September 2002

Final report of programme

Youth as Facilitative Leaders & Community Youth Development

August 2002

Concept of the programme

The programme *Youth as Facilitative Leaders & Community Youth Development* was designed to identify young people with the potential to be leaders in their communities, and to give them the tools that would drive them to take this opportunity and responsibility seriously and to be able, right away, to start making a difference in their communities. The young participants of this phase of the project would also be taken to a new level, training them to be able to pass these skills, incorporating the Technology of Participation (ToP)®, on to other young people and adults in the region, creating a multiplier effect and expanding the network of leaders. The programme would take place in the village of San Juan las Flores, Sanarate, El Progreso, during the 5 weekends in August, with the young participants and the trainers staying with families in the community, in order to give them a better idea what necessities existed in the community. These young people, during and after the course, would train the participative methods to groups of youth and adults from other communities in two-day courses. This would create an extensive network of facilitators in the towns and villages of the region. This network would be ready to begin to facilitate workshops and plans for community improvement all over the region.

The training team consisted of 2 ToP trainers with a wealth of experience in Community Youth Developement in the USA, and 5 graduates the Technology of Participation Training of Trainers course given by ICA:USA, most of whom specialised in Youth as Facilitative Leaders.

The participants

Invitations to the course were given in various high schools in Sanarate, in San Juan's high school and through the Young Enterprise group in Sansare. Those young people interested filled out an application form detailing their motive for participating in the course, and 13 young people between 14 and 19 years old were chosen from this information. Of the chosen participants, 2 were from San Juan, 3 were from Sansare, and 8 were from Sanarate; 5 were female and 8 were male. Through the course we

discovered that Azucena, Arcely, Ariel, Daniel, Darling, Ligia, Marlon, Maynor, Natali, Neftalí, Pablo, Teófilo and Waldemar were extremely enthusiastic, talented, energetic, intelligent, good-humoured, creative and concerned with the development of their communities.

Means of evaluation

At the beginning of the course the young people were asked what their expectations were for the course, and at the end, we brought them out again for them to see which of the expectations we had matched. Each weekend had its own evaluation form for the participants to fill in. After each theme or section each day a reflective conversation was held in which the participants were encouraged to express what they liked and disliked from them theme, and to make decisions about how they would use the information or tool. After each day of training the trainers did a reflection and feedback session and talked about any necessary changes, bearing in mind the events of the day and the responses of the participants. Throughout the course the participants were given various opportunities to practise facilitation, and at the end of each practice there would be constructive feedback from the group.

The course

Through the expectations communicated by the young people at the outset, the training team noticed that one of their major priorities was that of organising community development projects. We also noted that the group was reasonably heterogeneous in terms of ability, and that it would be more realistic and encouraging for them if we focussed on making them into good facilitators, than to risk some of them feeling discouraged when they were not quite up to the level of being able to train others. Therefore, the course outline was the following:

- Week 1: Group Facilitation Methods trained.
- Week 2: Demonstration of the Community Youth Forum and philosophy of Community Youth Development.
- Week 3: Participants' practice of the facilitation of the Community Youth Forum and preparation for real forums.
- Week 4: Community Youth Forums in communities of San Juan, Sansare and Sanarate, facilitated exclusively by the young facilitators. Evaluation and feedback.
- Week 5: Next steps with the results of the forums. Communication of ICA's vision and opportunities for the young people. Final celebration with guests.

Results

There was a 100% attendance rate of the young people to the course. Through the participative methods and philosophy the group managed to be united, respectful of each other and ready to support each other, and to have the confidence to speak about various subjects with openness and honesty. All of the young people reached a level of confidence in using the methods that allowed them to facilitate successfully the three community forums on the fourth weekend of the course. In these community forums a vision and a plan of action was produced for the community according to the priorities of the participants present. As well as facilitating the plan in the communities, they created their own plan of how they wanted to advance with the learnings of the course. The vision in this plan included improving the image of the youth in Guatemala, creating a regional youth support network, carrying out social and community projects, being partners with adults, expanding the course and continuing to work with ICA. As an early sign that these young people are serious in their mission, they have already organized two other forums in other communities on their own and almost all of them have, on their own initiative, employed the methods in a variety of situations and groups. Of the list of expectations done on the first day of the course, only one of these expectations was not met, and that was to be able to pass on the skills to other people. As mentioned this was a strategic decision to improve the overall quality and usefulness of the course, and is something we hope to achieve in the future. The evaluation forms each week demonstrated a high level of satisfaction and enjoyment of the course and belief in the usefulness of the content.

Support

To carry out the project, ICA had the generous financial support of ICA:USA, friends of Irma Twickler, the Member of Parliament for El Progreso, Dr. Yaquián, Emma Leamon, Dr. Carlos Sánchez of Sanarate, Pollo Rey, Francisco Sánchez, Ninoshka and other individuals. Moreover, the project could never have been done without the generosity of Luis Amado of San Juan in lending us his space for the training, nor the kind residents of San Juan, who allowed us to stay in their houses.

ICA's next steps

ICA believes 100% in the need to involve youth in the planning, implementation and evaluation of actions for the development of this country. To this end, we are going to continue to support this group of young people in their own plan. We are going to give some of them the opportunity to further their ability as facilitators and, eventually, as trainers. We are going to give some of them the opportunity to work directly with ICA during the holidays on project design, implementation and all the logistics behind a community project, to help them in the future to have the capacity to carry out impactful development projects without having to depend so much on institutions. We

are going to involve them in the identification of possible new beneficiary groups for a similar training project, where we would invite them to be co-facilitators. Then we would expand the course, the knowledge and the use of the participative methods y the network of youth leaders, in order for the programme to be stronger.