designed to get donor funds with clients as an afterthought. The seeds for future problems were cast the day USAID, CARE and the partner organisations jointly agreed on what constitutes a suitable proposal for funding when the intended clients and their needs of were not a part of the process.[6]

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6 see Appendix - "A Client Centered Organizational Development Process" - CARE SEAS Project 1992

CARE International in Swaziland

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To: Dick Ouellette, SEAS Project Manager

From: Dan Mullins, Training and Extension Specialist

Date: 21 August 1992

Subject: Final Report: Training Activities with Business Management Extension Programme

This is my final report summarising our work with the Business Management Extension Programme, and giving a few recommendations for how BMEP could continue to address important issues in the future.

Original Goals of Work with BMEP

The major training activities planned with BMEP, as written in the SEAS Project Proposal, included development of the extension service and of the formal business management training.

Problems

As identified both by BMEP and by CARE, a key constraint to achievement of these goals has been the relationship between formal training and extension within BMEP. The same staff members have been responsible for both, yet, until recently, there was a tendency among staff to view extension and training as distinct, unrelated activities. This was to the extent that, during the first few months of the SEAS project, CARE was directed to work with formal training, but specifically told not to get involved with extension work.

A second obstacle has been the multiple demands on BMEP staff. Given these demands, the lack of experience of some, together with the lack of clear guidelines and procedures, extension officers' time is often not used very efficiently. This has made it hard for us to physically get together as often as would be necessary to develop policies and procedures or to carry out staff develop work.

Major Accomplishments October 1990 - August 1992

- In late 1990 and on several occasions in 1991, SEAS supported BMEP' formal training (Full-Time Programme), with emphasis on simple training techniques, identification of training needs, and development of lesson plans.
- CARE's Regional Technical Advisor for Extension and Communications ran a Extension Methodology workshop in September 1991 for BMEP and staff of other organisations.

- Over the last year and a half, much discussion and effort has been specifically devoted, both by CARE and by BMEP management, to increasing coordination and linkages between training and extension. The attitudes of extension officers seems to have changed, and they no longer appear to view the two as being separate functions. This change in attitude will make future development much easier.
- Recent efforts by BMEP to set aside time specifically for staff development are encouraging. In the last two months, we have held a series of sessions reviewing major assumptions of SED work, development of client selection criteria, overview of a more systematic approach to extension, and initial practice with extension and SED skills.

Recommendations for Future

1. Continue with staff development process. To facilitate this process, BMEP could consider the following suggestions:
    a. Because lack of time is so often brought up as a reason for not proceeding with staff training, I would suggest that all BMEP staff block out one day every two weeks throughout the year to ensure time is guaranteed.
    b. Assign responsibility for staff development to a specific person, such as the Programme Manager. Such a staff development programme could address technical SED skills, extension skills, administrative duties, and so on. The responsible person need not conduct all training him or herself, but would be in charge of ensuring that it happens.
2. Further integrate extension and training functions.
    a. BMEP has made an annual calendar which broadly outlines when formal training would occur. It would be useful to develop a more detailed monthly (or even weekly) calendar, detailing how extension officers are expected to carry out multiple duties simultaneously. For example, EOs will continue to visit extension clients, while also conducting needs assessment for FTPs, helping with training, and evaluating FTPs. In the midst of delivering all these services, there are internal administrative duties, reports to write, meetings to attend, etc. A detailed monthly calendar could help BMEP identify and avoid conflicts before they arise.
    b. As already planned by BMEP, a new position of Training Officer would enable extension officers to focus on their primary task of extension, yet still serve as resource persons for formal training. Such a new position, rather than cutting training off from extension, could actually help with the integration efforts. Different staff could focus on particular things, but the key role of the Programme Manager would be to coordinate the two so that all their efforts are mutually supportive, from identifying clients' needs, through provision of consulting or training, to evaluation of impact.

3. Focus on consolidating and strengthening priority areas, before adding new services for clients or new functions for staff. Core staff skills, such as consultancy and training skills and technical SED skills, are involved in most services that BMEP staff deliver. The staff should be given ample time to improve and practice those skills which are currently weak, before they are given expanded or additional tasks - otherwise, they will constantly be playing "catch-up", having to work harder or less effectively because the demands placed on them exceed their abilities.

cc: Mrs. N. Gamedze, Director, Business Management Extension Programme

CARE International in Swaziland

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To: Dick Oullette, SEAS Project Manager

From: Dan Mullins, Training and Extension Specialist

Date: 21 August 1992

Subject: Final Report: Training Activities with Home Economics Section

This is my final report summarising our work with the Home Economics Section of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, and giving a few recommendations for how Home Economics could continue to address important issues in the future.

Original Goals of Work with Home Economics

The major training activities planned with Home Economics included up-grading of staff members' skills in support of income generating (IG) activities, and revision of training guides for use with women running income generation in rural areas.

The approach used by SEAS was to work closely with whoever held primary responsibilitiy within Home Economics for relevant activities.

Problems

Home Economics is a very busy organisation, with multiple programmes plus national duties. Originally, SEAS planned to focus on development of technical skills and resources for use in supporting income generation. However, early in our work, CARE determined that Home Economics' existing programmes and methods of service delivery in fact make it hard for their staff to turn skills upgrading into improved services to clients. Similarly, our strategy of working alongside Home Ec staff, to ensure they were closely involved with and in control of the process of staff up-grading and development of training materials, was difficult to carry out, as it proved hard for Home Ec staff to dedicate time to these jobs. This situation of overloading is exacerbated by frequent demands put on Home Ec staff to perform national duties as cooks and caterers.

For example, in her work with as many as 8 or 10 groups, every officer is theoretically responsible for implementing up to 20 different programmes simultaneously, ranging from income generation to loan applications, nutrition education to child care, and so forth. The goals and procedures of these diverse programmes are not well integrated, nor indeed clearly articulated. In practice, each officer tends to focus on a few of these programmes, and even then there is little consistency about what constitutes "success".

These problems also limited CARE's interaction with Home Economics staff. Upgrading workshops were designed and run with little input from Home Ec, because noone held this responsibility. Progress on the training guides was slow, since there was no one specifically responsible for this within Home Ec. Eventually, we set up a team which put in a great deal of work, revising and field testing several guides. Unfortunately, this was an extra burden for everyone, and with the onset of drought relief work, the more active members found it impossible to find the time to continue.

Fortunately, Home Ec staff are very open about these constraints, they truly want to improve, and have shown interest and dedication in the effort to do so. SEAS and Home Ec staff agreed that our interests in helping them improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall organisation coincided with their own desires to gain greater access to and control over resources. We then began to directly address organisational development as our main thrust.

Major Accomplishments October 1990 - August 1992

- Ran three workshops with Home Ec staff to revise or introduce basic elements of small business development and support of income generation.
- Developed and field-tested several training guides in income generation.
- Began long-term process of organisational development, to help Home Economics improve their effectiveness and efficiency in all areas of their work.

Recommendations for Future

Home Economics should simplify and focus its efforts, to enable field staff to do a good job in a few high priority activities. At the same time, the priority programmes must be clearly understood by all staff, so that they are all striving to meet well-articulated, achievable goals. To enable this to happen, Home Economics should:

1. Continue with the organisation development process. The appendix at the end of this report provides a review of typical problems faced by development organisation, and gives an overview of the suggested OD process which Home Economics should continue. As they procede, Home Ec should pay special attention to following steps:
    a. Get feedback from field staff on the section's mission statement and values, analysis of clients' problems, and identification of priority programmes. Later, ensure that field staff are involved in all subsequent steps;
    b. Set a few realistic, measurable goals for each programme which state expected impact on clients, as well as expected levels of performance by staff. Further, document accepted procedures to be used by staff;
    c. Develop practical, relevant procedures for regular monitoring of progress towards goals (such as annual review), and assign responsibility and allocate time to ensure such monitoring occurs;

d. Continuously review whether all programmes can realistically be implemented by staff, given available time, skills, resources, and interaction among the programmes;

e. Assign a resource person or subject matter specialist for each programme, and give that person the responsibility, authority, and time to support all staff, and to monitor activities in the programme.

2. Carry on with development, distribution, and use of IG training guides:

a. In line with the OD process above, select 1 person with strong skills in income generation to serve as resource person for IG, and give her time to perform the relevant duties;

b. Assign this resource person the task of continuing development, revision, and distribution of training materials, and the job of staff development in IG skills (including introduction and use of the training guides). Some session plans are currently being developed by Zodwa Baartjies, Peter Bechtel, Ruth Mkwanazi, and Margaret Simelane.

cc: Christabel Motsa, Principal Home Economics Officer, Home Economics Section, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

CARE International in Swaziland

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To: Dick Ouellette, SEAS Project Manager

From: Dan Mullins, Training and Extension Specialist

Date: 21 August 1992

Subject: Final Report: Training Activities with Assembly of NGOs

This is my final report summarising our work with the Assembly of NGOs, and giving a few recommendations for how BMEP could continue to address important issues in the future.

Original Goals of Work with Assembly of NGOs

The SEAS project proposal did not specifically set goals for work with the Assembly of NGOs. However, the proposal did envision an important role for networking, which is a key function of the Assembly. Also, our experience with our main partner organisations generally showed that they often lack organisational capacity to aborb and make effective use of improved staff skills in technical Small Enterprise Develeopment; institutions frequently need assistance with organisational planning and development first. The Assembly is in a position to provide such OD support for member NGOs, many of which run programmes in income generation and small business development. Thus, our work with the Assembly focused on improving their own organisation's programmes and service delivery, while developing their capacity at later leading other organisations through a similar OD process.

Problems

Work with the Assembly has proceeded quite well, with no major problems. Unfortunately, since our work with the Assembly only began recently, we will not be able to finish helping them work through the process. However, they have completed major stages, and should be able to carry on themselves.

Major Accomplishments October 1990 - August 1992

- Introduced Client-Centred Organisational Development Process to the Assembly's board, and led core staff through most of the process, including identification of client needs, basic development of programmes, documentation of key goals and procedures, and creation of a timeline.
- Assisted Assembly staff as they began to lead a client organisation through the initial stages of the OD process.

Recommendations for Future

1. Assess the proposed programmes designed through the OD process, and determine exactly what staff positions and financial resources are needed to carry them out. This could demand that the Assembly seek further funding.
2. Finalise documenting the information developed through the OD process. This could be printed as pamphlets both for internal and external use, to orient new staff members, and to inform members, donors, and other interested people about the Assembly.

cc: Mrs. Sarah Dlamini, Coordinator, Assembly of NGOs

Client-Centred Organisational Development Process

Current Situation of Development Organisations in Swaziland

Development organisations suffer from a variety of problems, many of which affect both larger, externally-supported NGOs, as well as smaller, underfunded and understaffed NGOs. Some of the major problems can be summarised:

- Programming is reactive, "all things to all people"

  NGO programmes are seldom based on clear analysis of clients' needs, but rather tend to be driven by donors or by symptoms confronted by clients. Donor funding which is only available for particular activities pulls NGOs into areas where they have little expertise; at the same time, NGOs tend to respond to clients' requests for assistance without examining actual causes of problems. Both of these tendencies result in a situation where a single organisation spreads itself into so many different types of activities that it does none of them very well.

- "Do Good", but lack of focus leads to low effectiveness and efficiency

  Boards, management and field staff all generally try to "help" clients, and many feel that whatever they do is therefore of value. However, the reactive, "all things to all people" style of programming makes very difficult to provide quality services. Unfortunately, many NGO staff don't realize that they could do more "good" by re-focusing and re-designing their programmes - this would enable them to have greater impact with clients, while using existing resources more efficiently.

- Absence of client-focused, goal-driven programmes

  Programmes seldom are designed to achieve clear goals, so neither staff nor clients can easily monitor "success". Where goals do exist, they usually focus on organisational activities (such as numbers of persons trained or numbers of gardens established). Though valuable as guides, excessive attention to such intermediate goals tends to draw attention away from monitoring and evaluation of actual impact on clients' lives.

- "Staff training" as cure-all

  NGO staff who do seek to improve their work usually focus on "staff training", which is intended to improve specific technical skills of particular staff members. However, low staff skills, whether in accounting, management of loan schemes, or technical agricultural topics, are seldom the major constraint to better services. Rather, this approach to staff training is like re-arranging the chairs on a ship headed in the wrong direction - everyone can feel like they are doing something, yet actual impact in terms of improving clients' quality of life is minimal.

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Ultimate Goal of the Client-Centred OD Process:

- Continual search for improved quality services to clients.

Principles of the Process:

- Quality for Clients Comes First

  Focus first on the clients. The organisational mission is developed around the clients' needs. The programmes and processes are designed to address the clients needs, in ways that fit with the organisation's mission and values. Finally, the organisational structure is developed to facilitate delivery of high quality services to clients.

- A Culture of Learning is Fundamentally Necessary

  Continual improvement demands constant efforts to learn from the successes and mistakes of oneself and of others. Such learning should be seen as constructive and helpful, not as critical and negative. This approach must be incorporated into the organisation's "culture", supported by daily efforts to share and learn, and by regular monitoring and evaluation.

- Keep It Simple

  Simple systems and procedures are more easily understood and implemented by staff. It is unrealistic to dely on extraordinarily dedicated or skilled staff - design programmes to be run by competent people doing a respectable job).

- Clear and Understandable is Better

  Easily understood and well-documented criteria and procedures help avoid misunderstandings, and give guidance to all staff and other stakeholders.

Assumptions:

- Staff Want to Improve

  We assume all stakeholders (especially management and staff) truly want to provide good quality services to clients, but that they are often frustrated by ways of working or thinking that get in the way of improvement.

- All Stakeholders Want to and Should Be Involved

  Top management is willing to involve clients, staff, and other stakeholders in the process. Also, the staff, clients, and other stakeholders want to participate by sharing their experience and ideas.

A Word of Caution:

- Vested Interests

  In existing organisations, vested interests in particular programmes, goals, procedures etc. can be obstacles to change and improvement. Concerns about job security and desires to retain established ways of doing things must be addressed sincerely, directly and openly, not ignored nor looked down upon.

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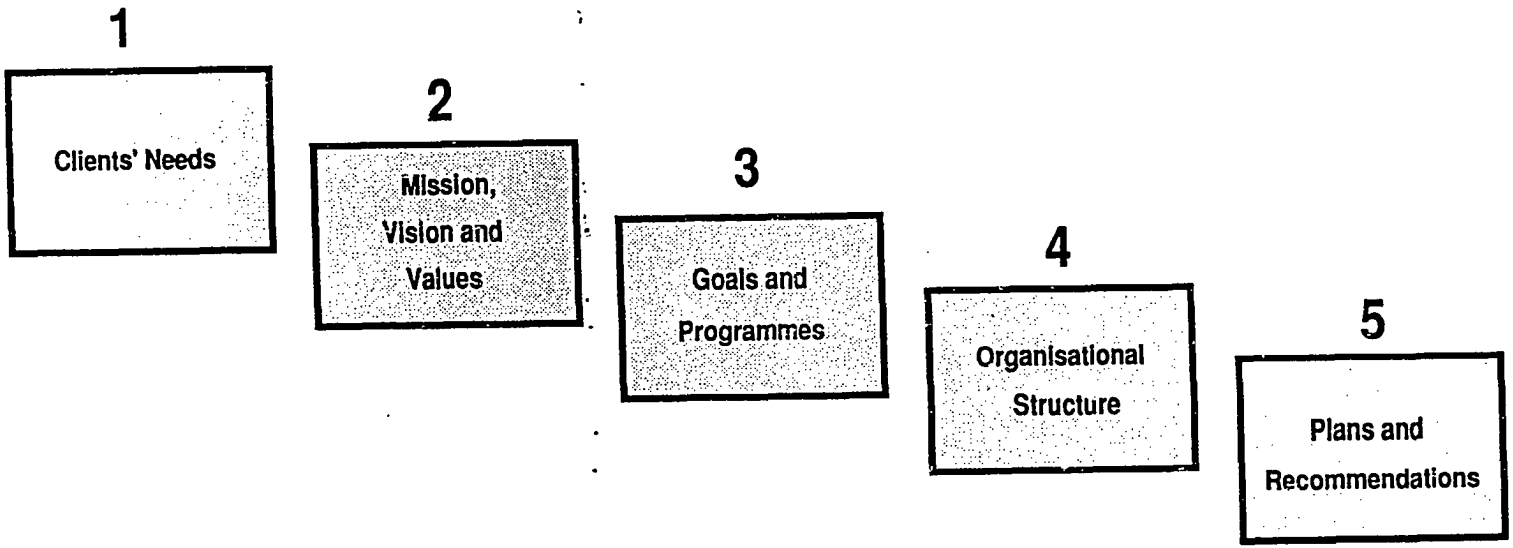
Five Basic Stages



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A Possible Schedule for the Process

Time	Stage of the Process	Major Activities	Who Participates
1 day	Introduce Process	review stages and activities who to participate at each step	Board, staff
3 - 5 days	Background and Fact-finding	read documentation interview key informants	selected individuals
2 - 4 days	**Client Needs and Causes**	identify & categorize clients identify and prioritize problems search for causes	mgt. and field staff, clients, donors, technical specialists
2 days	**Mission Statement, Vision and Values**	determine main purpose of organisation develop a vision for 3 - 5 years articulate principles and values	Board, relevant management and field staff (working group writes document)
1 day	report back to all staff	review work, get staff inputs	all staff
6 - 15 days (?)	**Goals and Programmes**	select client problems and causes to be addressed set programme aims, goals design integrated strategies document processes	working group of management and field staff
1 day	report back to all staff	review work, get staff inputs	all staff
(?)	Housekeeping Functions	funding acquisition financial management and control internal information flow external information flow personnel policies	management and administrative staff, selected field staff
2 - 4 days	**Organisational Structure**	numbers, type of staff needed functional staff relationships	working group
1 day	report to the Board	present all work to the Board for approval or inputs	Board members, key HQ, field staff
2 - 3 days	**Plans and Recommendations**	long-term strategic plans daily operational procedures resource requirements recommendations for change proposal for funding	management