ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT: KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

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The Alternative Development Knowledge Network (ADKN) comes from The International Symposium on Sustainable Highland Development and Networking: Lessons Learned from the Royal Project, also called “The Highland Symposium”. This was a symposium organized by Thailand’s Royal Project Foundation, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and Chiang Mai University, with the objectives of sharing knowledge and information, presenting the result of 35 years of work by the Royal Project and initiating a new knowledge-sharing network.

“The Highland Symposium”, 2004
CND Global Thematic Evaluation, 2005
UNODC Thematic Evaluation, 2005
UNODC Experts Meeting, 2005
CND Thematic Debate, 2006
EC/FAO/GTZ Workshop, 2006
• How do we develop an evidence base of ‘what works’?

• How do we work within the ‘conventional’ development architecture?

• How do we best understand and document the links between illicit drug crop cultivation and poverty?

• Is Alternative Development no longer a helpful term?

• How do we scale up?

• How do we ‘skill-up’ in ‘Development’?

• How do we skill-up development professionals in ‘Drug Control’?

### PROBLEMS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Problem</th>
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<td>“Technology transfer”</td>
<td>• Research and develop the solution, e.g. better agricultural technology  • Teach the local people how to use the system, then leave them to get on with it</td>
<td>• Improvements don’t work as well out of experimental conditions  • Improvements don’t “stick” - once project ends, farmers go back to old way</td>
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<td>“Marketing”</td>
<td>• Build up farmers’ agricultural systems  • Help farmers to sell the produce of their systems</td>
<td>• Improved systems don’t generate improved incomes  • Farmers remain in low-value agricultural activities</td>
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ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED ENTERPRISES

- **Increasing Income**
  - DOREs can help to increase production and productivity
  - DOREs can increase quality and carry out value-adding activities on behalf of the farmers

- **Providing Inputs**
  - DOREs will typically provide credit, planting material and agricultural chemicals, and will finance them with the revenues they get from sale of produce

- **Giving Access to Demand**
  - DOREs’ capital and operations allow poor farmers’ produce to reach high enough levels to sell to modern markets

- **Improving Distribution**
  - DOREs provide postharvest handling, processing and distribution systems so that produce from remote areas can reach markets

- **Reducing Risk**
  - DOREs improve access to customers and may eliminate market risk entirely by making production purchase agreements with farmers

SOLUTION I: PARTICIPATION

Involving beneficiaries in all aspects of the project...

- Involving farmers in:
  - Agricultural research
  - Socioeconomic and production surveys
  - Identification and planning of interventions
  - Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of interventions

... creates social capital and utilizes local knowledge

Benefits include:
- Creating initiatives that are well-suited to environment
- Using or building on solutions that have already been developed
- Building interest and enthusiasm in community
- Building capacity to continue activities after termination of project
- Creating respect and trust between community and project staff
CURRENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE

Extensive information and resources are available for people wanting to use participatory approaches:

- There is extensive theoretical and practical literature on participatory approaches, e.g. for:
  - Research
  - Intervention design
  - Monitoring and evaluation

Arguably, the big block is institutional capacity and political willingness to use these methods.

This course aims to start filling this gap.

Information about how to organize and manage rural enterprises is not widely available:

- There is good information on the early stages of the value-chain approach:
  - Good material on value-chain/market research
  - Good material on enterprise planning and development (e.g. FAO/CIAT)

- There is less little detailed information about what to do after a Development Oriented Rural Enterprise has been developed:
  - How to manage?
  - How to organize?

THE ‘BEST PRACTICE MARKETING’ PROJECT

Project Design Data-Gathering Analysis, Synthesis & Dissemination

- Recruited team for Thailand, China, Laos, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia
- Drafted case-study questionnaire
- Agreed project methodology

- Completed case studies
- Conducted inter-group field trips

- Conducted preliminary analyses
- Drafted manual and iterated after feedback
- Organized workshop generate more feedback
- Completed manual and training material
OUTPUT I: MANUAL

Building Development-Oriented Rural Enterprises:
Best Practice Marketing for Communities in Mountainous and/or Drug-Crop Producing Regions

Modules

1. Understanding how background and environment shape commercialization
2. Organizing the structure, management, performance and leadership of Development Oriented Rural Enterprises
3. Setting up the basic business processes of purchasing, on-farm improvements, post-harvest process and sales
4. Strengthening Development Oriented Rural Enterprises through quality control and certification, service provider management and market information
5. Creating effective marketing strategies through customer selection, positioning, branding and promotion
6. Measuring and managing the financial performance of Development Oriented Rural Enterprises
7. Building sustainable enterprises through the Rapid Rural Agricultural Commercialization framework

NOTE: Full manual is available on www.adkn.org

OUTPUT II: KNOWLEDGE-SHARING PORTAL

Check content on marketing, agriculture and other topics
Read and post notices relevant to the site
Log in to add your own articles, notices and documents
Get access to the manual and other content about Alternative Development
Discuss development issues or ask for help on the forum

NOTE: Website address is www.adkn.org
ADKN is facilitated by the Highland Research and Development Institute of Thailand and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (OAS-CICAD).

Thanks!