

# CAÑO NEGRO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

## SIX MONTH PROGRESS REPORT

JULY 1977

The Caño Negro Human Development Project was initiated in January 1977 in Caño Negro, an isolated underdeveloped village one and one-half hours drive east of Caracas in the state of Miranda. The project was formally launched with a week long consult. In this event a four year village socio-economic development plan was created by the 42 national and international consultants working with Caño Negro villagers. This plan called for 13 programs. Since its inception the project has initiated activity in all 13 program arenas. Several families who had left Caño Negro to live in congested Caracas slums have returned to participate in the new village life of Caño Negro. The following paragraphs are a brief summary of the first six months of actuation and indicate the future direction in the coming months.

### I. EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Caño Negro Pre-school is an open air, roofed structure in which all of the 55 village children aged 2-6 attend classes. They are an important symbol to the community, in their blue shorts and shirts. They are taught by an auxiliary staff member and two local mothers wearing attractive uniforms of the same blue. The local teachers now carry more than half of the teaching load and will soon take total responsibility. The children's singing and early experience of learning not only adds life to their families but frees the parents for other engagement.

### II. BASIC EDUCATION INSTITUTE

Adult literacy classes have enabled many villagers to learn to sign their name and read and write. The village was very proud when one of the group leaders was able to read a group report in public for the first time. A teacher was secured from the government structures for the public school and grades one through three began a full-schedule of classes.

### III. LIVE SKILLS ACADEMY

Sewing classes, cooking classes and driving classes have engaged villagers in increasing their employable skills and learning practical nutrition. Leadership training sessions have successfully empowered a number of community leaders to work with the care and planning groups within the community. In these groups practical leadership training occurs. Twenty villagers are slated for the Human Development Training School in the months ahead where they will learn management skills as well.

### IV. INCLUSIVE HEALTH CLINIC

A medical dispensary has been opened with regular hours three days per week, and two community women are being trained as health aids to serve the village. Many medicines were donated to the dispensary. A general community wide health examination and survey revealed the many needs for a total community health program.

### V. PREVENTIVE MEDICINE PROGRAM

In response to the health survey an anti-parasite campaign was launched. Latrines were constructed for every housing unit with the help of a septic tank manufacturer. This construction began to contain the parasites and prevent reinfection. After sanitary precautions and an education program, every person shown to have parasites was administered appropriate medicine. This program will now focus on inoculation and other health safeguards.

## VI. CAÑO NEGRO IDENTITY PROJECT

The execution of the 13 programs by the entire village has been assured by the organization of weekly meetings consisting of Stakes, neighborhood care groups, and Guilds, community action groups. The leaders of the community planned and carried out a successful five day celebration of their Saint's Day on May the first. The village youth have been organized into the boy's 'Machetes Corps' and the girl's 'Orchids Corps'. They work together on the community garden and other village work projects.

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## VII. SUPPORT SERVICE NETWORK

A truck has been secured for the project by a Venezuelan corporation to begin a transportation system for the people of Caño Negro. A 65 meter deep well was drilled with the assistance of a federal government agency, 'Aguadutocs Rurales' to find potable water for the community. Work will now begin on the piping of water to every household. The Council of Caugagua, the District Capital, has designated funds to construct sidewalks for the village.

## VIII. PUBLIC WORK CORPS

Community work days occur every week in Caño Negro and engage the entire village in projects related to the community's improvement. The work forces have been focused on community clean-up, grass cutting, road-way bush clearance, water facility expansion, garden land clearance, garden cultivation and building construction. These projects not only improve the living environment but reinforce the symbol of corporate care for the community.

## IX. AGRICULTURE EXPORT CORE

Ten acres of jungle was cleared for cash crop farming using a bulldozer borrowed from the Ministry of Public Works. A second well for the purpose of irrigating this and other potential farm land was drilled by the Engineering Training School of the Venezuelan Army. Attention now will focus on planting and cultivating this land and the eventual clearing of additional acreage.

## X. VILLAGE GARDEN ASSOCIATION

The community cleared the land for the village demonstration garden by hand and machete, aided by the use of the bulldozer. A tractor was borrowed from a nearby hacienda owner for plowing and banking the land. The village men, women and youth planted both the seed bed and the garden. The youth now continue with the responsibility for seeding and regular care for the garden.

## XI. GENERAL CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

A construction program was started with the erecting of multi-purpose buildings currently used as auxiliary staff housing. These will eventually be used for equipment storage and industry. A community center is also well under way with a local villager being trained while employed full time in building the center. The federal rural housing agency, Vivienda Rural, has promised to begin construction of family dwellings in Caño Negro in January 1978. They will employ and further train residents in house construction.

## XII. LOCAL COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE

A Caño Negro general store began with sales of used clothing and food goods. A facility has now been located to house the operation and shelves are being secured so as to expand available products and service to the community.

## XIII. SMALL INDUSTRY

A sewing industry has been established and the women of Caño Negro are being trained to sew sheets and pillow cases. Five sewing machines were secured as well as 150 meters of sheeting fabric to begin the industry. The products of the first bolts of fabric were sold and the second batch of material purchased sewn and sold and a third amount has been purchased and is in production. The weekly sewing classes will expand the skills to enable production of other products while the marketing of the sheets provides  
Let the people of Caño Negro occasionally be explored for the possibility of initiation for the creation of