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COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICE

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Quick Facts

There are eight basic steps that must be followed for a successful resource development program. These are:

- Develop the desire for change.
- Organize for change.
- Inventory the local situation.
- Develop a plan.
- Evaluate the plan.
- Put the plan into action.
- Keep people informed.
- Don't stop short of the final goal.

The role of the change agent in resource development is to help people in rural communities, through organization and education, secure for themselves the things they need and want. This is accomplished through the planned development of a community's natural, human and economic resources.

Steps in Resource Development

- Local people must have a desire for change.

A local development committee can stimulate a desire to grow and to build a stronger community. This desire can be created by holding group discussion meetings, by personal contact with community leaders, and by planned use of mass media.

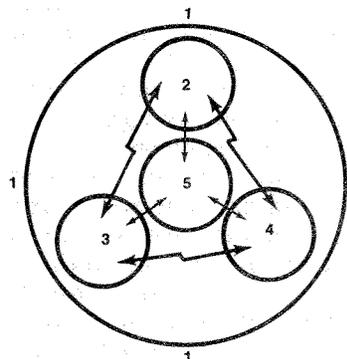
- A community must be organized if desired changes are to be realized.

Everyone in the community should be involved. This includes all phases of government as well as citizen groups. Community involvement can be accomplished first by organizing a base committee. Expansion then comes by placing people on local action committees. When individuals understand the local situation and the objectives of the organization, they generally are willing to become involved.

Organization Structure:

1. Total community
2. Economic resources

3. Social resources
4. Natural resources
5. Development team



The overall development team should not be made up of only one segment of the total community. It should work independent of the various resource groups. The committee, however, should include persons from each group and should set up communications linkage with the various resource groups. The resource groups can be useful in supplying information to the development committee but should not be the only source of information linkage.

- Take inventory of the current situation and then develop short and long range goals.

The people must know what the present situation is before realistic goals can be established. A community's situation must be reevaluated continually as new information is obtained and as progress is made toward the accomplishment of specific goals.

- Develop a plan.

Once a community's interest and involvement are secured and an inventory of local needs is made, then—and only then—should a plan be developed. Think the plan through and continue to evaluate the program as progress is made toward community goals. Some communities try to start development projects before

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community interest, commitment and inventory have been obtained. This is a mistake. Plans cannot be made before other steps have been completed.

- Examine and evaluate the plan.
It is possible that the initial plan is impractical or that too much has been taken for granted in developing the plan. Do not become married to a given plan. Test the plan on individuals from different interest groups and be willing to listen to new ideas and make changes. A good plan is not static, but will change to some degree with time as the community needs change. Community leaders will point out what is right or wrong.
- Put the plan into action.
Once the plan has been evaluated and agreed upon, it is then time to begin the action phase. As action progresses, a constant check and reevaluation of the plan should be maintained to determine if the plan is being followed and if intermediate goals are being attained. When we consider the potential impact of community development clearly, we are talking in terms of ourselves. Anything we do or do not do, or do well, or do poorly, has grave implications. Total development is affected by our actions, misactions or inactions. Our action has an impact on the lives of many and can determine the future of those around us as well as our own. Because of the impact the action taken may have on a community, it must be thought through and evaluated thoroughly.
- Keep people informed.
The community needs to be kept informed

about what is being accomplished. While telling the development story, be sure to extend credit where it is due. People work harder when their part is acknowledged.

- When short term goals are reached, plan new ones and keep going.

People have a natural tendency to let progress go to their heads and to stop working toward completion of major goals. Total development is a continuing process of trying to reach long range goals.

Extension's Role

Extension can assist in each of these steps by carrying out educational programs developed in cooperation with community development groups. Extension can assist in the organization for change, in taking inventory of the local situation, in setting goals, in developing a plan, in determining where assistance can be obtained, in the evaluation phases of the program and in informing the public of accomplishments.

Extension, much like the development team, cannot become directly identified with one of the resource groups. If this happens, it will lose part of its impact on the total development process.

The basic objective of resource development is to help people obtain the things they need and want through planned development of natural, social and economic resources.

A community can grow by taking advantage of a lack of interest in surrounding communities and by supplying the needs that others fail to supply. The progressive community is the one that doesn't wait for things to happen—its citizens make things happen.