

THIRD WORLD FOCUS

A Case Study in Community-Based Development:

Mesa del Campanero,

Sonora, Mexico

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“The groups that came were useful and they brought another communication and way of life. They brought the radio, light and other ideas that they gave us. But the most important thing they brought was friendship. We will remember them.”

--- Rebeca Holguin Coronado,
Mesa del Campanero Resident
(From the Fall 1986, CP Bulletin)

FOREWORD

In January of 1987, I registered for a University of La Verne class entitled “Social Ecology of a Mexican Village” with Dr. Dan Merritt. The class participated in a 10-day work camp in a remote village nestled in the Sierra Madre Range of Northern Mexico. The village, Mesa del Campanero, was involved in a five-year development project guided by two non-government organizations, La Asociacion Sonorense de los Amigos and El Centro de Paz. While on the mesa, we helped with small projects, such as digging privies, working the foundation area for a water tank.

We worked side-by-side with the people of Campanero, sharing our different cultures and ideas forming friendships that would not be forgotten. By living with local families during our stay, we were able to spend quality time talking with one another. We learned from each other as we sat by the evening fires after a day’s work.

During my short visit to the mesa I became quite interested in the nature of the five-year project. It seemed to me that the role of the local residents as the source of change and the role of the outside agency as a catalyst for change was appropriate to the needs of the community. In researching this paper, I was able to record a detailed account of a successful community-based development project.

A successful project is one which meets or exceeds its immediate goals and one that continues to develop after the outside agency or support group withdraws. Nonetheless, as stated by Stiles, “for a project to get off the ground, people must be able to perceive a tangible, fairly immediate and direct benefit from their participation” (Stiles, 1987). The Campanero project demonstrates how success can be attained.

Before I describe the village project, I should mention some important names that I will cite as sources of information. These people have been instrumental in helping me gather the facts necessary to write this comprehensive paper.

The first, Norman Krekler, has been the director of La Asociacion Sonorense de los Amigos in Hermosillo for many years. He led work camps in the mountain villages, and he became close friends with the local people. By profession he is a horticulturist. I met Norman when I visited the mesa in 1987, and I have received newsletters from Los Amigos since then. In June 1991 I spoke with him on the phone about the latest developments in Campanero.

Frank Shutts was a leader of El Centro de Paz during the five-year period of the project. With its base in the U.S., this group promotes cross-cultural relations through community-based development projects. Shutts is an ecologist and a retired university professor. He was in Hermosillo in 1987 with our social ecology class.

My project advisor, Dr. Dan Merritt of the University of La Verne, took social ecology classes to Campanero in 1985 and 1987. In addition, he attended seminars and organizational meetings for the project. Dr. Merritt has been a valuable source of information as well as strong base for organizational support.

Finally, I cited information from four of Dr. Merritt's students. Sonja Lopez and Tim Calkins participated in the 1985 social ecology class, Sandy Tosch participated in the 1987 class, and Randy Edwards took the class both in 1985 and 1987. As a class requirement, these students wrote papers describing the mesa and the project at the time of their visit. The papers served as informative sources, with recorded facts and figures coming from the local people.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades the question of how best to assist Third World countries in their struggle against harsh conditions has been established as one of the most urgent and plaguing issues of the twentieth century. World leaders have gathered in order to rethink methods of alleviating widespread hunger and poverty; government organizations and international agencies have been created to educate and aid those in developing countries; and private groups have amassed their resources to help enhance the quality of life of people across the globe. Despite the innumerable organizations and efforts, the question remains one of great complexity and one which requires collaborative interpretation and understanding.

Because the issues of Third World development represent a multiplicity of interrelated elements, they demand the attention of specialist from varied disciplines. Economists, sociologists, environmentalists, politicians, and educators must have a concerted effort toward finding appropriate and efficient ways to assist those people in dire need of assistance. Over the last half century such words as “socioeconomic” and “agro ecological” have become common terminology. The complex problems of today’s world are often seen as multidimensional issues requiring a more comprehensive approach.

In closely examining the various development projects that have been implemented in the last fifty years, one begins to notice certain characteristics of these projects, traits that sketch the progress of the operation as well as foreshadow the results of the efforts. To clarify the ensuing discussion, the following four distinct yet clearly interconnected traits of many foregoing Third World development projects are presented:

1. The project is usually organized and implemented by federal or provincial government agencies or by people living outside of the area to be developed.
2. The needs of the community, as perceived by outsiders, often do not correspond with the actual needs of the local population.
3. The developers often work only with politically and economically influential people, leaving most local residents out of the process.
4. The project emphasizes only one or two aspects of development.

ANALYSIS OF TRAIT #1:

The first trait, the idea that government agencies or outside developers should instigate and implement projects, has been opposed, especially in recent years. One reason for the opposition is directly related to trait number two; with government or outside development agencies, the needs of the community are continuously overlooked if developers lack a thorough understanding of the area and its people (Dover, 1988; Singham, 1989).

According to Clay, "In many countries, grassroots development with indigenous people is done through organizations that are established by states dominated by ethnic groups antagonistic to the groups supposedly being assisted" (Clay, 1987). Aside from ethnic even political or religious conflicts, another factor hindering development (by government or outside agency) is that the groups and/or individuals contributing to the project may well have ulterior motives such as financial gain, satisfaction of consumer demand, and career advancement (Rediske, 1988; George, 1988; Dover, 1988; Kuner, 1988; Von Braun, 1989).

Donor bureaucracies such as the Agency for International Development, USAID, often employ a "top-down" approach to development in which the project is planned from above without involving the local population who are intended to carry out the project and benefit from it. They employ consultants to evaluate development sites. After a short visit to study the technical and economic aspects as well as the environmental impacts, the consultants submit a proposal. The trend is towards larger homogeneous projects that distribute fixed administrative costs but do not address the varied needs of the

indigenous peoples (Stiles, 1987). Buell states, “Top-down strategies are unlikely to improve the lives of the poor” (Buell, 1987). The technical solutions applied by the large organizations mean little without a corresponding improvement in the political status of the poor. In fact, technical solutions may actually aggravate existing inequalities (Buell, 1987).

ANALYSIS OF TRAIT #2:

Some projects employ technologies and ideas that are imported. When the project fails to address local priorities, the local people suffer. As a result, the local fabric of life is inevitably destroyed. The “benefits” of development rarely trickle down to the needy and, in fact, the poor may become further impoverished. The trend is for income to become concentrated in the hands of a few while the poor face restricted food supplies and reduced outside employment opportunities.

Even in smaller “grassroots” projects, which are often scaled down versions of the large projects employed by development organizations and states, projects tend to be identified, designed, and implemented by outsiders. Massive funds and imported ideas simply have not proven to be the most effective means of eliminating poverty (Clay, 1987).

The classical western view of development is to change the underdeveloped, Third World, traditional socioeconomic system into a western pattern of continual growth and production where accumulation of capital (wealth) is desirable (Stiles, 1987). This view is obviously conceived without regard to the needs of those who live with the problems of underdevelopment. According to Petras, “In advanced Third World countries, the fundamental issue is not “underdevelopment” but class inequality and exploitation and social and political polarization as necessary conditions and outcomes of rapid capitalist growth” (Petras, 1981).

ANALYSIS OF TRAIT #3:

In developing trait number three, it is important to note that working only with politically and economically influential people often leads to intensified class divisions among the people of the developing area (Schumacher, 1987; Dover, 1988; Kumar, 1988). Some say that foreign aid and development planning often promotes the tendency of the poor to get poorer and the rich to get richer. Schumacher believes this is because “it is always easier to help those who can help themselves than to help the helpless” (Schumacher, 1973). Because of this, a disproportionately large percentage of development funds is targeted to urban areas which represent a rather small (about 15%) portion of the total world population. Urban development efforts also exacerbate the problems of urban migration and limited resources such as housing, food, and jobs. Aid becomes concentrated in areas where the promise of successful development is most credible (Schumacher, 1973). The creation of a dual economy results where two different patterns of living (wealth and poverty) exist side-by-side. Such a situation is bound to create social and political tension. Further, it is unrealistic to think that the creation of modern sectors in big cities will cause development to encompass the entire population (Schumacher, 1973).

ANALYSIS OF TRAIT #4:

Projects often place too much emphasis on one or two key factors seen as the main forces hindering a group's development. USAID predicted that an agricultural revolution would eliminate world hunger, slow population growth, increase income, and improve health and diet. To achieve this revolution, large amounts of capital were invested in developing areas with most of the money being spent on the costly fertilizers (Brown, 1970). An opposing view holds that hunger persists today not because of inadequate food supplies but because of unemployment and an uneven distribution of income (Brown, 1970).

Early development efforts, such as some following World War II, aimed their efforts at removing costly infrastructure bottlenecks so that Third World economies could "take off". It was felt that if certain large scale construction projects were externally funded, the country could then sustain its own growth (Clay, 1987). The provision of roads and dams, however, was not adequate aid as the local people still did not have the means to utilize what was provided.

Some organizations view development as a technical problem that can be solved with better techniques and advisors. Emphasis on only these external factors does not consider the motivation and effort of the indigenous people. Opposing this view is the idea that development problems are structurally bound in the economic and political roots of the group and this then is the area needing change (Buell, 1987).

An excessive emphasis on aggregate food production and grain trade at the global/international level acts as a detriment to land and resource availability for regional

and local food self-sufficiency. Such an approach hinders the clear perception of the underlying fragility of the ecological, institutional and social bases of fuel, water, and food availability and access (Sen, 1987).

The United Nations has two food policies for developing countries. One emphasizes the development of food production for international involvement, and the other stresses food production to meet national needs (Sen, 1987). Both approaches contend that expanding agricultural production and trade is the surest means of bringing about overall development. In order for the food policies to be successful, the UN must recognize and consider other factors, aside from production and trade, which influence development.

SUMMARY OF INTRODUCTION:

Referring back to the four traits (p.2), it can be seen that Third World development projects are often hindered by the nature of the projects themselves. That is to say, the smooth progress of the development plan may be impeded if it does not fully consider the needs, resources, and abilities of the local population. In order to make sound decisions about these matters, the outside developers must involve the local people. The latter group should be seen as a valuable source of information for the project, and the developers should work together with locals from each political and economic sector.

What follows is a case study of five-year development project in a Third World Mexican village, Mesa del Campanero. It provides an example of a well-panned and successful project. After a description of the village and a discussion of the project, the aspects of the plan which led to its apparent success will be identified.

DESCRIPTION OF MESA DEL CAMPANERO

IN 1982: PRE-PROJECT

In the following pages I provide a description of Mesa del Campanero as it was in 1982, before the development project began. Many of the aspects represented in the description remain very much the same today, but other conditions have changed significantly since the initiation of the project (in 1983). The changes that have occurred are presented in Appendix A of this document.

Mesa del Campanero is located at the 28° 15' latitude by 109° 5' longitude mark in the Sierra Madre Occidental range of Sonora, Mexico. In general terms, the village is approximately 150 miles east of the central coast of the Gulf of California and 300 miles south of the U.S.-Mexico border. The people live atop a vast mesa at the 7000 foot (2134 meter) elevation mark near the Chihuahua border.

Mesa del Campanero is described locally as being shaped like a hand with deep valleys between the fingers. Five individual sections of the village exist: Mesa Fraijo, Mesa Del Coronado, Mesa Holguin, Mesa Del Indio, and Mesa del Llano. The last named, Mesa Del Llano, rests as the palm of the hand, if you will; the name literally means mesa of the plain. The bulk of the village is located in the state of Sonora, but Mesa Del Indio extends to Chihuahua.

Within and surrounding the village is a rich variety of pine and oak trees. The mesa is part of the biotic province known as Madrean Evergreen Woodland which is characterized by several different evergreen oak species such as the cypress oak, along with a number of conifers, namely alligator juniper, Mexican pinon, Chihuahua pine,

white pine, ponderosa pine, and Douglas fir. Evergreen trees such as manzanitas and madrones are also quite common, and one may find palo verde and various cacti such as prickly pear scattered throughout the mountaintop. The flora of Mesa del Campanero is truly unique to the state of Sonora, which is well-known for housing the vast, arid Sonoran desert.

It is likely that one visiting the mesa might spot a mountain lion or a coyote searching for mice or perhaps even a wild turkey. White-tailed deer are also quite common, as are smaller animals such as raccoons and squirrels. It is said that wolves and black bears used to frequent the mountainside, and some still report sightings of the two, but hunting has long been diminishing the number of these animals found in the area.

The climate of the area is temperate, and the average annual precipitation is approximately 47" (119.4 cm) (Tosch, 1987). There are two main rainy seasons on the mesa: from late June to late September frequent rains fall on the village and from December through February both rain and snow are expected. Frost is likely to form between early October and late March, leaving a relatively short growing season. Summer temperatures rarely exceed 80°F (27°C) and winter temperatures stop dropping at about 20°F (-7°C), with the average annual temperature being 70°F (21°C) (Schutts, 1984; Calkins, 1985; Tosch, 1987).

The mountain is largely derived from basaltic rock material, so the parent soil consists of decomposed basalt (Schutts, 1984). In 1982 the topsoil reached a depth of about 20 inches (50.8 cm), with boulders and rocks intermingled. Slash-and-burn techniques were frequently used to clear the land for cultivation, leaving rich but

relatively thin soil for crops. In areas where excessive farming had too often exposed the soil to rain and wind erosion, the topsoil was nearly depleted (Schutts).

Prior to the project, the Sonoran government was selling urea based fertilizers to the entire state, including Mesa del Campanero, because most of the state benefited from this type of fertilizer (Krekler, 1991). The soil on the mesa, however, had an acid pH due to leachates from the pine and oak leaves: thus, the urea intensified the acidity of the Campanero soil, leaving the villagers with less productive soils.

One of the main economic securities of the villagers was land ownership, which allowed the people to raise food and animals for export. Planting and harvesting of crops had to follow the weather patterns in order to maximize productivity. Potatoes were planted in March after the frost melted completely. Squash and corn were planted in the dry months of May and April, while wheat and beans were planted in July when scattered showers were expected. The growing season was short because of the frosts, so the harvest for potatoes was in September, followed by the wheat harvest in October. The squash, beans, and corn were then harvested in November. Apples and other fruits were collected during all those months, so harvest season was quite busy (Edwards, 1985).

Because agricultural products were critical on the mesa, both for immediate consumption and for export, it is important to note specific practices of the villagers with respect to food production and storage. The people did not own any heavy farming equipment, so their primary means of preparing the fields for planting was the utilization of animals such as burros to pull plows mainly made of wood. The harvest, of course, was all done by hand, and to transport the fruits and vegetables the farmers relied on animals as well as on the trucks owned by only a few villagers.

Modern agricultural techniques were not widely implemented on the mesa. Pesticides and herbicides were expensive, thus most farmers shared their crops with the insect world and toiled many hours to keep the weeds under control. As mentioned previously, fertilizers were applied to the land; in order to supplement the urea brought from the government, the people used animal manure from their domestic animals (Krekler, 1991). A visitor helping with the harvest may have noticed many potatoes scattered through the corn fields. This was because some farmers had been taking advantage of crop rotation techniques, planting potatoes, corn, and beans on alternate years in order to sustain the soil (Dover, 1998). Intercropping was also a commonly used technique for enhancing yields and enriching the soils; mixing corn and squash in the same field was a frequent practice on the mesa (Dover, 1988). For years the farmers did not prune their tree crops, so the trees grew old before their time and yields were decreasing.

In order to preserve the food that they did collect, the villagers canned fruits and vegetables. They also hung fruits and meats from the ceiling to have dried foods available throughout the year. Making candied fruits and squash was also a common practice of the village women. The sugar for this process had to be imported. Other food imports included coffee beans, flour, salt, oils, green leafy vegetables, sodas and alcohol. The men hunted deer and wild turkey, and the people ate some beef or pork, although they tried to maximize the export of products from their domesticated animals. Other export crops included beans, corn, and wheat. The more perishable items were not able to withstand the transfer because the trip was long and difficult due to rough and almost

nonexistent roads; few outside haulers were willing to make the arduous drive to the village.

Aside from the export of meat and cash crops the villagers had very few days to earn money. Those who did not own much cropland were employed by those who did. Other supplemented their incomes by serving as the village suppliers of the imported products. Razor blades and other small items were imported suppliers because they were needed and because they were small and could be transported (Krekler, 1991). In the 1930s' there was a saw mill near the village, providing employment for some, but it burned down in the 1940s' (Calkins, 1985). Some of the villagers sought jobs in the nearby towns and commuted to work, but it is evident that the people relied mainly on agricultural production for basic survival needs; farming was the main work available on the mesa, as it has been since its beginnings.

It is assumed that the mesa has been inhabited by different groups of people for hundreds of years. Stories from the villagers explain that Mesa Del Campanero or "Table of the Bell Maker" was named after a 17th century man who made bells for a living on the mesa (Edwards, 1985). Everybody on the mesa can tell the curious visitor that the village was founded on January 6, 1910 by Francisco Fraijo. It seems that Francisco was tired of high rents and land disputes in the city, so he cleared some land in the Sierra Madres and squatted on Mesa Del Campanero, never pursuing legal claim to the land that he occupied. He and his immediate family members settled on what is now Mesa Fraijo, named after the family.

Other settled on extended parts of the mesa. Village history tells that three emigrant Confederate American soldiers (the Moores, Clarks and de Moss) from the

nearby village of Bermuda, which was settled in 1880, intermarried with the women of Mesa del Campanero, bringing odd names into the web of people (Calkins, 1985). In addition, the search for gold and silver brought French explorers and others who spiced up the ethnic variety of the mesa and surrounding areas.

In 1982 there were between 250-300 people, or 40-50 families, occupying Mesa del Campanero (Schutts, 1984; Krekler, 1991). Many of these families intermarried, but over the years a number of the young men and women left the village in search of better economic means as well as wider selection of mates. Demographically, then, the village evolved to the point at which there were hardly any people between the ages of 15 and 50 year (Krekler, 1987). Because more girls left the mesa while the boys stayed to help with the farm, the village consisted of more men than women (Edwards, 1985).

According to one of the long-term project volunteers, Eva McCormick, most of the ideas for home improvements came from the women, but the actualization of an idea was the man's responsibility. To implement new ideas, then, the women depended on the men who were most often busy in the fields (McCormick, 1987). Generally speaking, the women took "almost no active role" in the community (Krenkler, 1987). The women's role in the community, as well as the social and political organization of Campanero as a whole, was seen by local people as well as outsiders as an area in which improvement was definitely needed.

Because Mesa del Campanero had been quite an undeveloped area since its foundation, the men, women, and children all had to work diligently in order to complete all of the daily tasks required to fulfill their basic needs. For example, they exerted great effort to collect water in pails from distant springs. Many boiled some of the water for 10

minutes so that it would be free from parasites for consumption. The water needs alone took a significant proportion of time and energy from each day. Yet the fetching of the water had to be done consistently in order to supply the people with drinking and cooking water, in addition to water for bathing, washing the household items, irrigating the fields, and watering the animals.

In case the reader may be forming some picture of the villagers' living conditions already, I shall enhance the image by briefly describing the houses in which the people lived. Let it be understood, however, that the description refers to the houses as they were before the completion of the development project; the very basic description still holds, and the changes will be discussed later.

With a broad glance one could see that the houses were mainly made from wood or adobe with either tile or imported tin roofing. Some of the houses were made of stones which could be found in the mesa ground layers. Brick were not normally used for building because they were expensive, especially when the cost of transporting them was included in the expense; however, one man had his house made of bricks because he traded some land with a man who owned a brick making business (Calkins, 1985).

The floors of the houses were usually hard packed dirt, but a small number of families had some portion of their floor covered with cement or wood. Either glass or plastic covered the windows. All of the homes had outhouses as there was no plumbing system or running water in the village.

There was no electricity or gas heating in the homes, as electricity and natural gas were not available on the mesa. Instead, the rooms were lit mainly by kerosene lamps, although two houses had used car batteries wired to light bulbs for illumination, and

some families had flashlights (Edwards, 1985). To heat food and themselves, the villagers had iron wood burning stoves or 50-gallon steel drums which served the purpose (Appleton, et al. 1982).

Another way that the villagers made use of the heating benefits of fire was to create bonfires outside. One of the only social events of the village occurred when the men would gather around an outside fire and drink moonshine in the evening light. Other than that, the families generally stayed to themselves. The men normally did more socializing than the women because they worked with the other men in the village. But still, there seemed to be a lack of community organization and spirit (Krekler, 1991).

One thing that brought some members of the community together was education. A number of villagers organized a group of people, namely concerned parents, who took on the responsibility of overseeing school matters. At a time, only a primary school covering grades 1-6 existed. There was only one teacher who worked ten hours each day, five days each week and stayed with a Campanero family when not at work. The teachers would generally come to the mesa to fulfill a state regulation which required that they teach in a rural community before teaching in the city (Krekler, 1991). Thus, after their required year of service, the teacher usually left, and the children met their next teacher after the two months of summer break.

In 1982, before the start of the project, the number of students in attendance was below the state-required number. According to Krekler, “the teacher was putting false names [on the list] because the government would close [the school] if he didn’t show he had 20 students...” (Krekler, 1988). Besides needing more students, the school was in need of playground equipment and building repairs. On cloudy days the natural lighting

in the building was too dim, and on cold winter days the temperature in the building was cooler than the outside of the building (Krekler, 1988).

Because Mesa del Campanero did not have a secondary school, the older children went into the nearest city to attend high school. According to Frank Shutts, about two-thirds of those who left for school never returned to live on the mesa, for they either married and/or they found that the possibility for city employment was tempting. This led to a gap in the age distribution of the villagers, as mentioned earlier.

Most adults in the village did know how to read and write. Many of the older villagers were interrupted in their elementary education because the sawmill that burned in the 1940s' took the only school site with it. Those who were interrupted at that point had not finished school or obtained their elementary certificates.

THE PROJECT: WHY WAS IT NEEDED?

With this description of Mesa del Campanero in mind, it is important to emphasize some of the conditions or characteristics of the village which compelled the Campanero people to seek change. It seems imperative at this point to mention a critical coming event which would most certainly affect life on the mesa: a highway connecting Hermosillo and Chihuahua City was to be constructed near the base of the mesa.

In 1982, the village was fairly isolated from the nearby cities. A small number of families owned AM/FM radios. There was a telephone line strung from tree to tree from the village to the city of Yecora, Sonora, but when this line was damaged, there was no back-up phone communication.

The roads to the mesa were in poor condition, and only a few villagers owned trucks. Most of the traveling was done by foot or on horses. The nearest city was Yecora, located some 8 miles (13 km) below Campanero. Despite its seemingly close location, though, the trip to Yecora took 2-3 hours whether one traveled by truck, horse, or foot. (CP Bulltein, 1982; Topsch, 1987).

By 1982, however, the villagers were well aware that a new highway was to be laid down near the mesa top, in such close proximity that communication between the village and the outside would surely increase. Because the rural area of Campanero was attractive to many who lived in the city, outsiders and developers were soon trying to buy land so that they could build vacation homes and resorts on the mesa (CP Bulletin, 1982). Since the founding father of Mesa del Campanero, Francisco Fraijo, never pursued legal

claim to the land, the situation demanded immediate attention, for land ownership was the main source of economic security for the people.

The villagers anticipated that the increased communication brought about by the highway would most assuredly have further effects on their lives. For example, it was thought that since access to commercial centers such as Obregon and Hermosillo was to be improved, the exchange of goods and ideas would increase. This could have both positive and negative effects on the people of Campanero.

With an increased exchange of goods, the farmers would be able to increase their profits, and the villagers would have greater access to commercial products which could increase the comfort of their lives. Both of these possibilities, if realized, would be looked upon as positive effects on the highway.

Looking at the negative side, though, one of the main concerns of outsiders was the possible loss of the villagers' cultural identity and individual resourcefulness. The following statement by a CP member conveys the idea:

“Unless the pueblo realizes the power of its existing self-sufficiency, it will be yield to the temptation to become consumers just like the rest of the world” (CP, 1982).

Aside from the highway issue, the conditions of the village which warranted increased attention included agriculture, technology, education, and community organization. As mentioned earlier, the soils were depleted in some areas, and most of the land was highly acidic; soil conservation techniques needed to be learned and implemented by the farmers (Shutts, 1984). In addition, the orchards were mostly old and unpruned, calling for attention in order to increase the yield and promote the health of the trees.

With the respect of technology, the village obviously had not been introduced to or had not incorporated many modern technological devices. The perceived need for integration of appropriate technology was affiliated with the needs of agriculture, education, and the home. In the home, there was no running water or electricity, and the villagers spent a great deal of their time doing routine but necessary chores. The integration of appropriate technology in the home was expected to reduce workload and increase the quality of life of the villagers.

It was quite evident that improved lighting was needed in the classroom. In addition, the building and play equipment both needed repairs. The number of attending students needed to be increased so that the school could remain fully functional.

In order for all of these changes to occur, the community had to put forth a collaborative effort. A critical aspect of the development project was that the villagers decided that a project was needed, and they were to make all of the decisions as to what changes would be made. Because the community lacked organization, the success of the project depended largely on the ability of the community to cooperate.

THE PROJECT: WHO ELSE WAS INVOLVED?

The people of Campanero were not the only people involved in the development project; in fact, the two main organizations involved brought the possibility of the project to life by first offering help to the villagers. The villagers then decided to receive the offer openly, thus instigating the development process.

Both the groups were non-government organizations looking for appropriate development projects. The first, La Asociacion Sonorense de los Amigos (ASA), was headquartered in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. Along with both Mexican and American Friends Service Committees (Quaker Groups), ASA had been constructing rural community projects in the area since the 1960s'.

Rather than focusing on long-term development, however, the organizations concentrated on six-week educational summer work camps. The camps usually involved traveling to different villages to share cultures and ideas as well as to contribute to the betterment of the communities by helping with small projects. People from the USA, Mexico, South America, Scandinavia, and Europe served as short term-volunteers in the villages. As a result of the visits, the ASA leaders grew to know the rural people as true friends. A mutual trust and respect developed out of the relationship.

In December of 1979, there was a two-day meeting of 60 people, both from the United States and Mexico, at the Hermosillo home of Norman and Exilee Krekler. The Kreklers had been leaders of ASA for some time. Besides ASA members, some of the others attending the meeting were from the Friends Service Committees. All represented diverse backgrounds, from farmers to anthropologists and from educators to scientists.

The purpose for the meeting was to “explore and implement ways of promoting cross-cultural friendship and cooperation between people of the United States and Mexico and between rural and urban inhabitants” (Merritt, 1988).

At the end of the meeting, another group El Centro de Paz (The Center for Peace), was established to provide a basis of financial, technical, and organizational assistance for future projects. This group was headquartered in three different U.S. cities: Tucson, AZ; Albuquerque, NM; and Claremont CA.

During the meeting the following basic principles of the two groups were established, giving the members goals to focus on during the planning of the future projects:

1. Equality among people regardless of education or social status
2. The importance of community in organization and involvement.
3. Harmony among people and between people and nature.
4. Simplicity; the simple solution is often the best solution.

These basic principles were seen as “essential for bicultural, bi-national cooperation based on trust, transcending culture, and different legal systems” (Merritt, 1988).

In addition to the stated goals, the two groups shared another goal: they decided to establish a long-term regional demonstration project among the villages in which ASA had been conducting work camps. One of those villages was Mesa del Campanero. The ASA leaders proposed the idea to the people of Campanero, and the villagers welcomed their assistance. It was decided that the project would be implemented during a five-year period. At the end of that time period, the two organizations, ASA and CP, would move on to another project.

THE PROJECT: WHAT WERE THE GOALS OF THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN?

El Centro de Paz and La Asociacion Sonorense de los Amigos had two main goals for their part of the project. The first was to help build community spirit. The villagers, as well as the outsiders who had been closely working with the local people, thought that organizing the community would be a key element in the success of any Campanero development plan.

According to ASA President Norman Krekler, the second group goal was “to help people have more of a choice as to whether they stayed in their community or left it to search for a better life” (Krekler, 1988). This was to be accomplished through education and the introduction of appropriate technology.

It is important to note that the local people invited the two groups to assist them in the planning and implementation of the project. The villagers’ goals, then, included those of ASA and CP. Simply stated one of the main ambitions of the local people was to improve the quality of their lives.

THE PROJECT: HOW WAS IT ORGANIZED?

La Asociacion Sonorense de los Amigos and El Centro de Paz offered organizational skills, technical experience, and financial support to the project. It is important to note, however, that the local people served as the source for changes; ASA and CP did not undertake any enterprise without a request from the people of Campanero. Ideas for projects came from both the outsiders and the locals, but the initiation of the plan came from the latter group. According to Merritt, “the role of the outside agents was to identify and nurture the impulse for change through processes compatible with the customs and expressed desires of the people” (Merritt, 1989).

The two organizational groups, ASA and CP, introduced improvement ideas and appropriate technology projects to the villagers. Aside from the fact that the members of these outside organizations were well-informed about the possibilities for development in the village (especially regarding technology), they also offered a means to get supplies at affordable costs. The gathering of supplies, then, was left to the outside groups.

To aid in communication between the organizations and the villagers, one of the local people donated a small building located on Mesa Fraijo to serve as a house for outside, long-term volunteers. ASA and CP provided the volunteers with health insurance, food, furnished accommodations, and transportation (CP Newsletter, Fall 1986). The volunteers were responsible for motivating the community to implement projects; working with the villagers on the various projects; providing accommodations for short-term volunteers; visiting and establishing good working relationships with the local people; and promoting women’s gathering (McCormick, 1987). All of the

volunteers that spent time in Campanero also brought unique skills and ideas for additional projects, such as home gardening and knitting.

In addition to serving as a shelter for the volunteers, the small house served as a test site to introduce the various technology projects to the local people. By first installing a new device, such as a solar panel or an earthen oven, in the volunteers' house, the groups were able to furnish an example for the villagers. The people could then make informed decisions about what technological devices they would like to integrate into their homes.

An important aspect of the project was that the funds for the improvements came from two main sources: the individual incomes of the villagers and the donations collected by ASA and CP. If an individual Campanero family had the desire but not the funds to purchase home-improvement items associated with the project (i.e. solar panels, water pumps, etcetera...), ASA and CP would make up the difference in cost by providing no-interest loans and/or collected donations.

ONE PROJECT: EDUCATION

Because the education system on the mesa was in such poor organizational and physical condition, and because the education project has been called the “best project” by Norman Krekler (Krekler, 1991), I will describe it in detail in the body of this paper.

Before the initiation of the project, the primary school did not have enough students and was in danger of being closed. The children did not have a long-term teacher and the building and play equipments needed repairs. There was no secondary school, so the young people were leaving the mesa. Although the adults in Campanero could read and write, they had not completed their elementary certificates.

Since then the villagers built a two-room house for the teacher so that he/she would not have to live with one of the families. The primary school teacher is now a permanent resident on the mesa, and there are about thirty primary students attending school on a regular basis.

With the help of the volunteers, the local people painted and patched the school house, putting plastic windows and a new ceiling. The swing set was repaired with local wood.

The school house has four solar panels for electricity and, thus, for better illumination. Two of the panels were given to Campanero by the state congresswoman as a result of a petition, and the other two were donated by the Presbyterian Church. The wiring and other supplies were purchased with donations taken at a village meeting.

One of the long-term volunteers responded to the requests of the local residents and walked for miles to ask villagers to sign a petition stating the need for a secondary

school on the mesa. Now Campanero has a three year high school program supported by the federal government. While the mesa does not have a secondary teacher, the students are also taught through satellite television out of Mexico City.

The funding for the program came from the federal government as well as the villagers. The government donated a television/satellite system, while the local people provided the wiring and other supplies necessary to the proper functioning of the system.

Most of the adults in the village now have their elementary certificates of completion. The first long-term volunteer responded to the villagers' request for tutoring, and other volunteers continued the program.

The village has a committee that is responsible for overseeing the education system. According to Krekler, most of the decisions are made by consensus (Krekler, 1987). All of these changes have occurred because the local people saw a need for them asked for help, and the government and non-government organizations responded. The fact that the villagers worked together for the betterment of Campanero shows that community spirit has grown in the village.

CONCLUSIONS

As stated in the foreword to this text, a successful project is one which meets or exceeds its immediate goals and one that continues to develop after the outside agency or support group withdraws. In addition, in order for the project to have a successful start, it must offer the local people direct benefit from their participation.

The project at Mesa del Campanero was successful because it did meet its immediate goals. The first goal of the project was to build community spirit. During the five years, the villagers worked together to solve problems and implement ideas, forming committees to oversee specific matters.

One of the most immediate areas where organization was needed was that of landownership. The villagers worked together to obtain legal ownership of the land before the highway was completed. They saw areas where change was needed, and they requested help from both government and non-government agencies. All of this organizing and planning laid the foundation for a strong, self-sustaining community.

The second goal of the project was to help the village have a better chance to stay on the mesa and retain their fairly self-sufficient lifestyles. Through education the villagers learned how to more efficiently prune and graft their orchard trees, how to improve their diet and health through home gardening and resource manuals, and how to knit and quilt both profit as well as for home use.

Through technology such as solar-powered electricity, hydraulic ram pumps, and CB radios, the local people expanded their lifestyles to include devices which gave added

comfort and security to life on the mesa. Both technology and education worked to the benefit of the villagers and gave them a chance to improve the quality of their lives.

Villagers are continuing to generate and implement their own ideas. After the completion of the five-year project, for example, the local people collected funds through village donations and business enterprises to build a community church. Apparently the Campanero people had wanted a church for some time, but were never before organized and enthusiastic enough to build one (Krekler, 1991). The spirit of the development project is not dying on the mesa; this shows that the project did succeed.

Finally, it is evident that the project directly benefited the local people, as that was the main goal of the plan. The Campanero people obtained tangible items regardless of financial standing, and they put them to immediate use.

The success of the Mesa del Campanero project was due to the nature of the project itself. Referring to page two, the four traits of many foregoing development projects, it is clear that the Campanero project does not fit that description at all; in fact, it seems to contradict the type of project represented by those four traits.

The Campanero project is characterized by the following four traits:

1. The project was organized and implemented by local residents, with two outside agencies (nongovernmental) responding to the community's requests for change.
2. The actual needs of the local population were catered to since the local people identified those needs, and the agencies worked with the people.
3. The outside agencies worked with everybody alike, making sure to provide for those who could not provide for themselves.
4. The project covered a multitude of development aspects, including education, technology, agriculture, health, economics, community organization, and so on.

Other Third World development projects which follow this community-based approach have proven to be successful in every way. (Kammen, et. al., 1990; Nuntasuwan, 1987; Malik, 1988). This approach to development, with the community as the source for change, should not be overlooked. In fact, with time perhaps more agencies will realize that the grassroots approach, working from the local community and expanding from there, is a sensible and realistic approach. We may find that this small-scale approach that Schumacher wrote about in the 1970s is part of the answer to many large-scale development problems in the 1990s.

“Many changes have taken place in Campanero in the last five years, and it would be presumptuous for us to say that any one of them would not have happened without the Friends. Some would have, some would not. The people themselves have done them, but I think we are very safe to say if they happened at all, many of them would not have happened in the same way without us as the catalyst”.

--Norman Krekler, Director of La
Asociacion de los Amigos (from
“Report on Mesa Campanero
Project”, 1987)

APPENDIX A:

Information on some of the major projects completed in Mesa del Capanero during the five-year development plan.

Tangibles	Financial Source	Special Notes
Community water tank	Yecora Municipal Government	Volunteers helped to motivate people and build foundation. Village water committee formed, 2 men/2 women to oversee matters. Presently not Functional because Collecting basin caved in.
Hydraulic ram pumps	Villagers purchased with no-interest loans from W. Elkton Ohio Friends.	Tested first in volunteer's house. Low cost & maintenance. Can Carry water to 30+ homes. Pumps 300 gallons/day. The only energy source needed is the water flow itself
Citizen's Band radios	Villagers purchased with no-interest loans from Friends Service Committee.	Uses solar panel to charge battery. Used on trial basis for six months. Committee formed to oversee maintenance. Available for Emergency back-up for phone line. Used to announce arrival of doctor and dentist to mesa.
Tangible	Financial Source	Special Notes

<p>Apiculture (beekeeping) introduced</p>	<p>Grant from the Heifer Project International</p>	<p>Increased sale of fruit as allowed direct communication w/ truckers.</p>
<p>Solar panels in homes for electricity.</p>	<p>State congresswoman donated half the needed panels (2). Presbyterian church donated the other half for a total of four. Villagers collected Campanero donations for wiring and other needed supplies.</p>	<p>Students able to study more inside of building. Number of students did increase; possibly the new lighting helped interest newcomers.</p>
<p>Television (24 inch)</p>	<p>Sent by the federal government.</p>	<p>Used in secondary school. Students taught by satellite program from Mexico City. Volunteers walked miles to get signatures for government support for this program.</p>
<p>Test orchard of walnuts, cherries, raspberries, etc...</p>	<p>State funded</p>	<p>Eric Krekler, a state horticulturist, lives in Campanero now as he tends to the trees.</p>

APPENDIX B:

Information on the long-term volunteers, including lists of many small projects they helped with or initiated.

Name and Position	Where From	Dates; Length of Stay	Main Contributions to Campanero
Orlando Quintero (agronomist)	Hermosillo Mexico	1983-84; 12 mos	Helped start adult education/literacy program. Helped adults to obtain certificates in 1 year. Helped adults to obtain 6 elementary certificates in 1 year. Taught pruning/grafting. Acted as a source of information for new crop farming. Analyzed soils. Came up with apiculture project idea. Gained trust of locals as the first volunteer.
Ann & Michael McGuigan	U.S.	1984-85; 12 mos	Continued adult educ. Worked with home gardens and diet/nutrition. Taught quilting. Helped with beekeeping. Helped install CB radios. Helped introduce Blue Spruce trees & new varieties of apples.
Jeff Severinghaus (leader of 10 volunteers)	U.S.	Jn-Jy 85 6 weeks	Dug 1000m of ditch for town water system. Built concrete structure for protection of ram. Rebuilt school swing set. Installed telephone pole. Worked in the fields. Cleared rocks off the runway for doctors who fly to the mesa.
Tucker Burling	Mc Neal, AZ	Ja-Apr 86; 2 mos	Skilled in electronics & mechanics. Helped install solar panels and CB radios. Repaired sewing machines. Experienced with beekeeping, so he helped with that project.

Name and Position	Where from	Dates; Length of Stay	Main Contributions to Campanero
Helen Rowland, (from United World College)	England	Fb-Au 86 6 mos	Worked with women in community development. Initiated projects in knitting, quilting, and home gardening. Helped start bee project. Brought books on beekeeping.
John and Deb Bruihler	Rochester, Minesota	Ma 86?; weeks	Helped start the bee project.
Eric Krekler (leader of 10 others from State Horticulture & Fruiticulture College)	Hermosillo Mexico	Jn-Au 86; 2-3 mos	Taught orchard pruning. Developed 25 late-season vegetable gardens. Took soil samples for testing. Taught use of fertilizers & insecticides. Now resident of Campanero as state agriculture extension agent.
Lisa Cannon	New Jersey	Se-De 86; 4 mos	Continued with adult education/literacy. Taught women about good nutrition and health. With next two volunteers, introduced Donde No Hay Doctor as a reference manual for health.
Jane Kalbaugh, (from Warren Wilson College)	N. Carolina	Oc-De 86; 6 weeks	Taught English to village teenagers who wanted to learn. Helped teach about good nutrition and health.
Eve McCormick	Connecticut	Oc 86- Sep 87; 12 mos	Taught knitting to women. Made contact with buyers for needlework & seewing. Helped with beekeeping. Built chicken houses. Helped toymaking workshop. Helped dig foundation for town water system. Greatly organized/encouraged community, especially women.

Name and Position	Where From	Dates; Length of Stay	Main Contributions to Campanero
Laurie Larson	Alaska	Ja-Fb 87; 1 month	Made new furniture for the volunteers' house. Repaired broken items in the volunteers' house. Helped dig the foundation for the water tank.
Robert Wheeler	West Virginia	Ja-Fb 87; 1 month	Tutored people who wanted to learn English. Helped Laurie to build and repair. Helped with foundation.
Marion Yeager (from Warren Wilson College)	North Carolina	My-Jl 87; 2 mos	Organized groups of young girls to do fun & productive things (Like a Girl Scout group). Helped Eve with various projects.
Greg & Carol Paulson and 2 sons (Greg is a Professor of Horticulture at OSU)	Oregon	My-Jn 87; 1 month	Brought Douglas fir and grass seeds from Oregon. Taught pruning. Showed filmstrips on horticulture.
Mark & Emily Patton, and 3 children (Mark is a farm mgr., & Emily was a Spanish teacher)	Connecticut	Jn 87- My 88; 12 mos	Started youth group similar to a 4H-type group. Helped with the water tank foundation. Installed water system with hydraulic ram pump on outlying areas near village. Helped with secondary school initiation.

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