Workshop Session   Sustainable Rural Development

Names of presenters   Farouk Jiwa, Honey Care Africa; Ali Mokhtar, IDRC; David Bruce, Rural and Small Town Program, Mount Allison University

Name of rapporteur   Kathleen Ives

PRESENTER 1

Presenter #1 Farouk Jiwa

Title of Presentation

The <u>Innovative Practice or Strategy</u> that the speaker is presenting.

Mr. Jiwa presented the idea that the private sector has a significant role to play in development in general, and specifically with regards to the sustainable development in rural communities. Using Honey Care Africa (HCA) as an example, Mr. Jiwa spoke about the tripartite business model that HCA has used to implement sustainable beekeeping projects in rural Kenya. This model includes the private sector, donor organizations and communities.

Honey Care Africa targets small-scale subsistence farmers in rural Kenya who have typically been ignored by government officials who have been more interested in larger cash crops such as coffee and tea. HCA also introduced new beekeeping technology to Kenya; by promoting the Langstroth hive, HCA was ensuring that they had a marketable product and that women and youth were able to participate in beekeeping.

HCA was founded to prove that the private sector does indeed have a role to play in development. HCA uses the following indicators to guide their business practices:

- Economics – the company as well as the community must profit from the project
- Environment – the project must be environmentally sustainable and ensure the environmental sustainability of the community
- Social – the company must generate considerable social value

This model asks first "what does the market want?" then "how can we produce it?" keeping in mind the triple bottom line values.

The "<u>Mainstream Practice</u>" the speaker says their strategy is an alternative to.

This practice is an alternative to government and donor organization driven development. Traditionally, development projects have asked communities what they can produce first and tried to find a market for the product later. This has proven unsuccessful.

The <u>Alternative Vision</u> presented by the speaker (i.e. this innovative practice contributes to this vision)

Rural farmers with little land will be able to turn their products into cash.

<u>Success Factors</u>: factors that the speaker attributes to the success of their innovative practice or strategy.

- Guaranteed market for farmers
- Market research
- Fair prices paid to farmers upon collection of product (in this case, honey)
- Farmers are not required to pay loan if they do not harvest or if there is a drought
- Field officers that work directly with farmers to address their needs
- Micro-credit scheme allows farmers to access beehives and encourages ownership of the project
- Environmental assessment on sustainability
- Village demonstrations on beekeeping technology

<u>Key Challenges</u>: the main challenges the speaker identifies in implementing the strategy

- Lack of assistance from government
- Changing attitudes – this can be a multi-fold problem. In the case of HCA, communities were used to being given things from donor organizations. HCA had to convince individuals that their investment in beekeeping would be worthwhile (e.g. purchasing the hive). HCA also had to convince some farmers to change their beekeeping techniques.
- Recruiting women and youth

<u>Overcoming Challenges</u>: the ways the speaker says that challenges have been overcome.

- Where government assistance was lacking, the private sector stepped in (e.g. When government hired district beekeeping officers were not fulfilling their duties, HCA put field officers in place)
- Appropriate training sessions on new technologies
- Perseverance
- Recognizing the importance of community buy-in

<u>Moving from the Fringe to the Mainstream</u>: the ways the speaker says this work will move from the fringe to the mainstream.

<u>Lessons Learned from this Experience</u> - lessons learned identified by the speaker

PRESENTER 2

Presenter #2 Ali Mokhtar IDRC Lake Nasser Project

Title of Presentation

The Innovative Practice or Strategy that the speaker is presenting.

The goal of the Lake Nasser Project in Egypt is to explore agro-ecology as a sustainable livelihood. All agricultural projects must make ecological sense. The Lake Nasser project is intended to improve the conditions of the poor residing in a fragile ecological are. The project aims to achieve their goal through the following objectives:

- Identify factors affecting adoption of agro-ecology to develop understanding of its potential impact on livelihoods and the ecosystem
- Establish and support participatory community based management of land and water resources based on agro-ecology principles
- Identify with the community environmental threats to human health and initiate actions with stakeholders to mitigate threats
- Analyse and encourage opportunities for environmental friendly livelihood strategies including better access to markets
- Derive lessons on the applicability, benefits, shortcomings, etc of agro-ecology for policy makers

The "Mainstream Practice" the speaker says their strategy is an alternative to.

The Alternative Vision presented by the speaker (i.e. this innovative practice contributes to this vision)

Farmers in Egypt have migrated to the Lake Nasser region, bringing with them various cultures, traditions, technologies and farming methods. The vision is to build a new community, with a unified vision for resettlement.

<u>Success Factors</u>: factors that the speaker attributes to the success of their innovative practice or strategy.

CCA – Collaborative Community Action – community collaborates with stakeholders to achieve initiatives. There is an interactive dialogue with those that can bring change.

> The success of the project comes primarily from the process of having people work together. Even if it is as simple as planting a tree, the process the community must go through to carry that out encourages community unity.

<u>Key Challenges</u>: the main challenges the speaker identifies in implementing the strategy

- Fragility of the land
- Lack of government support

<u>Overcoming Challenges</u>: the ways the speaker says that challenges have been overcome

- Exploratory visits of the region
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Organizational need assessment
- PRA training
- Livelihood diagnosis (areas of concern to livelihood)
  - e.g. conversion to fishing when agriculture is not as labour intensive
- Medical campaign
- Seedling nursery
- Village enhancement

<u>Moving from the Fringe to the Mainstream</u>: the ways the speaker says this work will move from the fringe to the mainstream.

<u>Lessons Learned from this Experience</u> - lessons learned identified by the speaker

PRESENTER 3

Presenter #3 David Bruce, Mount Allison University

Title of Presentation

The Innovative Practice or Strategy that the speaker is presenting.

Voluntary agencies are being called upon to provide services where the public and private sectors are falling short.

The "Mainstream Practice" the speaker says their strategy is an alternative to.

Private and public sector provide services.

The Alternative Vision presented by the speaker (i.e. this innovative practice contributes to this vision)

Success Factors: factors that the speaker attributes to the success of their innovative practice or strategy.

Key Challenges: the main challenges the speaker identifies in implementing the strategy

- Default mindset that the voluntary sector can fill gaps where the public/private sector pulls out
- Asking the voluntary sector to act like the private sector without building their capacity to do so.
  - E.g. Repopulation of rural communities – government encourages immigrants to settle in rural communities to address the decline in rural populations but does not give voluntary sector capacity to develop resettlement associations

Overcoming Challenges: the ways the speaker says that challenges have been overcome

Moving from the Fringe to the Mainstream: the ways the speaker says this work will move from the fringe to the mainstream.

<u>Lessons Learned from this Experience</u> - lessons learned identified by the speaker

Need to examine the importance of relationships where communities are successful in community initiatives

Comment

Q. With reference to the first presentation: Just because the market wants something and we can do it, does not necessarily mean we should. How do we include the environmental and other issues into our decision?

When we ask can we produce it, we should ask does it make social, environmental, economic sense? It always comes back to the Triple Bottom Line

Q. What about cooperatives?

Ali: Coops in Egypt have experienced many ups and downs. The government uses them as an extension of itself. The process of restructuring the coops has not been successful. May be in the plan for Lake Nasser in the future but first there needs to be community and for neighbours to talk.

Farouk: Coops in Kenya have a history of being corrupt. HCA is trying to work with individual farmers. There are beekeeping associations and HCA supports beekeepers working together but coops are not always successful and HCA would rather work with individuals – individual efforts, individual benefits. HCA does work with community based organizations.

Comment: There is an incredible amount of volunteer time associated with coops

Comment: Cooperative movement also includes sharing between people e.g. farmers sharing equipment. It is a cooperative of getting prepared to go to market

Farouk: Some beekeepers share equipment. They own individual hives but share beekeeping equipment.

Ali: Formalizing coops is sometimes where things go wrong.

Q. With reference to Lake Nasser resettlement, how did the project get the people to come together to discuss, build community?

Ali: When dealing with different groups, they have to develop the agenda. It can be as simple as the process of planting a tree. Where? How? Who takes care of it? The process of deciding this is important because they have to come to some common ground

Q. Is it important to have a school or community centre

Ali: It's as important as the people think it is – what they really want versus what you are offering needs to be considered.

Summary:

- For sustainable rural development need to reduce dependency on government grants
- Private sector plays an important role
- Importance of building and maintaining relationships between stakeholders (e.g. between community and private sector, between voluntary organizations and community, etc.)
- Triple Bottom Line – Social, Environmental, Economic
- Need for common ground in a diverse community