

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCAL AND FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT

Barangay Talon Dos, Las Pinas City, Metro Manila

The only sustainable competitive advantage of any company or its nation is its people - their training and their ability to learn continuously. Globalization, good or bad, is upon us. The barangay plays an important role in preparing its citizens in meeting the challenges of globalization

Context

Barangay Talon Dos is one of the twenty (20) barangays of Las Pinas. It is located on the western part of Metropolitan Manila. It has a population of 37,136 and covers a land area of 391.61 hectares.

The Program

The Barangay Talon Dos-Las Pinas City Manpower and Livelihood Training Program started in 1994 to address the increasing unemployment among barangay residents. The program assumed greater importance three years later with the onset of the Asian financial crisis. Residents lost their jobs as capital fled, credit tightened, and the economy contracted. The subsequent removal of trade barriers and the inroads of globalization into the local economy caused multinational firms to close their factories and transfer operations to countries with lower labor costs. Even in the overseas labor market where Filipinos traditionally had an advantage, contraction and retrenchment led to loss of jobs for Filipino maritime and mid-East workers.



These developments caused families dependent on salaried and overseas employment to tighten their belts. Many encountered difficulties meeting payments on properties acquired through debt. Some saw their properties foreclosed by their creditors. With lower remittances, families transferred children studying in private schools to the cheaper public schools, or in worse cases, stopped their schooling altogether.

Program Objectives. Barangay Talon Dos, the Las Pinas Manpower Training and Livelihood Development Council, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Office of then Congressman Manuel Villar, Jr. joined hands to establish the Las Pinas City Manpower Livelihood Training Program. It had two main objectives:

- To provide training that could be a source of supplemental income or as an alternative source of income altogether;
- To enhance worker productivity and employability through computer literacy.

Courses Offered The Barangay Talon Dos-Las Pinas City Livelihood Training Program offered the following courses:

- Dressmaking
- Tailoring
- Curtain Making
- Food Trade
- Cosmetology
- Advanced Computer Course
- Computer Technician Course

The program conducted the training in two spare rooms of the barangay hall. Some of the classes were held in the unfinished building for TESDA that the barangay had spent around PhP3 million constructing.

As of writing, Barangay Talon Dos was seeking TESDA's authorization to offer a two-year certificate course on Computer Science that would provide an alternative for poor residents who could not afford to enroll in private computer science schools. The barangay planned to offer this course on a study-now-pay later scheme. In addition, Barangay Talon Dos was planning to offer sixmonth courses on Care Giving, Nursing Aide, and Hotel and Restaurant Management because of the large demand for nurses, hoteliers and restaurant personnel abroad.

Management. An Executive Officer oversaw the operations of the program and coordinated with TESDA. A barangay council member was in charge of program funding.

Results

Since 1994, the program has been graduating 600 trainees a year. With computer-literate residents and city employees, the Las Pinas city government succeeded in computerizing its operations within three years and with almost no cost spent on training.

A graduate of the program won a gold medal in the regional and national Olympics in 1999. Graduates of the program have landed jobs here and abroad. Other graduates have opted to set up their own businesses like dress shops, computer shops, diners, and beauty salons.

The program won for Barangay Talon Dos the Kabalikat Award for Most Outstanding Project from TESDA-National Capital Region Office in December 2001.

SKILLS TRAINING TO DEVELOP NEW ENTERPRISES

Barangay San Vicente, Pamplona, Camarines Sur

In the Philippines, many enterprise development programs usually begin with skills training. The premise is that people do not start new businesses because they do not know how. From experience, we now know that entrepreneurship is more than training. Training, however, is an important component. Barangay officials can easily do research on what skills their constituents have and what they need. Deciding on what training to offer is answering the question: Do I train people for economic activities being done or do I train them for enterprises that have yet to be?

Context

Barangay San Vicente is one of the seventeen (17) barangays of the Municipality of Pamplona, Camarines Sur. It is located seven (7) kilometers from the Pamplona Poblacion. It has 545 households. Many of its residents are into rice and vegetable farming. Other sources of livelihood in the barangay are basket weaving, mirror making, figurine making, hat making, map making, plate making, wig making, and hog and poultry raising.

The Project

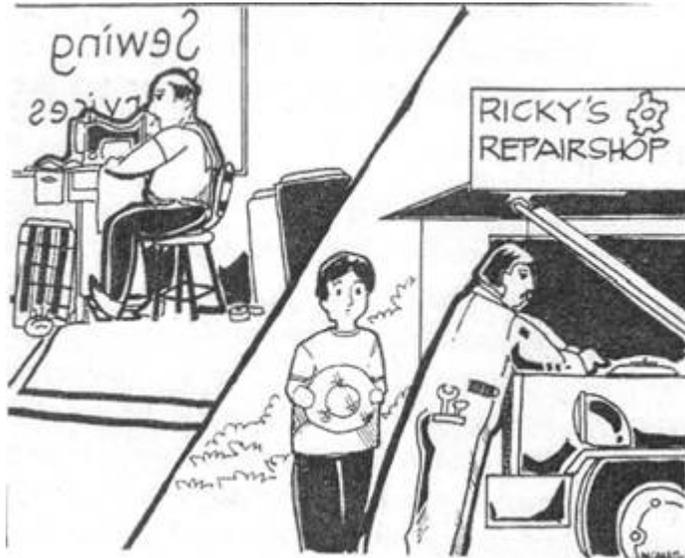
Barangay San Vicente suffered from the lack of livelihood opportunities and the lack of skilled people. Many were also illiterate.

To address the problem, the San Vicente Barangay Council together with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) (now DepEd) sponsored livelihood skills training and literacy classes. From 1998 to the present, interested villagers attended trainings on Dressmaking, Cosmetology, Shoe Making, Garment Making, Cooking and Baking, and Auto Diesel Mechanics.

Then Pamplona Mayor Salvador Castilla and the town council donated sewing machines, a stove, cosmetology equipment, a radio and cassette player, a television set, and a VHS player. The barangay spent for the materials used in the training. The Municipal Government shouldered the honoraria of the instructors using the twenty percent (20%) Development Fund of its Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA).

Results

As of writing, the project has eighty-three (83) graduates. Seventy-five (75) of them are economically productive.



ACADEME- BARANGAY PARTNERSHIP FOR ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Barangay Sibalew, Banga, Aklan

Partnership is one way of stretching little resources to achieve big results There are many kinds of partnerships: financial, administrative, and technical In this case, a barangay joins forces with a technical institution to transform its economy.

Context

Barangay Sibalew is one of the thirty (30) barangays of the Municipality of Banga, Province of Aklan. It is located fourteen (14) kilometers south of the poblacion. It can be reached by traveling through the national highway and turning on a rough rolling, uphill road leading to the mountains. The barangay is 2.5 kilometers from the highway. Its topography is characterized by steep slopes, rolling hills, and valleys. When the project started in the 1980s, it had 125 households. As of 2000, it had 198 households or roughly 934 people.

The Project

In the 1980s, Sibalew was ranked among the poorest barangays of Aklan province. Its land had become unproductive because of slash-and-burn (*kaingin*) agriculture. The people of the barangay cultivated rice, some coconut, and banana. Their harvest was barely enough for their needs. Many of the barangay residents worked as *sakadas* (*migratory* and seasonal sugar cane workers) in Negros Island. There was no electricity in the area, and people obtained their water from uncovered dug wells. The road leading to the barangay was impassable to any form of transportation except to horse or carabao-drawn carts. People often hiked the road going to and from the barangay.



Things started turning for the better in the dry season of 1983. The Aklan State College of Agriculture (ASCA) with the Agricultural Extension Outreach Program (AEOP) conducted a baseline survey to determine the condition of the residents and identify their major problems and most important needs.

The ASCA and AEOP drafted an extension plan for Sibalew but the barangay leaders and residents were initially doubtful of the program. They had good reason

to be. Extension workers and programs had come and gone from Sibalew. After a few visits, all of these extension workers disappeared, never to be heard of again.

The program, however, enjoyed greater support from the Municipality of Banga. The AEOP mobilized NGOs to provide credit and livelihood assistance.

ASCA trained the barangay residents in hillside farming and Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT). It led the effort to rehabilitate three (3) hectares of watershed areas and the dry creek. With the barangay, it established a water system, piping the water from a spring two kilometers away. ASCA also succeeded in having the access road improved.

In 1996, the ASCA started a hands-on and distance education program called the Diploma in Agricultural Technology Bachelor of Agricultural Technology (DAT-BAT). The course offered classes right at the barangay. The students had their practicum in their families' farms and businesses. To manage the on-farm learning experience, ASCA built a staff house in Sibalew for its instructors.

The program in Sibalew attracted foreign donor and volunteer institutions. The Australian Embassy, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) gave funding support. The Peace Corps sent a volunteer.

Additional funding came from the Congressional Development Fund (CD F) of the local congressmen and the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) of the municipality.

The barangay's partnership with ASCA led to the construction of a barangay resource center, the electrification of the barangay, the construction of bridges, and the setting up of a Pina Fiber Demonstration Farm. ASCA trained the residents in pina weaving. The island of Panay is famous for its weaving industry.

Results

The once dry, pale gray terrain of Sibalew has turned green with all kinds of blooming fruit trees. Sibalew is now the premier fruit producer in Aklan. On the valley, rice stalks sway in the wind.

Many of the nipa and makeshift houses of the barangay have been replaced with brick houses, as the average income of a farming household has risen to PhP60,000 a year, thrice that of the income level when the project started.