CHOICE Humanitarian

DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL VILLAGES AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

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OVERVIEW/BACKGROUND

With headquarters located in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, The Center for Humanitarian Outreach and Inter-Cultural Exchange, “CHOICE” Humanitarian has been dedicated to humanitarian service through sustainable rural village development since 1982. The CHOICE mission statement: “CHOICE Humanitarian offers alternatives to the hardships of poverty in rural villages of the world with simple technologies, self-sustainable initiatives and public awareness.”

CHOICE Humanitarian development models and practices are largely based on the writings and research of Dr. James Mayfield, a recently retired professor at the University of Utah. Dr. Mayfield has a long and distinguished career in the field of international development and has received numerous recognitions for his research, achievement and publications. He taught development for thirty years at the University of Utah. Dr. Mayfield is presently a member of the CHOICE Humanitarian Policy Governance Board and has been instrumental in creating CHOICE Humanitarian’s approach to sustainable development.

Currently, CHOICE conducts active development projects in Bolivia, Mexico, Guatemala, Kenya, Viet Nam and Nepal. Additional countries and project areas are considered as funds and resources become available. The majority of our staff members are natives of the countries in which they work, often having been raised in the rural villages themselves. They have successfully navigated the paths of opportunity and are dedicated to assisting villagers accomplish their goals.

INTRODUCTION

For this presentation, CHOICE Humanitarian was asked to share some of its experiences that would demonstrate the teaching of, and practical application of village “social capital”. While the term ‘social capital’ is relatively new to CHOICE Humanitarian,
CHOICE has been employing this concept for nearly 20 years in many successful community development projects around the world. At villager’s request CHOICE offers training and resources to help villages to develop their capacity to work together as a community and to help villages begin networking beyond their community in order to access new resources. CHOICE field staff workers and facilitators in some of our project countries were asked to share experiences that demonstrate their work in the development of village social capital. Those experiences follow this note on our approach to social capital.

**CHOICE APPROACH TO ‘SOCIAL CAPITAL’**

Dr. James Mayfield writes:

“Powerlessness of poor people in isolated rural villages arises through a process whereby valued identities and roles on the one hand and valuable resources on the other are denied—all of which are prerequisite to the exercise of interpersonal influence and effective social functioning.”

As long as the ‘outside world’ remains out-of-reach from the village, the chances of that community collectively breaking the poverty cycle are minimal. Isolated infusions of support will not have a lasting positive impact on the village if they cannot be built upon by securing ongoing support from the outside. One of the most important programs that can be developed with any village is a comprehensive system of networking with local national governments, with national and international NGOs, and with local and international private corporations. Christopher Johnson, Director of Field Operations for CHOICE Humanitarian has stated. “If we leave a village without a vibrant

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networking program, we are abandoning them. If we leave the village with good networking in place, we are releasing them to achieve much greater things than our organization could ever offer.”

CHOICE Humanitarian believes the first step in opening the resources of the outside world for the benefit of the villages is by encouraging them to organize themselves based on the principles of sustainable development. With the help of a facilitator, villagers identify and prioritize their needs through the use of Mayfield’s “Twenty Points of Progress” (see Appendix I) self-assessment tool. A vital step in the process is in encouraging and teaching the community to work together in setting goals of mutual benefit. Next, the village establishes a plan for reaching their objectives. Once villagers understand the value in working together for the benefit of the entire community, they are often very effective in defining their needs and determining ways to meet them, yet they lack access to those who have the necessary resources to achieve their objectives.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

After the village has completed the “Twenty Points of Progress” self assessment, the identification of a sustainable self-initiative project is the next step in the CHOICE development process. “Communities grow out of practice; they are groups drawn together, by common activities. The initial projects villagers decide to undertake become the foundation. CHOICE Rural Development Facilitators (RDFs) then use that foundation to build the capacity of the community to undertake additional development.

According to Robert Putnam:

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“Stocks of social capital, such as trust, norms, and networks, tend to be self-reinforcing and cumulative. Successful collaboration in one endeavor builds connections and trust—social assets that facilitate future collaboration in other, unrelated tasks. As with conventional capital, those who have social capital tend to accumulate more—them as has, gets.”

Recently one village in Bolivia demonstrated this principle by initially planning and building a community water system. The system delivered water from a distant spring to a central point in the village where everyone could access it. With the experience and pride of their achievement in mind, villagers then determined they could do more. Within a short time the new water system was connected to every individual home in the village. A tap was even installed next to the village latrine for sanitary hand washing.

Community projects also become the catalyst for bringing the most marginalized members of the community, often women, into networks. For example, CHOICE women’s savings groups in Mexico and the CHOICE women’s micro-credit bank in Kenya have brought together women who have lived in the same village unit for years, yet who have never experienced the mutual support and interaction for their common interests. They now have a mutual need to be supportive of each other. This interaction has created social capital for these women for the first time in their lives.

“Social capital is unlikely to arise among people who do not understand each other. In the absence of shared meanings or goals, it is difficult to see why or how people will collaborate.”

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The *Twenty Points of Progress* provides experience in setting shared goals. The project then provides a shared experience that will contribute to a stronger sense of community and enhanced internal social capital.

The development of ‘external’ social capital for a village most often comes only from intervention from an outside organization. Traditionally, villagers are shut out by the “power brokers” in the cities of developing countries because of racial discrimination, class discrimination, religious and/or other prejudices. This may be coupled with a lack of perceived importance of villagers to those in authority. Paying attention to or doing a favor for a villager may not further the career or popularity of a high-profile politician. However, when the director of an American supported N.G.O. with a well-established reputation and an extensive network of contacts is involved, politicians often go out of their way to accommodate requests for support.

CHOICE Humanitarian ‘lends’ its social capital to village leaders. After a few visits to politicians accompanied by a CHOICE Humanitarian representative, village leaders have the opportunity to establish a relationship of their own. Eventually those leaders can make appointments with decision makers without the accompaniment of a CHOICE director or representative. Villagers thus accumulate and develop their own social capital.

**CHOICE Social Capital Implementation**  
**Application & Results**

**EXAMPLE #1 - MEXICO**

Juan Luis Alducin, Country Director in Mexico for CHOICE Humanitarian, writes:
“The zone of Irapuato, Guanajuato has a dry, desert climate. The issue of clean water is a great problem that affects everyone. The contamination of the rivers causes many health problems. The diet of the villagers is greatly limited.

In our city, as in other parts of Latin America, the communities that are the most remote are generally the most neglected, with few services and many problems. Five such communities, which are geographically separated, became very united in attempting to find a solution to their water problem.

Before the beginning of the rainy season, the leaders of these communities met about this problem and about the lack of governmental interest in helping them. They invited CHOICE Humanitarian Mexico to attend one of their meetings. I attended and listened to the solutions they had identified. I believed I knew an individual who could help them.

I spoke with the head of Municipal Medical Services in Irapuato and invited him to visit the communities. He accepted because of our personal relationship. He went with us to listen to the people and hear their proposed solutions.

After his visit, he invited the community leaders to the Municipal Palace to speak with the Municipal President of Irapuato. He made the appointment and introduced each community leader to the President. The Municipal President listened, and invited village leaders to return in 15 days. He subsequently spoke with some of his friends and acquired many things to help the people of these communities reach the goals they had set, including the use of a caterpillar to create an earthen dam, the payment of 600 hours of labor to construct filters for the rivers, and a program of reforestation to replenish the soil and stop erosion.”
An important step in developing social capital is in teaching village leaders how to research and locate potential resources. Often programs and funds are available but because of the absence of social capital villagers are not aware of possible solutions. Again, in Mexico, if a community builds a school or a health post in their village, the government will staff and supply it. CHOICE Humanitarian field staff have helped many villages become aware of government-sponsored programs. Programs are available to help individuals purchase livestock such as pigs or chickens at greatly discounted prices. Yet, because of their remote locations with little or no connection to outside resources, many of the villages in which CHOICE Humanitarian works were not aware of these programs.

In rural communities, the illiteracy rate is very high among adult men and women. When CHOICE Mexico was working in the village of Garbanzo, the women of the Savings Box Program asked the CHOICE field staff to sponsor classes in reading and writing.

The women were especially embarrassed that they could not help their children with their schoolwork. They also wanted to learn about addition and subtraction in order to work together in their Savings Box Program.

During a family gathering, Juan Alducin, Country Director for CHOICE Mexico mentioned this problem to his cousins. This started a discussion about possible solutions. The seed of social capital was planted. One of the cousins had a friend who was a member of a Rotary Club in the area. The Rotary Club friend expressed a great desire to do something meaningful of the rural communities. Juan Alducin met with him and learned about a Rotary Club endorsed literacy program named “I Can”, a very simple method that teaches reading and writing with the aid of a small book of pictures, letters, words and numbers. Students can learn at their own pace.
Juan arranged to take 12 members of the Rotary Club to visit the village. Rotary members handed out the literacy books, pencils, erasers, and markers. A local villager was selected to be trained in Irapuato to help with the program.

At the end of 4 months a class graduation was celebrated. Of the 18 villagers who started the class, 12 graduated! The success in this case can be attributed to the simplest of social capital dynamics, ‘friends telling friends’.

EXAMPLE #2 - BOLIVIA

In the development handbook, Two Ears of Corn, Roland Bunch wrote: “Poor people often lack both the self-confidence needed to approach large organizations and the knowledge to know what to ask them once they do…small programs can create what is, in effect, a human infrastructure capable of bridging the gap between large organizations (or government entities) and the poor.”

A CHOICE Humanitarian example of this social circumstance is an experience reported by our Country Director in Bolivia, Willy Mendosa. In Bolivia, CHOICE Humanitarian operates under the name of Fundacion Andina Para La Ninez (F.A.N.). CHOICE has been working in this country since 1982. We enjoy an excellent reputation with local and national government entities. Willy Mendosa uses this asset of social capital to the benefit of many small villages.

Typically in Bolivia leaders of small rural villages present requests for projects to the Mayor’s Office. The mayors are faced with the dilemma of limited funds and a seemingly endless stack of requests from the villages. Unless there is a reason for mayors to pay particular attention to a proposal, they are inclined to toss incoming proposals on the stack and really not give them another thought. In addition, law prohibits mayors from providing more than 50% of the project costs and from giving money directly to the
village. Funds must go to the merchants, suppliers and contractors who will be providing the necessary supplies, expertise and materials for specific projects.

F.A.N., however, has been working with the mayors’ offices in the area for many years and has a keen understanding of how government funding works. F.A.N. has also developed a reputation for effectively leveraging project funds. This is of particular interest to mayors because they can complete more projects within available budgets. The result for the politician is increased popularity and a better chance of re-election. Subsequently, when proposals are presented to the mayor’s office with the endorsement of F.A.N., they get immediate attention and have a much higher likelihood of being funded.

Once a village leader has gone through the process of successfully completing a project or two, he becomes a good investment for the mayor’s office. He has become known for being organized, accountable and capable. The village can then stand on it’s own reputation in future project proposals.

F.A.N. and the community of Katchiri in Bolivia had been working together to develop a community water system. They had pooled available resources but still lacked enough money to buy the needed pipes for the project. Together, CHOICE Country Director Willy Mendosa and the village leader went to the manager of the plant where the pipes were manufactured. They were prepared with all of the specifications for the proposed project and an explanation of their available cash. The plant manager was impressed with the extent of their preparation. He gave them a significant discount that enabled the villagers to purchase the pipes needed for the project.

Willy and Maxima Mendosa have developed a program entitled Mi Escuelita (trans: My Little School), which is a good example of how an NGO can act as a catalyst

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to bring together individuals from different networks to support the development of a community.

The goal of the Mi Escuelita program is to:

“Introduce new technologies to various village schools; provide alternative education via hygiene, health and nutrition training; and to raise the personal expectation for standard of living through effective examples to the community.”

There are many active NGOs in the Altiplano region of Bolivia where Willy and Maxima have witnessed repeated NGO program failure in the region. They ascribe these failures to the lack of community involvement in the project. The Mi Escuelita model was developed on the premise that various technologies would be introduced to schools in order to combat high child mortality—only if construction and maintenance would be led by local participation.

Communities deciding to support Mi Escuelita agree to supply the labor and available materials for the construction of the greenhouse, well, and latrine to be built at the community school. F.A.N. supplies the expertise and other materials needed. They also work with local government agencies and local professionals to bring healthcare training, dentists, doctors, and teachers to the community. These services are provided at the community school.

The children at the school are taught how to grow garden vegetable crops in the greenhouse. These crops are then introduced to the children as part of their school lunch program. They receive training in dental hygiene and dental treatment from professionals arranged by F.A.N. They experience the use of latrine and clean water as part of the daily
life at school. They also plant trees and learn the value of restoring the ecology of their communities.

Through the network created by the Mi Escuelita program, the children of the rural villages learn new life skills, receive improved medical and dental care, and develop new visions for how their lives can be improved. Teachers receive support and training never available to them before. Parents have the opportunity to plan and work toward an improved life for their children through the experience of identifying goals and implementing the planned projects. Through the Mi Escuelita program, a rural village is able to develop social capital networks with governmental, non-governmental, and professional resources that otherwise would not have been available to them. These networks are enabling many villages in Bolivia to reach their goals of healthier children and an improved quality of life.

**EXAMPLE #3 - KENYA**

In addition to governmental resources, the private business community in Kenya can provide many potential resources that could benefit villages, but barriers prevent villagers from knowing about or accessing these resources. The network of contacts, or ‘external social capital’, established by CHOICE Humanitarian is actively shared with villages.

In Kenya villagers would not normally have access to various merchants and services in their area. For several years CHOICE Humanitarian has made efforts to establish good working relationships with these merchants and other vendors. Because of these relationships, CHOICE often receives discounts. By involving the villagers in the transactions with these businesses on behalf of CHOICE, they receive the same benefits. Once a villager establishes the connection to CHOICE on their first visit, they maintain the
credibility personally and continue to enjoy the benefits on their own without mention of CHOICE.

CHOICE Humanitarian is also opening doors for business opportunities for villagers. One of the new micro-industries that CHOICE is supporting is the spraying of naturally growing cashew nut trees with fertilizers and pesticides to yield a greater harvest. The harvest is then sold in the cities. CHOICE initially made contact with Bayer Co. who produces the chemicals. We were successful in gaining the Bayer Company's support for the program. The 'spray teams' have since received free training from Bayer and free protective clothing.

CHOICE and Bayer Co. have also teamed up to visit the major buyers of bixa, another naturally grown crop in the area. The crop is harvested by locals and sold to markets in the cities. CHOICE and the Bayer Co. have opened the door for the spray teams to work directly with the major bixa buyers in establishing an agreement to purchase the increased production of bixa at a set price. The bixa buyers have confidence in the spray teams because CHOICE and Bayer vouch for them. The spray teams can confidently invest in spraying bixa knowing that there will be a guaranteed buyer for the increased yields.

EXAMPLE #4 - HUMANITARIAN EXPEDITIONS

A somewhat unique aspect of social capital utilized by CHOICE Humanitarian is that of volunteer expeditions of Americans who work side by side with the villagers in the completion of community-initiated projects. These expeditions are just one of the development tools available to our RDFs. RDFs extend the offer of expedition assistance to the villagers upon condition that the villagers complete specific components of a project. Volunteer expeditions then serve as a catalyst or incentive for the community to work together.
Expeditions are also another form of social capital consistent with Boxman’s definition of social capital, “the number of people who can be expected to provide support and resources those people have at their disposal.” Not only do expedition participants bring labor and money to a project, they often bring their continued support of those communities. Historically our greatest organizational supporters have come from the ranks of expedition participants.

The presence of American expeditioners in a village can also add to the social capital of the village within its own region. Local government officials become aware of the work going on. Other villages have an incentive to conduct their own self-assessments with CHOICE RDFs.

CONCLUSION

These are just a few of the many examples that could be shared to illustrate how CHOICE has implemented the valuable asset of social capital. It is an asset that can be shared. It opens doors and offers opportunities to people throughout the world who desire to help themselves and improve the lives of their families.

The most important thing we can do to benefit villagers is to facilitate the development of their community networks to those who have resources. We who have access to so many resources, including social capital, have a wonderful opportunity and obligation to assist others and make it possible for them to reach their full potential.

Appendix A
Twenty Points of Progress Program

In the Spring of 1996, CHOICE, a nonprofit humanitarian organization committed to implementing village development programs in various parts of the world, announced the establishment of the Twenty Points of Progress Program (20PPP) which has now been field tested in Bolivia, Egypt, India, Kenya, and Mexico. The purpose of the program is to provide a very simple technology for stimulating community involvement and participation and for measuring and assessing the impact of village development programs being implemented throughout the world. The target groups of this program are the hundreds of thousands of isolated and disadvantaged village communities (generally with populations of less than 10,000) that make up nearly fifty percent of the world's population. These village communities often lack adequate schools, health facilities, potable water systems, and are characterized by extreme levels of poverty and environmental degradation.

While billions of dollars have been allocated for village development by many different organizations over the past fifty years, there is no universally accepted methodology for measuring if progress in fact is being made through all these efforts. While a number of methodologies have been attempted in the past, most have failed either because they were too complicated for the villagers to understand and appreciate (measuring levels of nutrition, calculating infant mortality rates, determining levels of inequality in a community, etc.) or the data being requested were, while obviously significant and important to a researcher, tended to be controversial and to stimulate conflict and divisions within a community (obtaining data on family planning, female circumcision, excessive dowries, child marriages, attendance of females in school, etc.).

Dr Mayfield, Chairman of CHOICE, several years ago was asked by UNICEF to develop a simple technology by which village development progress might best be measured over time. During nearly two years of field-testing, it quickly became apparent that any organization trying to institutionalize an ongoing system of assessment and evaluation would be faced with two different types of dilemmas. First, it become clear that if this system of community participation and data collection was to be effective, the number of indicators used would have to be limited. At first we attempted to review the literature, which taken as a whole, suggested several hundred possible indicators that could be used. Trying to determine which of the many indicators available would best provide a comprehensive view of a community proved almost impossible -- both because almost any set of indicators selected could be justified, depending on the orientation and sector-concerns one might have and also because what was really needed was a set of indicators that were diverse enough to be useful in helping peasants to see a broader set of problem are as
that they might consider, but also a small enough number so as not to be too complex or confusing to a group of disadvantaged peasants. Through an iterative process of testing a number of possible indicators, we gradually came to realize that if we really wanted a group of villagers seriously to consider the indicators we had selected, then it ought to be a number that could easily be discussed in not more than 40-60 minutes, that when discussions went beyond that length of time, interest tended to wane very quickly and a major purpose of the process would be lost. Also it become clear that no one set of indicators would be able to reflect the diversity of concerns and issues that one might find in the villages of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

As a compromise to these dilemmas, we determined to pursue the following courses of action. First, though a test of several different versions of our indicators, we came to see that at least 15 indicators would be needed to reflect the diversity of concerns in most of the villages where we were working, and second if you had more than 25 or 30 indicators, the process of discussing all of them would exceed the one hour time limit that we had found to be most effective in maintaining the interest and commitment to a process of open discussion and participation. We finally concluded that roughly 20 indicators were the most appropriate numbers to use. Secondly, we struggled intensely on the issue of which indicators we should use. You bring a group of villagers together and you will find them defining, arguing for and insisting on such a diversity of concerns that when added all together in the aggregate, the number of indicators needed to reflect this diversity was consistently over 50 to 100 different issues and concerns.

However, after pre-testing a number of instruments in nearly 50 villages in five different countries, reflecting what we thought would be a fairly representative sample of world cultural areas: Bolivia, Mexico, Kenya, India, and Egypt, we found that at least 95 percent of their concerns could be categorized under some five broad areas of concern. The five concerns that were almost universally mentioned in all the cultural areas included: 1) education and literacy for children and adults, 2) availability of health services and facilities, 3) challenges of food security, income improvement and alleviation of poverty, 4) the community environment with concerns for potable water, housing, sanitation, public utilities, and local environment and 5) problems related to ways of stimulating community cooperation and participation, and the desire for greater social and cultural cohesiveness. Once these five dimensions of village development were identified, we then reviewed the aggregate data on the different aspects of each of the five dimensions and it became relatively easy to select the four most widely mentioned indicators in each dimension. This was the process by which we came up with our Twenty Points of Progress Program (20PPP).

Also in order to keep the discussion as simple as possible, we had each indicator operationalized on a five point scale, with a score of 1 meaning that
less than 19% of the people were involved (more simply that only a few people were involved), a score of 2 meaning that 20 to 39% were involved (more simply that some people but less than half were involved), a score of 3 meaning 40 to 59% were involved (or more simply that roughly half of the community was involved), a score of 4 means 60 to 79% were involved (or more simply that a significant number were involved but not everybody), and finally that a score of 5 means 80 to 100% of the people were involved (or more simply that all or nearly all the people were involved).

During the two years of field testing these 20PP, we were consistently trying to include indicators that would address women's issues without generating too much conflict and social divisions. We found that the whole purpose of the 20PPP could easily be sabotaged if the indicators were perceived to be too controversial by the village leaders. In our original 35 indicators, we had indicators related specifically to utilization of family planning methods, elimination of female circumcision, excessive dowries and child marriages, etc. While these are all very important indicators of change, they tended to generate so many arguments and conflict within community discussions, that we opted for a different strategy. We sought to introduce issues related to women but in a more indirect way. First we started the process with our present 20 indicators and then let the more controversial issues emerge naturally over time. We have noted that many such issues do become significant after the 20PPP has been operating in an area for 2-3 years. In the beginning, it is better to have the process legitimized using less controversy-inducing indicators. Since we do encourage villagers to identify their own indicators above and beyond our 20 indicators, this allows for much flexibility and openness to new indicators.

In conclusion, the 20PPP seeks first to stimulate the involvement and participation of all the members of a village community, second to teach villagers to engage in project prioritization, action planning, and implementation skills, and third, to develop some base-line indicators that will help both villagers and outside donor agencies more easily monitor in a systematic way, if, how and why progress is being made in their efforts to improve the quality of life in rural villages. The 20PPP is a simple technology, utilizing a limited number of indicators that any community could use, but which provides a fairly diverse set of program options that suggest areas of emphasis and prioritization for communities desiring to take more responsibility for their own development.

As a way of establishing some historical perspective on how these villages might have improved over time, CHOICE encourages the participating organizations to "guesstimate" what the scores for each village might have been (for example in 1980 or 1990 and perhaps in 1995) for comparison purposes (See the Attached District Level Summary Report) and to provide examples of especially successful activities completed. Each participating organization is invited to send copies of their completed worksheets and their district level
summary reports to the CHOICE office. CHOICE will prepare an annual report, summarizing the data collected, noting any areas where great success has been achieved and what specific strategies or programs have proven to be especially successful and then sharing this information with all participating organizations.

For people interested in reviewing various strategies, interventions and approaches that have been successful in helping rural villages to improve their quality of life in the twenty points of progress in the areas of health, education, income generation, environment, and local culture enhancement, might wish to read a new book: James B. Mayfield, One Can Make A Difference: The Role of Rural Development Facilitators (RDFs) in the Process of Rural Development (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1997). This book is available at University Press of America, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, Maryland, 20706. Telephone number is (301) 459-2118.
20 Points of Progress Worksheet (IV)

Country_______________, Province _____________, District_______________
Village Name _________________________ Population_________________

**Please use the following for scoring: a score of 1 = less than 19% (only a few people);
a score of 2 = 20 to 39% (some people but less than half); 3 = 40 to 59% (roughly half);
4 = 60 to 79% (a big majority, but not everybody); a 5 = 80 to 100% (all or nearly all the people Please use the definitions of the indicators found on the back side of this sheet)

I. Basic Education/Literacy
   Score
   1. Percentage of children attending primary school (5-12 years of age) ______
   2. Percentage of adults (18 years and above) who are literate ______
   3. Percentage of boys and girls graduating from primary school ______
   4. Percentage of parents meeting with teachers on regular basis ______

   Education/Literacy Score _______ (a score between 4 and 20)

II. Primary Health Care
    Score
    5. Percentage of children vaccinated for common diseases ______
    6. Percentage of parents aware of ORT, children's weight and good nutrition ______
    7. Percentage of families who have and use a latrine ______
    8. Percentage of families who have access to and go to a trained health worker ______

    Health Score _______ (a score between 4 and 20)

III. Income/Agriculture/Alleviation of Poverty
    Score
    9. Percentage of families who have a family vegetable garden ______
    10. Percentage of families who belong to savings and loan-giving groups ______
    11. Percentage of families who have started micro-enterprises ______
    12. Percentage of families who earn income above the poverty level ______
Income/Poverty Score_________ (a score between 4 and 20)

IV. Community Environment
   Score
13. Percentage of families with adequate housing, _____
14. Percentage of families participating in a program to preserve the environment
   _____
15. Percentage of families with access to potable water
   _____
16. Percentage of families participating in a program to improve sanitation in the village
   _____
   Environment Score __________ (score between 4 and 20)

V. Local Leadership/Social Cultural Enhancement
   Score
17. Percentage of families who donate to a project that benefits the whole village
   _____
18. Percentage of families who support a cultural enhancement program
   _____
19. Percentage of youth (ages 16-30) who participate in youth programs
   _____
20. Percentage of Families participating in a 20 points of progress activity.
    _____
    Community Enhancement Score________(score between 4 and 20)

Total Score__________(score between 20 and 100)
1. **Attendance in Village Schools**: get a count of the children 5-12 years and determine how many of these children actually attend the local schools by asking the school teachers.

2. **Adult Literacy**: determine the number of adults (men and women 16 and over) who have the ability to read basic newspaper material, street and bus signs, simple government forms, able to sign their own name, and complete some basic arithmetic calculations.

3. **Percentage of Boys and Girls Graduating From Primary School**: get count of the children who are 12 years of age in the village and then determine how many actually graduated last year.

4. **Parent Teacher Collaboration**: Percentage of parents who meet regularly with teachers to discuss student attendance, questions of curriculum, educational costs, progress of students, etc.

5. **Vaccination of Children**: Percentage of children that are presently immunized for most common diseases (tuberculosis, measles, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus).

6. **Health Awareness of Parents**: Percentage of parents who understand oral rehydration for diarrhea, weigh their children on a regular basis, understand good nutrition, encourage their children to brush their teeth, and understand how to keep their children healthy.

7. **Family Latrines**: the families in the village who use a properly constructed latrine.

8. **Permanent Village Health Workers**: Percentage of families who have access to and use a trained health worker and pay or give them something for the services they provide.

9. **Food Security**: How many families have a family vegetable garden and have been trained in how to improve their farming productivity.

10. **Savings and Loan-Giving Groups**: Percentage of families participating in a formal savings program, have taken out loans and are paying their loans back in a consistent and timely way.

11. **Non Farming Sources of Income**: Number of families who have started some type of enterprise to supplement their family income, purchasing livestock (cows, goats, pigs, chickens, ducks), setting up enterprises where their products can be sold in the market, purchasing tools, equipment and other assets which can increase their income generating capacity.

12. **Family Income Status**: The percentage of families that are still living close to a subsistence level of income, often lack the funds needed to buy needed food, medicine and clothing, they are often malnourished and sickly and spends roughly 70-80% of their income just on food.

13. **Availability of Adequate Housing**: Percentage having adequate housing, protects them from the weather, a roof that keeps out the rain, an enclosed stove vents the smoke, and the house is permanent enough to be save and secure. Let the villagers decide what “adequate” might be.

14. **Preservation of the Environment**: families participating in a program to improve the environment (plant trees, stop soil erosion, use solar panels and fuel efficient “lorenzo” stoves).

15. **Access to Potable Water**: Families having access to potable (disease-free) water.

16. **Sanitation in the Community**: Number of families participating in a sanitation program to reduce the flies and mosquitoes, remove stagnant ponds, remove human and animal waste from areas close to people’s homes, and the establishment of some type of garbage collection system.
17. Local Leaders Organizing Community Projects: Number of families who have participated in mobilizing their own resources to help implement a village-wide project.

18. Community/Cultural Activities: Percentage of families participating in a cultural enhancement program: dance groups, singing groups, traditional cultural and religious festivals and programs, and the preservation of traditional arts and crafts, etc.

19. Youth Programs and Activities: The percentage of youth who are participating in a program that would provide opportunities for sports, cultural and social activities, employment training and income generating projects.

20. Establishment of a Networking System: the percentage of families aware of the Twenty Points of Progress Program, have participated in meetings to determine how their village might be improved, are actively seeking to improve the quality of life in their village, and helping to create a significant network of relationships with other nearby villages, government agencies, non government organizations(NGOs) and the private sector, including companies and business people willing to support the collective efforts of the village itself.
# Twenty Points of Progress Program-IV

## District/Village Cluster Level Summary Report

(one for each district or cluster of villages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsoring Organization/Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person__________________________________</td>
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| Country_______________, Province _____________, District_______________ |  |
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### Village Twenty Points of Progress Scores (score between 20-100 points possible)

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Average Score  ---  ---  ---  ---  ---  ---  ---  ---
for each year

25
Twenty Points of Progress Program- IV

Five Dimensions Progress Report
(one for each district or cluster of villages)

Sponsoring Organization/Contact
Person ________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Address _______________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

Month/Year that data were collected __________________________
Telephone, Fax and/or email _________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

Country ____________, Province ____________, District ____________

Village Scores for each of the five dimensions (score between 4 and 20 points possible)

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<th>Name of Village Culture</th>
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Average score is calculated by adding up all the scores under each dimension and dividing by the number of villages.

******Remember: For each dimension the score will be between 4 and 20

In reviewing these items, please note that each indicator may be defined somewhat differently, depending on how much experience the village has had with the 20PPP. There are three stages:

(1) First Stage (Consciousness Raising): The village has had little or no experience in using the 20 Points of Progress. The purpose of the 20PPP at this stage is to raise people’s awareness of the various ways that their lives might be improved, to stimulate some discussion, some skills in assessing their community, and in prioritizing their needs. The rural development facilitator (RDF) who is introducing the 20PPP into a village, must be very patient in explaining the meaning of each indicator, flexible in allowing the villagers to disagree on the scores given, and thus willing to allow the villagers to present scores that may appear to be exaggerated, even incorrect.

(2) Second Stage (Planning and Implementing Projects). The village has been discussing and working with the 20 Points of Progress for several months, with the help of the RDF, the villagers have agreed upon several indicators that they would like to improve, are networking with various NGOs, government agencies and other sources of help, and are designing and implementing projects that will improve the quality of their lives in several of the 20 indicators. Through various discussions in the village, there is some effort to ensure that the scores given are an accurate reflection of the true situation in the village.

(3) Third Stage (Networking and Evaluation). The village is now part of a cluster of villages working together in the same geographical area, have shared ideas with other villages on how to improve their scores in the 20 Points of Progress, have been collecting data on the 20 Points for several years, and are able to assess the progress that they have made, can determine what is working and what is not working, and how they can work with other villages in networking together to obtain support, funding and other resources from various
government agencies, NGOs and other groups and individuals in their district, province and even national sources. At this stage, the RDF is much less involved in the process of the 20PPP, gradually allowing the communities to take responsibility for their own networking, local resource mobilizing, and planning and implementing their own projects.

Below is an effort to give a more detailed description of how each of the 20 indicators might best be defined and understood.

1. **Attendance in Village Schools**: When the 20PPP is first introduced into the village, the RDF encourages the villagers to determine how many children in the village are actually attending school. Villagers often assume that more children are attending than are in reality, especially when it comes to the percentage of girls who attend school regularly. After the village has some familiarity with the 20PPP, the RDF might encourage the villagers to get a count of the children 5-12 years of age separated by gender (a list of boys and a list of girls) and then to ask the village teachers how many of these children actually attend. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19 percent of the school age children are attending, a (2) means 20-39 percent are attending, a (3) means 40-59 percent, a (4) means that 60-79 percent are attending and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the children are regularly attending. If only boys are attending school, then the highest score possible would be a three. Eventually, as the village becomes somewhat sophisticated concerning the philosophy and purpose of the 20PPP, one of the most significant indicators of a village community’s level of progress is closely related to the percentage of young girls that attend school on a regular basis. In later phases of the 20PPP, the villagers may want to determine how many girls are attending regularly, how many actually finish the requirements for each grade, how many are graduating at the end of six years, etc. (see indicator #3). Some villages eventually may even want to use attendance at the middle and secondary school as the basis for determining their score on this indicator.

2. **Adult Literacy**: We are seeking to determine how many of the adults both men and women (16 and over) in the village have the ability to read basic newspaper material, street and bus signs, simple government forms, able to sign their own name, and complete some very basic calculations, adding up costs of goods purchased, receiving change from a merchant, and perhaps the cost of buying three pounds of some grain, when the per pound cost is known. Later when the villagers have more experience with the 20PPP, the RDF may help the villagers to understand that just because a villager has completed primary education that they are not necessarily literate. In a later phase of the 20PPP, the RDF or other data collectors, as part of a village planning process would be encouraged to interview people who claim to be literate to determine whether they are in fact functionally literate. Such interviews should be done in private, not done in a way that would embarrass, and should only be given to determine if some type of additional adult education might be useful. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19% are literate, a (2)
indicates 20% to 39% are literate, a (3) 40% to 59%, a (4) 60% to 79% and a (5) over 80% are literate. Some specific emphasis should be given to women who are illiterate.

3. Percentage of Boys and Girls Graduating From Primary School and the extent there is Diversification of the Curriculum: In the early stage (consciousness stage) of the 20PPP, the score should reflect the villagers' perceptions of how many children are actually graduating. Because the quality of the teacher and the methods used has a lot to do with whether a child stays in school, it is helpful in the training phase to assess the quality of teaching in the village as part of this indicator. Most village teachers tend to use a straight memorization and a "repeat what the teacher says" approach. Teachers that use discussion methods, seeking to involve the students in some form of dialogue are generally rare. The curriculum is often set at the national level, tends to focus on the 3Rs, to prepare students to pass government exams. Teachers willing to be somewhat creative, willing to introduce new material a bit more relevant to villagers (material on agriculture, health and sanitation, local culture and language, etc.), are obviously unusual in most villages. Since this indicator seeks to measure the effectiveness of the school system to meet the needs of village children, the indicator should best be defined in terms of the percentage of male and female children that actually complete or graduate from the primary school. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19 percent of the school age children are officially graduating from primary school, a (2) means 20-39 percent are graduating, a (3) means 40-59 percent, a (4) means that 60-79 percent are graduating and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the children are actually graduating.

An alternative scoring system that might be used in stage three (20 Points as a system of Evaluation) would tend to focus more on the quality of teaching found in the schools, where a (1) indicates that most teachers follow a limited curriculum, and seldom deviate from a rote memory approach to education, a (2) means one or two teachers might be a bit creative but most are not, a (3) means that several teachers are trying to involve their students in discussions and more interaction, but are still unwilling to introduce any new curriculum not approved by higher authorities, (4) means that many of the teachers are trying new teaching methods and are also introducing some new materials that are relevant to village children who may not go beyond primary education, and a (5) means that nearly all the teachers are seeking to involve their students with better teaching methods (discussions, multi-media materials, etc.), and have established a formal program to make their curriculum more relevant to village children, including information on agriculture, health, small enterprise, music, etc..

4. Parent Teacher Collaboration: This indicator seeks to measure the willingness of parents and teachers to meet on a fairly regular basis, to discuss student attendance, questions of curriculum, educational costs, progress of students, etc. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates there is almost no
interaction between teachers and parents (less than 19% of the parents are involved with teachers, a (2) means that some teachers and some parents (between 20% and 39%) do meet periodically, but very little change in the schools ever happens, a (3) means that a significant number of parents (between 40% and 59%) and teachers do meet regularly, that some changes have occurred, that more children are attending because of the meetings, a (4) means that a formal Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has been established (with 60% to 79% of the parents are involved), that they meet at least 2-3 times a year and that changes in curriculum and methods have been introduced, and a (5) means that a formal PTA has been established, that at least 80% of the parents meet with the teachers at least monthly, and that significant changes have been introduced, that the teachers are keeping careful records on attendance, that creative new programs are being implemented, reflecting a much greater sensitivity to the real needs of village children, many of whom never go beyond primary school.

5. Vaccination of Children: This indicator seeks to measure the number of children that are presently immunized for most common diseases in the village. This would generally include tuberculosis, measles, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis (Whooping Cough) and tetanus. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19 percent of the children have been immunized a (2) means 20-39 percent have been, a (3) means 40-59 percent, a (4) means that 60-79 percent have been, and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the children have been immunized. In a later (planning) stage, this indicator can be useful in assessing the health condition of the children in a village. The rural development facilitator (RDF) responsible for introducing the 20PPP is encouraged to check with village leaders, perhaps even district health officials to determine if and when an immunization program had been or will be implemented in the village. Even when an immunization program has been implemented, this does not necessarily mean that all the children have been vaccinated. Some effort might be needed to determine how many children in the village have not been vaccinated and thus are still at risk.

6. Health Awareness of Parents: This indicator seeks to measure the awareness of parents and their willingness to use ORT when their children have diarrhea, are willing to have their children weighed on a regular basis, understand the components of good nutrition, encourage their children to brush their teeth, and understand how to keep their children healthy. Implied in this indicator would be the establishment of some type of training program that all parents eventually would need to complete. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that very few of the parents (less than 19%) are aware of how the health of their children might be improved, a (2) means that some parents (20% to 39%) have now received some training in the use of ORT, children weighing, nutrition, teeth brushing and family planning. a (3) means that roughly half of the parents (40% to 59%) have now been trained in these aspects of good health, a (4) means that most parents (60% to 79%) have now been trained and
are familiar with these aspects of good health, and a (5) means that most of the families (over 80%) have been trained to use ORT, to have their smaller children weighed at least quarterly, to provide proper nutrition, to brush their teeth, and to be aware of how to improve the health of their children. This indicator may be somewhat difficult to ascertain, unless there is some formal system of training established in the village. Over several years, the RDF would be encouraged to visit a sample of families, both poor and rich, to determine how many parents are clearly aware of how they can improve the health of their children.

7. Availability and Use of Family Latrines (traditional, water sealed, flushed): This item seeks to determine the number of families in the village who have and use a properly constructed latrine. This is one indicator that clearly reflects when significant new health-behaviors are being adopted in a given village. This item does not measure the existence of public latrines, only the use of family home latrines. Public latrines are almost never used and seldom improve the sanitation and health of a village. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19% of the families have latrines, a (2) means that 20-39% of the families do have family latrines, but it is difficult to determine if they are in use, a (3) means that over 40-59% of the families do have a family latrine and there is some evidence that they are being used, a (4) means that 60-79% of the families have family latrines and they are being used regularly, and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the families have family latrines and they are being used regularly. An RDF can be very helpful in suggesting various types of latrines that might used, sources of materials and funding that might be available from government agencies and various NGOs.

8. Permanent Village Health Workers: In the early phase of the 20PPP, this indicator simply seeks to determine if there are health workers in the village and what percentage of the people use such health workers. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19% of the villagers have access to a trained health worker, a (2) indicates that 20% to 39% have access, a (3) 40% to 59% have access, a (4) 60% to 79% have access and a (5) over 80% have access to a trained health worker. Later, during the planning stage, the RDF might seek to help the villagers understand that a sustainable health care system will require that the villagers be willing to participate in a fee for service or village health fund. The RDF may help the villagers to see the need for such health workers and to determine if such village health workers who have been selected, have been properly trained, and are presently providing some basic health care to all the villagers who need help. Again when the villagers are more sophisticated concerning the 20PPP, it will be important to determine whether these village health workers have the status, the confidence and the skill to be effective in providing needed health care. Ideally it would be hoped there would be at least one trained village health worker for every 2,000 population. Crucial in determining their effectiveness is the amount of training they have received, and whether the community accepts them to the point
where they are willing to pay them for the services they provide. The RDF in the planning stage may seek to help such village health workers to network with a nearby rural hospital or other government health clinic. At the planning or evaluation stages, a more sophisticated scoring system would indicate that a (1) indicates that the village still uses traditional health workers, with few having received any formal training in modern medicine (less than 19% have access to a trained village health worker), a (2) means that the village still uses traditional health workers, but some of them have received some training in modern medicine, (no formal fee for services program yet exists) with between 20% and 39% of the families going to a trained health worker, a (3) means that the village has at least 1-2 village health workers who have received some training in modern medicine and that some type of fee for service or village health fund has been established to pay the health workers and to purchase needed medicine(hopefully with 40% to 69% of the families now being willing to pay some or all of the costs of their medical care), a (4) means that the village has 2-3 village trained health workers, that a fee for services or health fund has been established and their position is now more sustainable because at least 60% to 79% of the families are willing and able to pay all or some of the costs of the health services they receive, and a (5) means that the village has 2-3 or more village trained health workers, that a fee for services or health fund has been established and their position is now fully sustainable because over 80% of the families are willing and able to pay all or some of the costs of the health services they receive. Please note that some villages may be blessed with a functional clinic where trained nurses and even physicians may be available. While the village obviously may not be able to support financially the professional nurses and physicians that may come to or work in their village, this indicator is more interested in measuring the extent to which a village would have developed ways to provide some financial support for para-professional village health workers that could supplement the more formal health care system. As the village moves into the planning and evaluation stages of the 20PPP, the RDF would encourage a group of villagers interested in improving health in their village to set up a formal health committee (perhaps a sub committee of the village development committee) to review and set up programs established to improve the scores of the 6-7 indicators that relate directly to good. Such a committee could be crucial in ensuring that all children are immunized (indicator#5), parents are trained in good health practices for their children(indicator #6), that latrines are being built and used (indicator #7), that village health workers are recruited and supported (indicator #8), that the quality of housing in the village provides protection from the cold and dampness of the weather (indicator #13), that potable water is available to all the families in the village (indicator #15), and that a campaign to clean up and improve the sanitation of their village has been set up(indicator #16).

9. Food Security (Family Vegetable Garden): This item seeks to determine if the villagers have adequate food security (have enough surplus to live through short-terms food shortages), have developed family gardens, orchards or other
food producing activities to provide supplemental income and a more nutritious diet for their families, and have received some training in how to improve their productivity in farming. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19 percent of the families have adequate food security, have their own family gardens and have received some training in how to improve their farming productivity, a (2) means 20-39 percent of the families have adequate food security, have their own family gardens and have received some training in how to improve their farming productivity, a (3) means 40-59 percent of the families have adequate food security, have their own family gardens and have received some training in how to improve their farming productivity, a (4) means that 60-79 percent of the families have adequate food security, have their own family gardens and have received some training in how to improve their farming productivity, and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the families have adequate food security, have their own family gardens and have been trained in how to improve their farming productivity. Obviously, an RDF in the planning stage of the 20PPP can be very helpful in identifying government agencies and NGOs willing to train villagers in how to improve the quality of their farming skills, how to use organic gardening techniques to ensure that they have a diversity of vegetables and fruits for their families.

10. Existence of Savings and Loan-Giving Groups: This item seeks to measure the willingness of the villagers to organize themselves into savings groups and to participate in some type of micro-credit system. This item gives some indication of the willingness of villagers to find ways to fund their own income generating activities. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that most villagers tend to rely on local moneylenders for their funding needs and that less than 19% of the families have started any kind of formal savings program, a (2) means that 20-39% of the families are participating in a formal savings program and some of them are also participating in a micro credit program, a (3) means that 40-59% of the families are participating in some type of savings program and many families have actually established a relationship with some type of formal micro-credit program, a (4) means that 60-79% of the families are participating in some type of formal savings program and that many families have taken out loans with a formal micro-credit program and have already paid them back, and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the villagers are participating in some type of formal savings program and that more than half of the villagers have taken out loans with a formal micro-credit program and are paying their loans back in a consistent and timely way.

11. Existence of Non Farming Sources of Income (micro-enterprises): This item seeks to measure the willingness of villagers to pursue supplemental income activities outside of their own farming. Especially important in this item is the percentage of women who have found supplemental income generating activities to help in the support of their families. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19 percent of the families (especially women) are involved in some type of micro-enterprise to supplement their family income, a
(2) means 20-39 percent of the families are involved in some type of micro-enterprise, a (3) means 40-59 percent are involved, a (4) means that 60-79 percent are involved and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the families (especially women) are involved in some type of micro-enterprise to supplement their family income. It should be obvious that indicator 10 is related to item 11 as a kind of pre-condition process. An RDF can be very useful in the planning stage of the 20PPP, by helping villagers identify various types of income generating activities: purchasing livestock (cows, goats, pigs, chickens, ducks, etc), setting up handicraft, food processing, and other enterprises where their products can be sold in the market, purchasing tools, equipment and other assets which can increase the income generating capacity of villagers.

12. Family Income Status: This item seeks to measure the percentage of families that are still living close to a subsistence level of income. This may be a fairly difficult piece of information to collect. It generally means that the family often lack the funds needed to buy needed food, medicine and clothing, that they are often malnourished and sickly and spends roughly 70-80% of their income just on food. Malnutrition is common among the children in these families (this can often be determined if there is a functioning child weighing program in the village). In the early phase of the 20PPP, the RDF should allow the villagers themselves to determine what they think their score might be. In later phases, especially during the planning stage 2-3 year of the 20PPP, the RDF would be encouraged to spend enough time in the village to determine what level of income is needed to survive in this village and then to determine what percentage of the village families are living at that subsistence or slightly higher level. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19% percent of the families are above the poverty or subsistence level, a (2) means 20% to 39% are above the subsistence level, a (3) means 40-59 percent are above the poverty or subsistence level, a (4) means that only 60% to 79 percent are above the poverty or subsistence level and a (5) means that more than 80% are living above the poverty or subsistence level. Subsistence is generally defined to mean the people in the village who are below the poverty line, who spend close to three-fourths of their income just for food, and have very little surplus for clothing, housing, or even basic necessities.

13. Availability of Adequate Housing: This item measures the extent to which villagers have adequate housing, which protects them from the weather, a roof keeps out the rain, an enclosed stove vents the smoke, and the house is permanent enough to save and secure. In some societies this may mean brick or cement housing with metal or tiled roofs, brick/cement walls, perhaps glass windows, and an enclosed stove to control smoke in the house), but such things may not be necessary for adequate housing. Each cultural group must determine their own definition of adequate housing. Again in the early phase of the 20PPP, villagers’ perceptions concerning what is adequate housing should be used. In later phases, the RDF might be encouraged to obtain a sketch or map of the village with all the houses shown on the map. Some effort should be
made to visit a sample of houses to determine what adequate housing is typical in this village. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19 percent of the houses are adequate however that may be defined. a (2) means 20-39 percent of the houses are adequate, a (3) means 40-59 percent have such housing, a (4) means that 60-79 percent have such housing and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the families have adequate housing.

14. Preservation of the Environment: This item seeks to measure the number of families participating in a program to improve the environment (plant trees, stop soil erosion, use solar panel and fuel efficient lorenzo stoves). The RDF may play an important role in helping villagers to establish a formal plan organized to protect and preserve the local environment: planting trees and shrubs, reducing soil erosion and irrigation salinity, the reduction of pollution in nearby streams, rivers and lakes, protecting local forest areas, etc. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that there is no village environmental protection plan in place and very few people (less than 19%) are even aware that there may be a problem, a (2) means that there are a few individuals (perhaps between 20% to 39% of the families) concerned and seeking to improve the environment of the village, but most people appear to have no interest in their environment, a (3) means that the village has organized a formal plan to improve and preserve the local environment and at least 40 to 59 percent of the people have been made aware of various environmental problems and have even tried to implement a program or two, but only a few villagers are actively supporting the community’s efforts a (4) means that a significant portion of the families (roughly 60% to 79%) are aware of the needs of their environment and that a significant percentage of the community has been involved in mobilizing resources, implementing some of the programs, and some effort has been made to assess progress and actually to measure success, a (5) means that the environmental plan is fully functioning, that the vast majority of the villagers (over 80%) are aware of the needs of the environment, that nearly everyone in the village is donating some resource (funds, labor, materials, etc.) for the implementation of all aspects of the program.

15. Access to Potable Water: In the consciousness raising stage (the first year of the 20PPP), this indicator simply measures the percentage of families that have potable water available. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19% of the villagers have access to potable water, a (2) means that only 20% to 39% have access, a (3) means that 40% to 59% have access, a (4) means that 60% to 79% have access and a (5) means that over 80% have access to potable water. In later stages during the third to fifth years (planning and evaluation), this indicator might emphasize the availability of piped water into their homes, of electricity connected to their homes, the paving of an access road, the establishment of a post office, a telephone line, perhaps a market square, etc. At this stage, the point of scoring might be different, a (1) might indicate that the village is still relatively isolated, with less than 19% of the families having access to potable water, no paved roads and the lack of any types of utilities or government services, a (2) might mean that while the village
is still relatively isolated, there is a potable water system for at least 20-39% of the families, and perhaps a single telephone line into their village, a (3) might mean that the village does have both electricity and a reasonably good road system to some nearby towns and 40-59% have access to potable water, a (4) might mean that 60-79% of the village families have access to potable water and many even have piped water into their homes, a significant percentage have some electricity and there is a good transportation and road system, and a (5) means that over 80% of the families have access to potable water with perhaps half of the families having piped water, access to electricity, and various government services available. In seeking to determine what number to use, it would depend on how long the 20PPP has been functioning in the village. In the early stage, the scoring should reflect the availability of potable water, rather than electricity. Therefore, if over 90 percent of the families had access to potable water and only 10 percent had access to electricity, the village could still be rated a category five. In later stages, (planning and evaluation), during the third to fifth years of the 20PPP, when a village development committee has been established and the villagers are trying to have their access road paved, their village connected with electricity, and other services provided, the scoring system could be modified to reflect their developments.

16. Quality of Sanitation in the Community: This item measures the extent to which some type of sanitation program has been implemented in the village to reduce the flies and mosquitoes, remove stagnant pools and ponds, remove human and animal waste from areas close to people’s homes, and the establishment of some type of garbage collection system. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that no serious program of sanitation has been implemented (less than 19% of the families are willing to participate), a (2) means that some effort (perhaps 20% to 39% of the families are participating) has been made to improve the sanitation, but the efforts have not been very effective or long lasting, a (3) means that the community has officially announced a sanitation program for the village, that some effort has been made to clean up the village, but much work is still needed, that roughly 40% to 59% of the families are participating, a (4) means that the community has an official sanitation program (roughly 60% to 79% of the families are participating), that a health committee has been established to oversee the implementation of the program and there has been significant improvement in some aspects of the program, reduction of flies and mosquitoes, reduction of ponds, removal of animal and human waste from the areas of the homes, and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the families are aware of the needs for a clean village and are actively involved in implementing a village-wide sanitation program.

17. Local Leaders Organizing Community Projects: This item is not seeking to judge the quality of leaders in the village. What is far more important are the percentage of the people who are willing to participate together in developing a community effort to improve their village, their willingness to organize some
type of community development committee and to mobilize their own resources to complete village level projects. In the beginning, the villagers will determine what they think their village’s score is. Later as the 20PPP is better understood by the villagers, the RDF may help the villagers to organize their own development committee, provide some training to the formal and informal leaders in the community, help them in learning how to network with outside agencies and NGOs and in finding ways that they themselves can begin to take more responsibility in solving their own problems. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that there is very little local leadership and that less than 19 percent of the villagers have participated in mobilizing their own resources or in implementing a village-wide project (usually this is limited to the wealthy and influential families in the village). Please note that this indicator could be directly related to other indicators that might require a village-wide effort such as in developing a literacy program, improving the sanitation of the village, protecting or preserving the environment, and so forth, a (2) means that some leadership has emerged, still only 20 percent to 39 percent have been willing to participate with their labor, resources or funds for the implementation of village-wide projects, a (3) means that a few village-wide projects have been implemented and many families (roughly 40% to 59%) have actually participated in mobilizing resources and helping to implement such projects, a (4) means that a significant majority of all the families (from 60% to 79%) are now actively involved in raising funds, providing labor and other resources to help implement several village-wide projects and programs that benefit the entire village, and a (5) means that a number of village-wide projects and programs have now been implemented, that nearly all of the families (more than 80%) are actively involved in the supporting, funding and implementing of these projects and programs. Obviously this indicator seeks to measure the effectiveness of village leaders to mobilize the entire community in defining, funding, and implementing projects and programs that will benefit the entire community.

18. Community/Cultural Activities: This item measures the communities willingness to organize and participate in cultural activities (dance groups, singing groups, traditional cultural and religious festivals and programs), and the preservation of traditional arts and crafts, etc. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that very few people seem to be interested in preserving or enhancing the cultural life of the village(probably less than 19%), there are some religious and cultural activities organized but they generally do not bring the village close together, a (2) means that there are some people (perhaps 20% to 39%) interested in the preservation and enhancement of the local culture, but there is still no formal organization working to improve the cultural life of the village, a (3) means that a formal organization or committee (perhaps a subcommittee of the village development committee) does exist which meet sporadically to plan and encourage cultural activities, (dance groups, singing groups, arts and crafts, religious activities), but generally only about half of the villagers (40% to 59%) are actively involved, a (4) means that a formal
organization or committee exists and it meets regularly both to plan activities but also to mobilize resources, and nearly two-thirds of the villagers (60% to 79%) are actively involved, and a (5) means that a formal organization exists to preserve and enhance the local culture, that all groups of the community (over 80% of the families) are represented and are involved in the programs that help stimulate interest in music, arts, handicrafts and festivals, etc.

19. Youth Programs and Activities: This item measures the extent to which young women and young men (ages 16 to 30 years) participate in some formal programs which support various activities that provide development, enjoyment and integration into the community for these youth. Such a program would provide opportunities for sports, cultural and social activities, employment training and income generating project development. Again some effort should be made to assess to what extent there are programs and activities for both young men and young women. The RDF will need to meet with the youth as well as with village leaders to determine the extent to which such programs exist for the youth (generally 16-30 years of age). From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that there is almost no organized effort (less than 19% of the youth are involved), although there may be some individuals organizing periodic activities, a (2) means that a few people (between 20% and 39% of the youth) are actively organizing some types of activities, especially in sports, but the vast majority of the youth are not involved, and there are few resources available, a (3) means that there is a formal organization or committee established that does meet periodically, and that some types of programs are available for the youth, still generally only about half of the youth (roughly 40% to 59%) participate, a (4) means that the formal organization that does exist meets regularly usually at least once a month and seeks to mobilize resources for the youth, that sports and social/cultural activities are organized and nearly two-thirds (roughly 60% to 79%) of the youth participate, and a (5) means that the formal organization/committee meets regularly at least 2-3 times a month, plans and implements a number of programs for the youth, including significant efforts are made to help youth obtain training and employment opportunities, the committee mobilizes the necessary funds and ensures that the vast majority (over 80%) of the youth are involved.

20. Community Participation in the 20PPP and the Establishment of a Networking System: This item seeks to determine the extent to which the families of the village are aware of the Twenty Points of Progress Program, have participated in meetings to determine how their village might be improved, are actively seeking to improve the quality of life in their village and that a significant network of relationships with other nearby villages, government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs) and the private sector, including companies and business people willing to support the collective efforts of the village itself, has been established. During the third to the fifth year of the 20PPP, RDFs are encouraged to invite representatives from each of the villages participating in the 20PPP in a given rural district to attend a district-
wide or area-wide Planning and Development Council (PDC), perhaps 2-3 times a year, to meet with NGOs, government agencies, and other sources of support and consider ways in which the members of the network established can work together. From the point of scoring, a (1) indicates that less than 19 percent of the families are aware of the 20PPP, there may have been a community meeting or two to talk about how they might improve their community, but nothing of any importance has been accomplished, a (2) means 20-39 percent are aware and there have been a few meetings to determine how they might improve their community, and there are a few families in the community really trying to implement the 20PPP, a (3) means 40-59 percent of the families are aware of the 20PPP, a formal village development committee (VDC) has now has met several times to determine how they might improve their village, some projects in literacy, health, income generating, etc. have been implemented with some help from outside support but with only limited success, a (4) means that 60-79 percent are aware of the 20PPP, the VDC meets at least monthly to outline specific activities and there has been some success in several of the twenty indicators, largely because village leaders are now networking with government agencies, NGOs, and various private sector people, and a (5) means that over 80 percent of the families are aware of 20PPP, the VDC meets 2-3 times each month to outline specific activities and there is some success in nearly all the twenty points of progress indicators, with significant networking relationships established, including regularly scheduled meetings of the district or area-wide Planning and Development Council (PDC).

**General Conclusion**

CHOICE is in the process of creating a data bank on Village Development Activities, using the Twenty Points of Progress Work Sheet. Organizations of all types are encouraged and invited to use the 20PPP Worksheet to assess the progress in villages where they are working. All we ask is that you send the name of the country, province, district and village, a rough estimate of the village's population and the results of your assessment. Sometime during June and July of 1999, but no later than August 15, 1999, we should like to receive the following two reports, one for each district or cluster of villages participating: (1) District Level Summary Report and (2) Five Dimensions Progress Report (included above). You are also invited to share with us any particular strategies or approaches that proved to be especially successful. CHOICE will seek to publish a summary report during September 1999 on all villages participating, presenting evidence of progress being made in these villages and a summary of some the approaches, strategies, programs and activities that have been especially successful. Copies of this annual report will be sent to all participating organizations either by email or regular mail.
For people interested in reviewing various strategies, interventions and approaches that have been successful in helping rural villages to improve their quality of life in the twenty points of progress in the areas of health, education, income generation, environment, and local culture enhancement, might wish to read a new book: James B. Mayfield, *One Can Make A Difference: The Role of Rural Development Facilitators (RDFs) in the Process of Rural Development* (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1997). This book is available at the University Press of America, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, Maryland, 20706. Telephone number is (301) 459-2118.

***CHOICE has a workbook which outlines in great detail how to implement the 20PPP in a given village setting. If you are interested, please let us know.
Follow Up Questionnaire

Greetings,

After you have reviewed the 20 Points of Progress Program and perhaps have sought to implement this program in a few villages, it might helpful if you would fill out the following questionnaire and send it to our office. It is our way of obtaining feedback and of determining how best we can help you in your efforts to implement the 20 Points of Progress Program.

1. In how many different village communities does your organization presently work? (implementing projects, supporting activities, programs, supervising or managing projects or programs, etc) __________________________________________
   a. Number of villages where your organization is presently implementing or supporting projects or programs_________
   b. Number of villages where you have worked in the past, but at present your organization is not working in these villages_____________
   c. Number of villages where you have developed a relationship with the people, but you have not yet implemented a project or program ________________

2. How many full time field workers do you have in your organization that are presently involved in implementing or supporting some type of rural development project or program in rural village communities? ______.

3. Does your organization presently collect information (specific data) on the characteristics of the village communities where your organization is working or has worked?
   a. Yes very detailed information (on more than 20 indicators)______________
   b. Yes but only on a limited bases (on less than 10 indicators)___________
   c. Yes, but only on a very few (less than 2-3 indicators)_____________
   d. No, but we would very much like to develop some kind of information gathering system____________
   e. No and we are not interesting in establishing such a system__________

4. As you read through the material on the 20PPP, would you say that your organization would be
   a. Very interested in working with CHOICE in implementing the program____
   b. Somewhat interested in working with CHOICE ____
   c. No too interested in working with CHOICE ___
   d. Not interested at all in working with CHOICE ____

4. In your own words, what did you like most about the 20PPP and what did you like least?
   ____________________________________________________________________
   __
5. Which of the following best describes your feelings about the 20PPP (check all that are applicable)?
   a. the Program looks terrific and we have already started to implement it
   b. The program looks terrific and we are planning to implement the 20PPP in the near future
   c. The program looks terrific but we don't have the resources (manpower, expertise) to implement the 20PPP at the present time
   d. The program appears to be a bit too complicated for us to implement and we are not certain it would be appropriate for the villages where we work
   e. The program appears a bit complicated but if we had someone who would come and train our staff to implement the 20PPP, we would be interested
   f. The program appears to be feasible, but we have a number of questions that need to be answered before we would be willing to implement the 20PPP
   g. The program does not appear appropriate for our organization at present

6. If you have specific questions about how to implement the 20PPP, please send us your list of questions or concerns that we might help you with:

   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________

CHOICE is very anxious to help your organization implement the 20PPP. We are excited about creating a data bank of village development programs around the world and would certainly like to include your activities into this data bank. We have found that many organizations use the 20PPP as part of their fund raising efforts, using the 20 indicators and the villagers’ priorities to demonstrate to potential donor agencies, what progress has been made in the villages where you are working and what specific programs or projects still need funding. Also, CHOICE has a trained staff of people who are willing to donate their time in helping to train your staff, if you can cover their transportation and living expenses while they are working with your staff. We have found that it takes
roughly one week to orient your staff, engage in some field trials, and to outline a specific set of action steps needed to implement the 20PPP in your area. If that is of some interest, please let us know.

Sincerely,

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Formal Discussion on the Meaning and Application Of the 20 Points of Progress Program

In order to understand and apply the 20 Points of Progress Program, (20PPP) there are two levels of awareness that need to be developed: the conceptual level and the application level.

**Conceptual Level**

First, it is important to see the 20PPP as a tool, a mechanism, with a number of potential purposes, goals and outcomes. It is important not to see the 20PPP as having only one purpose (for example that it is only a data collection process). Just as a hammer may be used for many purposes, so too, the 20 Points of Progress Program can be used for many different purposes -- depending on a number of factors that might characterize a given village community. 1) Levels of government services available or not available, 2) the level of per capita income and the degree of equality or inequality of income, 3) extent to which there is political, social and cultural unity or disunity, and 4) the quality and level of commitment of the local leaders to a process of village development.

Second, it is important to conceptualize the 20PPP as a process that will evolve over time, and that what the 20PPP was structured to do in the early phases of the program would be quite different in villages where the 20PPP had been functioning for two or three years. Conceptually, the 20PPP in year one would be structured mostly as a community involvement and participation-stimulating process. As many of the villagers as possible would be encouraged to participate in small group discussions, reviewing the 20 points (indicators) and seeking to understand what the indicator mean, which ones are most important in their village, and then to learn how the community could prioritize the 3-4 most important ones in their village. At a later phase (later during years 2-3), the purpose of the 20PPP would shift toward helping the villagers to reflect on how the most important concerns could best be solved, to develop action plans through the help of a local rural development facilitator (RDF), and the development of a community program to implement some of these action steps to deal with the concerns and problems that they were most concerned about. In a much later phase (say during years 4-5), after the 20 PPP had been in effect for several years, a review of the progress that had been made in the different dimensions of village development might be made, with a review of how the scores had changed and what specific programs and activities had been most effective in helping a village community to solve their problems. This kind of data collection and analysis can then be made available to the villagers themselves, allowing them to see how they compare with other villages and helping them to learn from the efforts of other villages.

The third and in many ways the most fundamental aspect of this process is to stimulate village participation and awareness of the problems and challenges they face and to create some consensus and ownership to a set of action steps on which the village as a whole would be willing to cooperate and work together.
In the early phases of this program we noticed that some of the village leaders were very suspicious, somewhat confused about the "real " purpose of the 20PPP. They often were very concerned that the central government or some outside donor agency was seeking to spy on their community, seeking to learn about all their weaknesses and problems, which might then be used against them. Others assumed that the 20PPP was being established simply to collect data so that outsiders could write up reports and complete research activities that would only benefit the outsiders and not the villagers themselves. In the application section, below, we will spend a great deal of time on how best to introduce the 20PPP into a given village. It clearly does require a great deal of time and effort to help village communities to see the value and importance of the 20PPP and those responsible for implementing this program must be patient and careful in how they introduce and explain the purposes of the 20PPP. This will be discussed in the application phase described below.

The fourth aspect of our conceptualizing is to understand that the 20 indicators we are using are best defined as a set of fairly broad categories open to a variety of different interpretations. The people introducing the 20PPP in a village must be carefully trained to see each indicator in very flexible terms, that what we have in mind is a broad category that can represent a number of potential problem areas. There is no assumption in our conceptualization that an indicator must be defined in some narrow or conceptually fixed way. The process, as we are defining it, is less concerned with some limited or fixed definition for each of the 20 points, and thus should be more concerned about helping villagers to reflect on a broad range of possible problems that need solutions. Because we are allowing the villagers to define how each of the 20 points are to be defined, it ensures a greater probability that most of the 20 indicators we are using will be perceived by the villagers as relevant and appropriate to the situation in their village.

Thus, in the early phase we really do want the villagers to interact, with the outsider facilitator (RDF) introducing the 20PPP, in a way that allows both the outside facilitator and the villagers participating to have some impact in how the indicator is defined. In the initial phase of the program, it is less important that there is only one single definition, which must rigorously be adopted. We are far more interested in helping the villager to see each indicator in ways that are interesting, relevant and meaningful. One of the interesting consequences of this flexible approach to each indicator, is the interesting phenomenon of "scoring inconsistency." Thus it is not uncommon for a village to score themselves as a four on the first indicator (what percentage of children attend school), simply assuming that most children do attend school in their village. Through a series of iterative discussions between the outside facilitator (RDF) and the villagers, over time the villagers may begin later to see that attendance can be defined in many ways (registered to attend but not really attending, attending periodically but often missing several days at time to meet parent's needs, attending but not actually passing the grade they are in, and so forth).
It is not necessary during the first time the 20PPP is introduced that all of these subtle distinctions need to be considered or even discussed. As a consequent, over time the villagers will gradually develop a much more sophisticated awareness of what "attendance" means, but we are not concerned with that in the beginning. For this reason, we have noted this "scoring inconsistency" phenomenon" where during the first discussion of the 20PPPP, villagers will, through a process of consensus, declare they are a four, but then a year later, actually decide, after a set of more careful discussions, that they are really a two on that indicator.

Finally we want to conceptualize the 20PPP as a long-term process that will take several years for the full benefits of this program to be appreciated. If we conceptualize the 20PPP as a five-year process, then how the 20PPP would be used in a village would depend on the extent to which the 20PPP methodology had been exposed to the villagers and whether they are, for example, in year 1, year 3 or year 5. Although this will become more clear when we describe the processes of application in the next section below, let us simply point out that in the early phases, the 20PPP would best be seen as a process to stimulate awareness and participation, generally during the first year. In a later set of discussions, especially in the 2-3 years, the 20PPP would better be seen as a process to stimulate a rudimentary planning and implementation processes, where action plans are designed and then implemented. In a later stage of development, perhaps during the 4-5 year of the program, the 20PPP could be defined as a process to stimulate greater empowerment, local initiative and responsibility. Such activities could include the strengthening of local leadership and the willingness of the villagers to mobilize more of their own resources, also a willingness to network with outsiders to help them help themselves. As they reflect on where they have been in the past, where they are now and where they want to be in the future, the 20PPP provides a set of tools to measure the impact of their efforts, allowing them to compare their own village with other villages, assess their successes and failures and finally to reflect on ways that they might improve their efforts to improve the quality of life in their village community.

**Application Level**

In order to make the 20PPP more understandable and more easy to implement let us first outline the actual steps that an outside agency might take to introduce the 20PPP in a given cluster of villages and then outline in some detail a case study of how the 20PPP was introduced into a group of villages in central Mexico in the autumn of 1997. Over a two-year period in a number of different areas of the world, the 20PPP methodology has been gradually refined and improved. The steps outlined below are based upon the number of field testing experiences. It is clear that no one set of steps will work in all cultures and certainly not in all villages. Thus each step defined below must be seen as suggestive rather than definitive, and thus open to some flexibility. Clearly there are some things that appear useful in the application of the 20PPP in a given area. Let us define some of these pre-requisites.
Selecting the Villages to Participate.
The sponsoring agency or donor organization desiring to participate in the Twenty Points of Progress Program should first conduct an assessment of the rural districts where they are presently working and target one or two districts that have higher than average levels of poverty. It has been especially helpful to meet with various government and non-government organizations, including organizations like UNICEF and UNDP, to explain what you are trying to accomplish through the Twenty Points of Progress Program and to obtain their support and encouragement.

Once the rural districts have been identified, one or two full-time rural development facilitators (RDFs) must be hired, trained and supported in each district selected. In the early stages of the Twenty Points of Progress, such RDFs may simply be volunteers, recruited from a local college or university or members of your organization’s staff. We have found some value in introducing the 20PPP into a cluster of at least 5 to 10 villages. Selecting a cluster of villages, as will be seen below, has certain advantages. It is the long term purpose of the 20PPP to create a rural district wide program, where all the villages in a given rural district are aware of the 20PPP, have been able to participate in this process over several years, are aware, not only of what their own scores are on the 20 indicators, but are also aware of the scores of other villages in their area. This awareness of other villages and what they are doing to improve their scores over time has been found to be very effective in stimulating villages to improve their own scores. One of the unintended consequences of the 20PPP has been the willingness of village leaders in one village actually to visit another nearby village to learn what they are doing and how they have been able to improve their scores and thus as a consequence to improve the quality of life in their village. Such an exchange of ideas and experiences among villagers themselves is clearly one of the unique and helpful consequences of the 20PPP in a given rural district.

Preparing Rural Development Facilitators (RDFs) to implement the 20PPP.
Success is greatly enhanced when the outsider introducing the 20PPP has some in depth experience with the village communities. Thus it is strongly recommended that the 20PPP be introduced into an area where a full-time rural development facilitator (RDF) has been working with the villages for some extended period of time. From our experience, RDFs should be a local person if possible, fluent in the local language or dialect, familiar and sensitive to the local culture, traditions and customs. The RDF should have a favorable attitude towards rural people. He or she should not be arrogant and condescending towards the villagers, must be willing to listen and learn from villagers, show respect and appreciation for the contribution that villagers can make in their own development. Successful RDFs should have some basic experience in rural community development work, including, if possible, some background in one or more of the following disciplines: rural health and sanitation, rural literacy and education, agricultural extension with some familiarity in organic farming, rural
small-scale enterprise and micro-credit systems, and a strong willingness to live and work among a cluster of villages for 3-5 years. RDFs should be able to contact and work with government officials, NGO representatives, public administrators and other officials, and private sector business people and other informal leaders, needed to coordinate and implement the 20PPP. The RDF must be a mobilizer of resources, both within and outside the village area, must be a networker with various community and district leaders, (both formal and informal), various religious, ethnic, income and social groups, that might exist in the area. Also the RDF must network with government agencies at the district, provincial, and even national levels, also with non-government organizations (NGOs), with regional universities and technical schools, with national and international donors and companies that may be persuaded to support and partnership with the organization sponsoring the 20PPP. Thus in the process of implementation, it is very helpful that a full time facilitator be assigned to the area where the 20PPP is to be implemented, both because this RDF will have the background and awareness of these local village communities to know how best to introduce the 20PPP in the area, but also will be able to establish the level of trust needed to introduce the process.

Awareness Building Phase
Below are some of the basic steps that have been found especially useful in introducing the 20PPP into a rural area. After the villages have been selected there at least three different ways to introduce the 20PPP into these villages.

Step One. Introduction
1. Establish a full-time rural development facilitator (RDF) in the area who has lived in the area long enough to know each of the communities that are to participate in the 20PPP and thus can develop the strong levels of trust and can demonstrate sensitivity and awareness of the local situation. Experience suggests that 3-6 months minimum are needed to establish the level of trust and sensitivity needed to make the introduction of the 20PPP relatively easy.
2. Without a full time RDF, it is still possible to introduce the 20PPP into an area, but the possibility of failure is greatly enhanced. One way to reduce the necessity of a full time RDF is to recruit local college students or local extension workers who have some background and training in village development methodologies in a given area.
3. Those introducing the 20PPP in an areas still will need some training (at least 1-2 days) to ensure they are completely familiar with the purposes, procedures and philosophy needed to make the 20PPP successful in a given area. It is recommended that there be at least two male and two female facilitators assigned to each village in order to ensure that a significant number of the villagers do have an opportunity to participate in a small group setting.
4. It is important that the 20 points worksheet be translated into the local dialect, making certain that each point (indicator) is translated in terms and phrases that are readily understood by both literate and illiterate people.

5. The first step requires those introducing the 20PPP to meet with the formal and informal leaders of the village (both men and women if possible) to explain in some detail the purposes, procedures and philosophy of the 20PPP and to go through the 20 points in some detail to make certain the leaders understand the meaning and implications of all 20 points.

Step Two. Small Group Awareness Building
1. Experience suggests that those introducing the 20PPP into a village must first work with various small groups (generally groups of 4-6 people), who represent informal leadership groups, different neighborhoods, social or religious groups, older and younger men, women, etc. It is helpful to have gone through the procedures of the 20PPP to at least 6-12 different groups before having a larger community-wide meeting. It is especially helpful to have both male and female facilitators, in order to ensure that women’s opinions are heard. There is no question that village women are much more apt to express their opinion if the facilitator is a woman.

2. The procedure is fairly simple. It requires that each of the 20 points are either written out on laminated sheets or on cards or even better have a set of 20 pictures prepared that represent each of the 20 points. When working with illiterate people, pictures, which represent the 20 points, can be very helpful in keeping their interest and helping them to remember each of the 20 points. Each card or picture is then explained and placed on a table or on the ground where all the members of the small group can see them. The villagers are helped to understand the five point scale used: 1) means only a few people (less than 19%), 2) means less than half of the people (20-39%), 3) means roughly half of the people (40-59%), 4) mean many or more than half of the people, but not all (60-79%) and 5) means all or nearly all the people (80-100%). By using small stones, beans or pieces of stick, the members of the small groups are invited to put the number of stones, beans, sticks that correspond to the number that is reflective of their village. Thus, if a group of villagers believe that roughly half of the children are attending the village school, they would put 3 stones, beans or sticks on the first indicator (paper or picture).

3. Those introducing the 20PPP in the village must be very friendly and supportive of whatever number the members of these small groups want to put on the cards or pictures. At this point we are less interested in the correctness of their scores and far more interested in the dynamic of the discussion going on, with the facilitators encouraging all the members of these groups to voice their opinion and to give their reasons for the score they think is right. While it is nice if all the members of the small groups reach consensus on each indicator, at this stage of the process, consensus is not necessary. The facilitator should keep tract of the different opinions that are presented, noting the arguments that are given, the different ideas presented and some of the reasons people gave for their opinions. Later when the larger community meeting is held, an aggregate
score will be presented for each indicator, pointing out that most people said, for example a 3 on some indicator, but there were also some who said a 1 or a 2.

4. After the facilitators have presented the 20PPP to a fairly diverse set of small groups (at least 6 groups), the facilitators should meet privately and review what they have learned, how different people in the village might have had different opinions and the level or extent to which all the groups were similar or dissimilar on the 20 points. A summary of all the groups needs to be prepared and reviewed with an aggregate score established for each point before the total community meeting is held.

Step Three. Community Awareness Building and Establishment of Priorities

1. In the evening or later the next day, the facilitators meet with the community at large, with all members of the community invited. Either the full time RDF or a well-respected village leader introduces the group and invites one of the facilitators to lead a discussion. The purposes, procedures and philosophy are again presented to the entire community. Questions can be raised and clarification and greater explanations can be presented to the villagers. It is very important that the purposes and procedures of the 20PPP be carefully presented a second time in order for the meaning and significance of the 20PPP to be reinforced in the village.

2. Each of the 20 points is discussed in some detail. Enough time must be available so that the different ways in which the 20 points were understood and defined by different people in the village can be mentioned. Village people should feel that their opinions were understood and respected by the facilitators. An aggregate average score for each indicator is presented, but other scores suggested by other individuals and the reasons given for these different scores can be explained if there is time. People should be given an opportunity to comment on the aggregate average scores, but again no effort should be made to have a vote or seek to impose some type of consensus at this point in time. Again, the purpose of the 20PPP at this time is to stimulate discussion, generate some consciousness raising, and some greater awareness of the types of indicators that could be used to help understand how well their village is doing.

3. It must be understood by the facilitators introducing the 20PPP into a given village that at this point in time, villagers may have some awareness of the 20 indicators that we are using, but most of them will have a very unclear understanding as to just exactly what these indicators might mean in some objective or scientifically correct way of thinking. Again at this point we are more interested in the dynamics of the participation that is generated, the level of involvement and willingness of a variety of different people (rich and poor, old and young, men and women) to express their opinions. Facilitators should be sensitive to the tendency for some of the local elite to dominate, for certain family or social leaders to discourage the participation of certain people, and to have a minority of people insisting that a certain indicator has to be defined in a specific way. Again at this stage, it is probably not wise to confront these tendencies for authoritarian decision-making. Effort can be made to invite other people in the
general meeting to participate, without becoming offensive to the natural (formal) leaders, but no effort should be made to confront the present processes being observed. Clarification as to how each indicator might better be defined or defined in a different way will be presented in a later meeting.

4. After all of the indicator scores have been presented, the facilitators will explain that some of the indicators had very good scores (averaging 4s and 5s), some were in the middle (averaging 3s) and some scores were low (averaging 1s and 2s). One helpful way is to put the cards or pictures in groups with indicators having similar aggregate scores, put in similar piles. While no effort should be made to suggest that the village is bad or that the low scores demonstrate a weakness or failure in the village, the villagers can still be invited to identify 2-3 of the indicators that a majority of the people would like to work on, to develop some type of plan to improve or increase their scores. Experience suggests that some level of consensus is not too difficult to develop when villagers are asked to identify and prioritize 2-3 indicators to focus on. Usually the RDF or a well-respected leader in the village is best suited to lead this kind of discussion. The RDF is generally better qualified to point out possible ways that a particular indicator might be improved. If the villagers all agree that vaccinating all the children is a high priority, the RDF could offer to take a group from the village to meet with a representative in the Ministry of Health, or to meet with an NGO representative in a nearby city, requesting that they help in the village's desire to have their children vaccinated. Again, it is also helpful for the villagers to be told that many of these indicators may require many months, even years before the scores can be improved to a 4 or 5, but that the RDF is committed to helping them find a way to work on the indicators they are most interested in.

**Capacity Building Phase**

The three steps mentioned above are the key steps in the first phase of the 20PPP, what we are calling the Awareness Building Phase in the 20PPP. We are now ready to describe in some detail the second phase of the 20PPP, what we are calling the Capacity Building or Project Implementation Phase of the 20 Points of Progress Program. CHOICE has found that the following sets of activities and support mechanisms are important pre-requisites for the Capacity Building or Project Implementation Phase:

1. Since each RDF is assigned a cluster of 5-10 villages and is encouraged to visit and explain the purpose and advantages of the Twenty Points of Progress Program in each village community. This initial introduction may require several visits before community commitment has been established. Village Communities participating in the 20 Points of Progress Program may consider the following advantages of membership in this program: (a) It provides a simple but effective way of determining their present level of development or progress. (b) It provides an effective way of monitoring progress through the assessment of some 20 specific indicators. (c) It helps the community to consider a number of specific activities that might be implemented, including helping the village community to prioritize such activities when local resources
are limited. (d) As participating village communities prioritize their own needs and program activities, and as they begin to mobilize some of their own resources, possible outside agencies, organizations or donors, seeing these village communities seeking to help themselves, may be motivated to provide some of their own resources to the village communities participating in the Twenty Points of Progress Program.

(2) If possible, some type of either already existing, or newly established, village development committee (VDC) needs to be trained and oriented in each village community in the processes and activities of the Twenty Points of Progress Program. Such committees are encouraged to review the twenty points of progress worksheet, to determine the level where their own community is located on each of the twenty points of progress and to select two or three indicators that they may wish to focus on.

(3) Working with the RDF, the village development committee (VDC) is encouraged to involve as many people in the village as possible in developing an Action Plan for each indicator, identifying specific goals to be achieved, a time schedule, resources needed to implement the activity, a list of people to be involved along with their responsibilities and activities to be completed, and a list of outside agencies, NGOs or other organizations that might be recruited to work with them in the accomplishment of their goals.

(4) At least monthly the VDC must meet to assess progress being made in each indicator selected for planning and implementation. It is strongly recommended that VDCs select the 2-3 indicators in the initial phase of the Twenty Points of Progress Program that have the greatest probability of success. Only after success has been accomplished in a few of the indicators, should they seek to work on others. The quickest way for a community to get discouraged is to work on too many indicators all at once.

(5) The RDFs will play a significant role in establishing linkages and networks of support groups both within and among the village communities, but also with outside sources of support (local government agencies, government program representatives, NGOs and other voluntary organizations, and even private businesses) who begin to leverage their resources with the resource mobilization activities being carried out by the village communities themselves.

(6) At least once a year the Twenty Points of Progress Worksheet will be used to measure and assess what progress has been made in each of the participating villages in the rural district. It is very important that the result of this annual assessment is compiled and a new score be assigned to each village on each of the twenty indicators. A district report should then be printed, showing what the scores had been a year ago for each of the twenty indicators for each participating village, and then the new scores for each indicator one year later. This district level report is sent to each village community at least once a year both to demonstrate where each community has made the most progress, but also to raise their awareness as to how they compare with other villages in the district. Preliminary studies using this Twenty Points of Progress technology suggests that communities that receive this kind of annual and sometimes even semi-annual feedback are much more apt to mobilize their own resources to
achieve goals that are most important to them. What is especially interesting is to note how such feedback stimulates community discussion. One community seeing that another community nearby had increased their scores significantly in the five indicators of the health dimension over the past year, would begin to ask questions: how and why was this other community so successful, what specifically did they do, can we visit their village and see what they are doing, obviously, if they can do it, so can we, etc.

(7) All international agencies, donors, NGOs, PVOs, presently working in the area where the 20PPP is being implemented, who are seeking to improve the quality of life in these communities, are invited to participate in the CHOICE Twenty Points of Progress Program. To become a participant simply register your organization with the CHOICE Web Page, indicating the name of your organization, agency or institution that is implementing some form of village development activity at the grassroots level. Please send us the name, address, telephone, FAX, email, web page, etc., of your organization, including the contact person, and a brief summary of your philosophy, mission and scope of rural development activities. List the village communities that you are presently working with that will be participating in the 20 Points of Progress Program. As soon as a village community has filled out a Twenty Points of Progress Work Sheet, please send CHOICE a copy of the results, which we will include in our database.

General Summary

The major purpose of the Twenty Points of Progress Program is to provide some basic indicators by which a village community can measure its own efforts at improving its quality of life. The purpose of the Twenty Points of Progress Program is not to criticize or belittle a village community. Much care must be given to ensure that the community understands the purpose of the Twenty Points of Progress. The RDF must help the villagers to accept this program as a way of seeing where they are now and where they may want to be in the future, to see the various ways in which they might be able to improve their lives, and to seek activities and projects that will help achieve their goals. The RDF can play a very significant role in helping the villagers to see what the possibilities might be, to help the villagers to mobilize the resources they need to implement this program. The RDF should help the villagers to develop an inventory of government agencies, local universities and technical schools in the area, various non-government organizations, national and international donors and businesses that might provide some resources. The Twenty Points of Progress Program (20PPP) thus has seven components:

1. Initial Assessment: First, the community must assess its present situation by filling out the Twenty Points of Progress Work Sheet.
2. Prioritize Goals: Second, the community must determine what specific items on the work sheet are most important to work on during the next 3-6 months.
(3) Establish a work plan: Third, the community must identify various sources of help and specific action steps that need to be implemented.

(4) Implement the work plan: Fourth, the community must establish a work schedule, assignment of work activities to be completed, involving as many people in the community as possible.

(5) Follow Up Assessment: Fifth, the community must do another assessment using the Twenty Points of Progress Work Sheet usually after 6 months to a year, to see if the desired progress has been made.

(6) Re-evaluation: Sixth, the community must determine why the action plan was successful or not successful, and develop a new action plan.

(7) Continued Follow-Through: Seventh, the community must continue the first six steps until the progress desired in the village has been achieved.

Two things need to be emphasized. First, while the RDF may be the logical person to introduce the Twenty Points of Progress Program in a given village, there are various ways by which the actual collection of data might be conducted. In some situations the RDF working with a group of trusted informants can be used to collect the data. In many villages, it is simply the village development committee, working with the RDF that determines the scores. In other situations, local high school and college students who are from this district can be recruited to go out and collect the data. While it is important that the scores be as accurate as possible, some care needs to be taken to ensure that the time and effort needed to collect the data is not too excessive, either to the RDF or to the community. Since the purpose is simply to let people know where they are and if they are making progress, it may only be necessary to collect rough estimates in the early stages. Second, while the twenty indicators used in the program reflect a set of common indicators, obviously there are other indicators that could be used. While we do ask that each community participating in the program rate themselves on these twenty items in order to facilitate comparisons across many village communities, each community, nevertheless, is free to add their own indicators to these twenty. In several villages participating in this program, it was not unusual for the given village community to add 3-4 additional indicators that they felt were important. CHOICE would be interested in knowing what the villager-generated indicators might be with the possibility of including these additional indicators in future versions of the 20 Points of Progress Program.
CHOICE Rural District Empowerment
Twenty Points of Progress Program

The field of rural development has sought to improve the quality of life in the villages of Africa, Asia, and Latin America for nearly 50 years. Much of this effort has been rather uncoordinated, ineffective and non-sustainable. Let us review why this is:

Lack of Coordination:
1. Presently there are many separate organizations focusing on rural health services, others focus on village level literacy and education programs, still others emphasize small scale enterprises and micro-credit systems or other development activities.
2. Generally, these many programs seldom communicate with each other. They generally have no idea how their own programs impact or affect other programs in the same area.
3. This lack of coordination has led to much wastage of resources, has led to unnecessary duplication of services, and has reduced the possibility of beneficial cooperation (synergism) and mutually supported efforts.

Lack of Effectiveness Through Mass Participation:
1. For village development programs to be effective, conscious efforts are needed to collect valid information from a broad section of the community that indicates what the condition of the village is at the present time, in terms of health, literacy, income, environment, and community development.
2. A consensus model of goal setting and prioritization is needed to allow communities the opportunity to determine what specific development goals they want to achieve say over the next 3-5 years.
3. Next an annual survey of the participating communities is needed to measure what progress is being made and some analysis of what is working and what is not working and why.

Lack of Sustainability Through Networking and Processes of Empowerment:
1. Too many rural development programs are one-time, give-away activities, which emphasize the distribution of free medicine, free clothing and other free resources, thus reducing the possibility of long-term, positive impact on these communities over time. Few programs are structured to facilitate the growth of individual and group empowerment, greater self-esteem, dignity, and self-reliance.
2. Few development agencies expect that local communities should be required to mobilize some of their own resources for the support of local programs, or be required to pay for some of the services that they receive, thus ensuring that the communities remain dependent on the resources of outside government and non-government agencies.
3. Few rural development programs are structured to encourage local communities to organize themselves both to mobilize their own resources and to network with outside public and private sources of help in order to work together in implementing long term, sustainable programs of rural development.

CHOICE has developed the Rural District Empowerment and Networking Strategy and the Twenty Points of Progress methodology to deal with the problems of lack of coordination, ineffectiveness, and non-sustainability. There are three specific sets of activities which are needed to implement such a Program.

1. Selection of a Rural District: Working in conjunction with various government and non-government agencies, CHOICE seeks to identify a rural district, where a Twenty Points of Progress Program might be implemented. Such districts are usually of less than 50,000 people in population, may have one or two small rural towns, and a cluster of 20-30 or more village communities. By focusing on one district as the beginning pilot project for a given country, a number of specific activities can be implemented to test the efficaciousness of various strategies and programs structured to improve program coordination, program effectiveness, and program sustainability.

2. Placement of Full-time Rural Development Facilitators (RDFs): Once the district has been selected, CHOICE, in cooperation with various local government and non-government agencies, will select, train and support full-time Rural Development Facilitators. These RDFs should have the following qualifications:
   a. Should be a local person if possible, fluent in the local language or dialect, familiar with and sensitive to the local culture, traditions and customs. The RDF should have a favorable attitude towards rural people. He or she should not be arrogant and condescending towards the villagers, must be willing to listen and learn from villagers, show respect and appreciation for the contribution that villagers can make in their own development.
   b. Should have some basic experience in rural community development work, including, if possible, some background in one or more of the following disciplines: rural health and sanitation, rural literacy and education, agricultural extension with some familiarity in organic farming, rural small-scale enterprise and micro-credit systems, and a strong willingness to live and work in the selected rural district for 3-5 years.
   c. Should be able to contact and work with government officials, NGO representatives, and other public and private administrators needed to coordinate and implement a Twenty Points of Progress Program. The RDF must be a mobilizer of resources, both within and outside the district area, must be a networker with various community and district leaders, (both formal and informal), various religious, ethnic, income and social groups, that might exist in the area. Also the RDF must network with government agencies at the district, provincial, and even national levels, also with non-government organizations (NGOs), with regional universities and technical schools, with national and
international donors and businesses and companies that may be persuaded to support and partnership with the Twenty Points of Progress Program.

3. Formalize and Institutionalize the Twenty Points of Progress Program:
CHOICE is willing to provide the leadership role in the implementation of a pilot project in some rural district, on the condition that various government and non-government agencies, businesses and companies, national and international donors are willing to allocate needed resources to start such a program. The key to this whole program is the strong commitment to collecting data needed to assess what is the condition of the district at the beginning of the pilot project, to organize follow-up data collection efforts to measure what is working and what is not working and why, and to document this whole process in such a way as to provide a detailed description of how the program was organized, how the communities where involved, what types of programs were easiest to implement and which types of programs were more difficult to implement, what lessons were learned, and how the Rural District Twenty Points of Progress Program might best be implemented in other districts. CHOICE is committed both to implementing this program and in helping other NGOs in a pilot project district and to collecting the data needed to measure progress and to assess lessons learned.

Various government agencies and non-government organizations (NGOs) must be willing to provide some resources to accomplish this most important work. From CHOICE’s experience in a number of countries, at least $100,000 in local currency is needed per year to implement such a district level program which would include the cost of salary and expenses for a full-time RDF, salary and expenses for 5-10 assistant RDFs, the cost of collecting the data at the beginning and at the end of each year, and various administrative and support costs. While CHOICE is willing to cover some of these expenses, the lion share of the costs much be covered by various government agencies, non-government organizations, businesses and companies and national and international donors that are willing to partnership with CHOICE.

CHOICE has developed a number of sector-specific programs to help RDFs to work more effectively in rural district development:
(1) The Rural District Hospital Outreach Program, to help organize a district-wide village health worker program in which a rural hospital is selected to help support and coordinate a network of village health workers willing to introduce sanitation and health care programs into the villages located in a rural district.
(2) The Rural District Micro-Credit program to help establish a district-wide village finance system which starts with a commitment to first set up village-level savings groups, then to establish small micro-credit groups and eventually to set up a district-wide, rural village bank program.
(3) The Rural District Education Enrichment Program to help establish a district-wide commitment to improving the quality of education in the village schools of a given rural district through an organized teacher training program, an organized adult literacy campaign, and the establishment of village level parent-teacher associations to facilitate greater coordination and cooperation between communities and their schools.
This proposal is being sent to several government officials, NGO representatives, and various businesses and companies working in these areas to determine what interest there might be to start such a project. At the present time CHOICE is seeking to formalize such a Rural District Empowerment Twenty Points of Progress Program in Bolivia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, and Vietnam. If you are interested in helping to develop such a program in one of these countries or elsewhere, please let me know. See the enclosed Proposal Letter which can be sent to various businesses, companies, organizations and institutions seeking their support.