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THE 1890 LAND GRANT COLLEGE ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE)

BY

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FOREWORD

The Unemployment and Underemployment Institute was created to coordinate all international economic development activities of the 211(d) grant at Southern University.

In 1972, the Agency for International Development (AID) approved a five year grant to Southern University to strengthen and increase its capacity in economic/agricultural economics to enhance Southern's capabilities to contribute to the resolution of problems of rural unemployment and underemployment in developing countries.

The general objectives of the Institute are (a) to develop and coordinate the activities of the University for greater participation in international economic development programs; (b) to make available the capacities and expertise thus developed to public and private agencies involved in industrial development programs; and (c) to conduct research, seminars, and workshops on domestic and international development problems including cooperatives, manpower utilization, small farmers, housing, population, nutrition, leadership training, and community development.

In keeping with objective (a), the University supports several faculty members working towards advanced degrees in the area of economic development and related disciplines, supports undergraduate scholarships to foreign and U. S. nationals in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, provides travel to professional seminars for faculty, foreign exposure to development experiences, and special training on techniques of program design and evaluation.

In keeping with objective (b), the Institute sponsors an International Development Seminar Series, Student-Faculty & Staff Seminar Series, and hosts foreign individuals and groups interested in economic development programs at Southern University.

Results of research projects consistent with the objectives of this program are published under the Institute's Faculty-Staff Research Paper Series. Papers published under this series reflects the diversity of interests and specialties of our faculty and staff.

The above activities of the Institute demonstrate the capacities and expertise of Southern University developed through the 211(d) program. As a result of the 211(d) grant, the Unemployment-Underemployment Institute at Southern University is in a position to offer expert and technical personnel to private and public agencies involved in international economic development programs.

T. T. Williams
Director

THE 1890 LAND GRANT COLLEGE ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE)

BY

T. T. Williams

INTRODUCTION

In 1892, Southern University was recognized by the Federal Government as a land grant college under the Second Morrill Act of 1890. In 1914, the campus was relocated in Baton Rouge, after some thirty (30) years in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Since its creation in the 1880 State Legislative Act 87, and the 1912 Legislative Act 118, Southern University has sought to improve the economic well-being of people residing in the rural and urban areas of Louisiana. There were two Morrill Acts establishing Land Grant Colleges. The first act established one land grant college in each state. By and large, these were colleges for the predominately white clientele of this country. These colleges are referred to as the original land grant colleges or the 1862 land grant colleges.

In 1890, Congress passed the second Morrill Act establishing land grant colleges primarily in the southern states for predominately black clientele. These 1890 land grant colleges were created with the understanding that they would develop educational programs with a focus for black people. In almost all of the southern states where these colleges were located, they were until most recently, the only state supported institution of higher education for blacks. These colleges provided a multiplicity of services to their clientele who resided in the rural and urban sectors of the respective state. In fact, the history of black involvement in higher education in general, and the mainstream of America in particular, is the direct result of the programs undertaken at the 1890 land grant colleges.

Southern views its constituents as the Louisiana population with special expertise for working with people of low socio-economic background. The University is a system with campuses located in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Shreveport. The student body of approximately 14,000 and a professional staff in excess of 800, makes Southern the largest predominately black land-grant college in the United States. Approximately thirty percent of the faculty are holders of the earned terminal degree.

Southern University has a recognized research faculty as observed by their contribution to leading professional research journals and their demand as advisors and consultants by local, state, national, and international organizations. Through organized instruction, seminars and outreach programs, Southern is reaching an increasing number of people in the State, nation, and developing countries.

RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS:

Two of the pressing problems confronting twentieth century planners are: (1) how to develop and implement programs to ameliorate the impact of technological progress which has disadvantaged a number of people residing in the rural and urban areas; and (2) how to motivate the alienated, disadvantaged, and displaced to consider alternative economic and community development opportunities within the community wherein they reside. It is believed that for these target groups, the alternatives are far wiser than a move to congested urban centers. The problems of the congested urban cities such as alienation, poverty, unemployment and underemployment are kindled with migration from rural communities and must be attacked at that level.

RESEARCH: (ACTION-ORIENTED)

Action-oriented research is designed to provide factual data relative to a specific problem faced by low income people. Historically, the lack of an

instrument (University) with the specific responsibility, sensitivity, and resources to undertake action-oriented research dealing with the indigenous population has served to compound the problem of program implementation and economic development. The urgency of the land-grant colleges assuming action-oriented research responsibility is apparent, for unless amelioration programs can be investigated and tested, indigenous people presently residing in the rural and urban areas will migrate to congested centers at an increasing rate. Likewise, unless indigenous people residing in the rural areas are provided with alternatives for upward mobility, the social and economic ills of unemployment and underemployment will become more intensified and difficult to solve.

Louisiana is primarily a rural state with a relatively large number of small farm operators who are unable to realize a standard of living from the sale of their farm commodities, above the poverty level. However, despite the economic plight and employment status of small farm operators, many prefer to remain in the rural area rather than migrate to congested urban centers. If potential rural migrants are to realize a better life in their present environment, they must be provided with a broad array of employment opportunities and social services.

Over the years, the 1890 land-grant colleges like Southern University have had to limit their efforts in economic development programs due to the shortage of funds for research. However, in recent years, since 1972, the expertise of these Universities in working with low-income families have been sought by the state and federal governments to assist with community development. The FY 1972 research funds (P.L.89-106) made available to the 1890 land-grant colleges, enabled these colleges to undertake action-oriented research. The Federal funds were used to secure and analyze data relative to resolving problems of families with low socio-economic characteristics residing in rural and urban areas of the respective states.

The faculty at the 1890 land-grant colleges like Southern University, are better oriented to investigate families of low socio-economic background than faculties of the other state Universities (1862 land-grant colleges), mainly because the 1890 land-grant colleges have a historical commitment to the low-income target group.

Prior to 1972, delegated agencies with the responsibility of assisting indigenous families were not satisfied with the progress of development programs for the low-income groups, nor were they pleased with the rate of acceptance of alternative upward mobility programs by the people of the target groups. The 1890 land-grant colleges strongly feels that economic development programs must be based upon reliable data concerning the population to be served and the data should be secured by a research staff with whom indigenous families have rapport. Southern University and other 1890 land-grant colleges have that rapport and the research expertise to undertake such investigations and to provide the leadership for program development and implementation. The implications of Southern's research efforts for economic development will have major implications for other areas including program development and implementation in developing countries.

The research efforts of Southern University are divided into five (5) program areas as follows:

1. Identification of Community Leaders:

   Prior to the development of specific projects, the research staff at Southern University located and identified the grassroot leaders and held dialogue sessions with these leaders in the community and on the campus. Out of these dialogue sessions, the research staff identify research priorities. Dialogues with grass-root leaders have identified the other four program areas enumerated.

Research projects in this area concentrate on the location and identification of indigenous leaders residing in rural and urban areas. Out of the dialogue sessions with these leaders, specific projects are designed to provide information on such issues as (a) pattern of leadership; and (b) factors influencing the acceptance or rejection of programs for economic development. Faculty members in such areas as sociology, psychology, economics, political science, and education are involved in research under this program heading.

2. Small Farm Operation:

Southern is in the process of developing an experimental farm unit for small farm operators. The experiment farm unit will be used as the center to investigate the most economical combination of resources for relatively small farm operators in Louisiana. In addition, studies in the areas of intensive production and marketing are undertaken by the agriculture economics and economics faculties.

3. Services Available to Indigenous Families:

Studies are undertaken to determine the need and the availability of services necessary for the upward mobility of the target groups. Priority is given to those studies designed to ascertain data needed to develop and implement amelioration programs for this group. Faculty members in economics, business, animal sciences, plant sciences, education, sociology, and engineering are encouraged to pursue studies under this broad heading. Researchers are encouraged to investigate the potential role of community based organizations such as the church, fraternal orders, youth clubs, and cooperatives, as catalytic agents for change.

5. Nutrition, Health, and Recreation:

The major thrust of such research is to provide the extension staff with a better understanding of each entity for meeting the needs of low-income families. Faculty members in such disciplines as home economics, plant science, animal science, chemistry, physiology, psychology, biology, economics, business, recreation, and geography are encouraged to undertake research designed to provide guidance for amelioration programs in these areas.

EXTENSION: (UTILIZATION OF ACTION-REACH FINDINGS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE TARGET GROUP OR OUTREACH)

Research findings are utilized by the Extension Staff to develop and implement economic development programs for low-income people. The Extension Arm of the economic development thrust at Southern University is designed to focus the total resources and experience of the University on alternative ways of moving people who have been left behind into the mainstream of contemporary society. The Extension program is supported with funds under the Smith-Lever Act.

Southern University is the base for sponsored educational activities pertaining to the Extension Program. The primary purpose of the Extension Program is to develop training and demonstration activities designed to help the target group acquire the skills and knowledge so necessary to become effective contributors to society, and to share equally in the benefits of the Extension Service and Society. More specifically, the objectives are to: (1) utilize the expertise of Southern to develop and implement programs specifically designed to reach alienated, disadvantaged, and displaced families who are outside the Extension's mainstream; (2) determine the extent to which an Intensive Extension program can improve the socio-economic status of the target population; (3) Complement the Extension's knowledge base program in Louisiana; and (4) develop and

test pilot programs designed to evaluate different approaches in the utilization of available resources for economic development.

The Extension Program emphasized four program areas to reach its target group. All programs under the Extension component utilize the grassroot leaders in development and implementation.

1. Family Living:

The target population has a number of family problems related to health, nutrition, education, sanitation, transportation, etc. Under the Family Living component, emphasis is placed on activities designed to improve family living, nutrition, home surroundings, housing, and youth.

The alienated, disadvantaged, and low-income families have certain characteristics which prolong their low-economic status. Such characteristics, and the reasons for their existence, requires better understanding and specific attention before progress can be made in moving these families into the mainstream of contemporary society. From research and general observation, the following characteristics seems to be present in varying degrees among the target population:

a. Generation of Poverty:

Traditional housing conditions, home, and community environments have served to push-down rather than build-up the initiative of target population. In addition, race and prejudice have been definite factors in perpetuating the generation of poverty among the target population.

b. Low Educational Level:

The presence of an attitude that formal education is for the "haves" rather than the "have-nots" and the limited motivation from home

and community have contributed to the low education and economic levels of the target group.

c. Nutrition and Health Knowledge is Practically Non-Existent:

There is a lack of pre-natal care and the importance of good nutrition for the mother and the baby. The relationship between food and mental retardation is virtually unknown. In addition, health habits and the spread of disease are treated rather lightly and there is limited knowledge of public health facilities and agencies which could provide the needed assistance.

d. Management of Time and Money Receives Low Priority:

Knowledge of how the wise use of time and money could contribute to family welfare have not been fully explored nor accepted by the target group. Therefore, the importance of home production and conservation of food receives high priority in the family planning component.

e. Family and Life Styles Vary:

Among the target population there are a number of one-parent families headed by the mother who works or receives welfare payment. In addition, there are homes in which the children are being reared by distant relatives. Such family life or environment leaves the children on the short end of a wholesome experience so necessary for personality development.

f. Influence of Custom and Tradition:

The alienated, disadvantaged, displaced, and low-income families are usually suspicious of outsiders. There exist a strong religious manifestation and deeply ingrained food habit based on custom rather than nutritional needs.

The foregoing characteristics of the target population underlie the Extension Program at Southern University. These six characteristics of the target population are mirrored by the Extension Program objectives enumerated below: (1) to select from the target group families to develop competency in: (a) family and community relationships; (b) child rearing and development; and (c) decision-making as a family process concerning their human and economic resources; (2) to select from the target group families to improve their health conditions through: (a) recommended nutritional practices; (b) better diets and eating habits; and (c) improved health habits; and (3) to select from the target population families to develop pride in home and surroundings.

2. Farm Management:

The general thrust of the farm management component is to help the target group complement family income from the farm and non-farm employment. Located in Louisiana are a relatively large number of small farmers with limited resources for the operation and expansion of their resources. However, many of these farmers would like to remain on their farms and utilize their labor in a productive manner. The Farm Management component places emphasis on such factors as (a) new enterprises and market outlet for these enterprices; (b) intensive production including livestock and vegetables; and (c) farm planning.

Usually, when the rewards for the efforts that are put into farming by low-income families fall below that which the family could earn in other employment, they move off the farm to the city. Such a migration pattern is not a desirable situation for the family, the county, or developing nations. Basically, the problem is that there are a large number of small farms that are producing independently of one another and producing crops that have been traditional in the family over a long

period of years. In addition, these farmers are operating with limited land resource and surplus labor. Our dialogue with indigenous leaders supports the observation that securing credit and management are the areas in which most target group farmers have difficulties.

In order to maximize income of the small farms requires an intensive type agriculture with an available market outlet. The size of these farms and volume provided for market makes their management difficult. Chain stores show little interest in small quantities, since they are programmed for large volume on a continuing basis. Consequently, small farmers trying to sell crops independently grown have difficulty in moving their produce through the market. To compound the situation, the educational level of these farm operators is low and the indigenous leaders have not been identified nor fully utilized in many rural areas. Consequently, there is an acute need for trained professionals in the field of agriculture to assist these farmers and give them the greatest return for their limited resources. Finally, there is a need to develop market outlets for the products after they are produced.

Reflecting upon the above justification for the farm management component, the five objectives of this entity are to: (1) increase the income of families with limited resources; (2) organize farm production so that the greatest returns will be made from limited resources; (3) coordinate production of selected agriculture enterprices so that contract, non-contract, or cooperative market outlets can be secured; (4) develop and pool community resources to encourage joint purchase and use of large farm equipment and machinery; and (5)

manage the sources of capital that are needed by the target group for the production of agricultural profits.

3. Leadership and Community Development:

The emphasis on leadership and community development concentrates on programs to train leaders and promote their involvement as community leaders. Local leadership is viewed as an essential component of community development. Therefore, early in the program, "grassroot" leaders are identified, plans are discussed with such leaders to secure their support and commitment to the program.

Leadership development concentrates on (a) process programs determined to be the most useful for a specific community; and (b) the means by which communities will develop and implement programs to solve local problems. The specific objective of the leadership development component are to: (1) improve the ability of the target group to actively participate in decision-making through the democratic process; (2) develop among the target group the ability to carry out group action programs; and (3) increase the involvement and effectiveness of the adults and youth in leadership responsibilities.

Communities are held together by common interest of the people. It is the basis of this interest that community leaders can meet and seek solutions to their common problems. However, many of these leaders, especially those of the target group, lack the necessary skills to implement programs. The economic development scheme at Southern University has convinced us that it is very important that grassroot leaders be exposed to educational activities designed to help them take action on programs that will improve their total community environment. Emphasis is placed on assisting the group with their efforts to participate in neighborhood community programs. The

community development component is geared to communities using the organized community neighborhood approach to give leaders the opportunity to make basic program decisions. The specific objectives of this component are to: (1) organize groups as an approach in determining programs for community improvement; (2) encourage people and communities to participate in program development committee's according to their needs, interests, and abilities; and (3) participate in the planning process designed to implement community improvement activities.

THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (211(d)):

The International Economic Development Program (IEDP) was created to coordinate the activities of the 211(d) grant at Southern University. The IEDP provides the University with a vehicle for expanding its domestic thrust into the international arena of economic development.

In 1972, the Agency for International Development (AID) approved a five (5) year grant to Southern University to strengthen and increase its capacity in economic/agricultural economics to enhance Southern's capabilities to contribute to the resolution of problems of rural unemployment and underemployment in developing countries.

The general objectives of the IEDP are: (a) to develop and coordinate the activities of the University for greater participation in international economic development programs; (b) to make available the capacities and expertise thus developed to public and private agencies involved in industrial development programs; and (c) to conduct research, seminars, and workshops on domestic and international development problems including cooperatives, manpower utilization, small farmers, housing, population, nutrition, leadership training, and community development.

In keeping with objective (a), the University supports several faculty members working towards advanced degrees in the area of economic development and related disciplines, supports undergraduate scholarships to foreign and U. S. nationals in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Economics, provides travel to professional seminars for faculty, foreign exposure to development experiences, and special training on techniques of program design and evaluation.

In keeping with objective (b), the IEDP sponsors an International Development Seminar Series, Student-Faculty & Staff Seminar Series, and hosts foreign individuals and groups interested in learning more about the Southern University experience in economic development as summarized in this Staff Paper.

Results of research projects consistent with the objectives of this program are published under the IEDP's Faculty-Staff Research Paper Series. The over 25 Staff Papers published by the IEDP reflects the diversity of interests and specialties of Southern University faculty and staff. A copy of each publication is available upon request. Through the IEDP at Southern University, expert and technical personnel can be provided to private and public agencies involved in economic development activities in developing countries and the United States. Already, one faculty member orginally hired through 211(d) funds, is employed with the Southern University Cameroon project. The Cameroon project is to help establish a department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Cameroon. The 211(d) program director, a faculty member, and several students have spent time in the Cameroon observing the activity of that program.