

SOL DE SEPTIEMBRE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
REPORT FOR 1980

Introduction

The Sol de Septiembre Human Development Project is a pilot experiment in integrated development in a rural community (a former asentamiento) north of Santiago, Chile. Launched in June, 1978 by a two week planning consult, the project has completed its initial phase of a four year plan. During this phase, the 15 actuating programs (see attachment) have been launched. They are in various stages of self-sufficiency: some in the initiation stage, others in an expansion phase, and others totally under community management. During the past year of the project, there has been heavy emphasis on leadership, management and skills training, with the goal that those participating in all programs might assume responsibility for program maintenance and for planning their future.

Agriculture Development

1) Diversification - Knowing that the foundation of the community's development is the development of its economic base, during the past year there has been a major emphasis put on the creation and actuation of development strategies for the agricultural life of the community. A comprehensive strategy has been developed (see attachment). To initiate this strategy, the Demonstration Farm has been launched to establish the means and feasibility of intensive agriculture, experimental crops, judicious use of water and the formation of a working partnership of non-landed community residents. The Farm has completed its first year, harvesting a national record-breaking crop of greenhouse tomatoes and a bumper crop of strawberries, watered by an experimental drip and siphon irrigation system. Three former day laborers have been trained in greenhouse technology, irrigation and marketing. Working as a team, they have begun to create management systems to effectively organize the land preparation, planting, cultivating, harvesting and marketing operations on the Farm. In consultation with a number of experienced farmers in the community, as well as technical assistance from Foundation Chile and the Experimental Station in Colina, they are learning to plan their crops, anticipate yields, and produce off-season harvests for higher profit. Their initial experimentation with "plastic agriculture" has paved the way for greater experimentation by farmers throughout the community. Their marketing experience has provided helpful data for the future development of a community-wide marketing agency. Perhaps most significant in light of Chile's past experience and present agricultural potential, they have demonstrated that it is feasible for non-landed community residents to work as a team to learn needed skills, share a work load, and to provide the management presence needed for effective farm operation.

2) Irrigation - The irrigation system in Sol de Septiembre, like many in the region, is built around 7 electric pumps which raise water from 80 meters depth and distribute it through canals of varying soils. One meter serving up to 12 consumers and water loss in the sandy areas has created a system of inequity and overwhelming complexity. Work in revamping the community's irrigation system is critical. In order to move effectively in this area, a month-long study was carried out by the University of Chile, Department of Soils and Engineering. The study isolated problem areas, and projects needed short and long term remedies. In the meantime, on the Demonstration Farm, a system using both drip and siphon irrigation, in combination with plastic-lined canals and holding tanks, has created a model for several alternatives. In addition, a land leveler and irrigation plows have been added to the community Machinery Pool to prepare land for more effective water application. In addition, experimentation with new forms of administration of the payment system are being explored to overcome the inequity and resulting accrued debts.

3) Machinery Pool - In its first year of operation, the community Machinery Pool finished with profits and doubled its net worth. Managed by the farmers of the community, the tractor operates on a rental system that provides credit to any farmer within the community. In order to increase its profits, it has also contracted work outside the community. From these profits, a disc, an irrigation ditch plow, a furrowerplow, a scraper, a trailer and land leveler have been purchased. Use of all the implements is handled through the community's agriculture office and all work is done by two community residents who have been trained in tractor care and maintenance, and who, in the course of their work, are learning the systems of Machinery Pool administration.

Commerce

4) The Bakery - The community Bakery was begun during the first month of the project out of a concern for providing work opportunities for women and cutting down the flow of cash outside the community. It began in a shed leant by a community resident, who also made available her mud oven. Twenty women formed teams of three to begin baking and provide bread for morning sale in the community. After a month of successful operation, the women located a low price gas oven with which they were able to increase their production. They began to bake bread for sale in the evenings. Always maintaining the idea of a "team" operation and a community based enterprise, the Bakery has been a continual source of work for women in need. In August, 1979, the Bakery moved into a new facility, complete with indoor plumbing and a hot-water shower. Amplified space has meant the possibility of increased production. The standardization of the bread recipe and the acquisition of a kneading machine have enabled the women to gauge the operating costs and anticipate production of various types of bread

as well as delivery to the outlying sectors of Sol de Septiembre. Most important, the bakery has created a model in the community of team work, creativity, determination and stable management.

5) The Sewing Industry - The community sewing industry has completed one year of operation, and has demonstrated its ability to fulfill both external contracts and community needs. Composed of 10 women, the industry began with a sewing class offered by the Instituto de Educación Rural in September 1978. On completing the class, a core group of women decided to produce school uniforms for children within the community. Going door to door to take measurements and to secure orders, the women set up a pricing and credit system that made it possible that many children in the community could have a school uniform for the first time in their lives. The acquisition of an electric machine enabled the women to acquire new skills and to complete the orders under the press of time. Proving first that there was a local market that could sustain the industry, the women then set out to explore the possibility of external markets. With the aid of several women from Santiago, the sewing industry explored specialty markets and were successful in securing a contract with the Institute for the Help of Crippled Children in Santiago for curtains, bedspreads and pajamas. A donation of cloth from Panal Textiles made possible the production of pants and children's clothes, which were sold within the community. Always working as a team to complete contracts, the women have demonstrated their capacity to organize work schedules, to coordinate skills and to produce under time schedules. Like the Bakery the Sewing Industry operates as a community industry to provide work for women in need of supplemental employment on a profit sharing basis.

6) The Construction Company - In June, 1979, a group of men organized their time to meet construction needs within the community. Working on the basis of designated projects funded with donated money, they built the two entrance-ways to the community, the new bakery building, and re-vamped existing facilities for a community Training Program, which involved students from the Department of Soils and Engineering of the University of Chile and trainees from the Peace Corps. In preparation for further construction in the community, the team investigated processes for the production of bricks and cement blocks. They have now begun production of these in order to meet future needs in community construction.

7) Community Structures and Services - Critical to the future well-being of the community is the formation of structures to sustain progress and services to maintain its well-being. During the past year,

the leadership (elected and informal) of Sol de Septiembre has focussed on the future design of the community, and has concerned itself with the disposition of housing sites, acquisition of community land for the construction of community facilities, and the formalization and legalization of the Neighborhood Association. Simultaneously, it has coordinated the designing of the plaza, constructed needed fences around public facilities, improved the beauty of the community, maintained the operation of the Community Center and has initiated a Recreation Center.

8) The Advisory Board - Critical to all of these concerns of economic and social development has been the formation of the Community Advisory Board (Consejo). Formed by the membership of the elected officers of the Neighborhood Association (Junta de Vecinos), in combination with a representative of each geographic sector of the community and a representative of each area of social and economic development, the Advisory Board has met weekly to hear project reports and to make decisions in relationship to the programs and to the use of monies donated to the project. Understanding itself to be an interim structure, the Advisory Board has become a "servant force" within the community. It has dedicated a great deal of its time and energy to the process of formalization and legalization of the Neighborhood Association and the many programs described in this report.

9) Legalization of the Junta de Vecinos - The Advisory board and the residents of Sol de Septiembre have been involved for over the past year in the process of writing and modifying the statutes of a typical "Junta de Vecinos". The challenge was to create a system whereby any rural community concerned with its own development could accomplish the processes for legal personality. The Advisory Council and elected Junta leaders formed a commission which met about every night for several weeks to review and modify a proto type set of statutes issued by the government. On completion of this process, the commission submitted their work to a lawyer who reviewed the indicated changes in correspondence to existing laws and gave his recommendations. On November 29, 1979, the general assembly of the "Junta de Vecinos" met to review and approve the statutes. The community submitted its work to the municipality and is awaiting approval.

10) Land Use - A major concern of the community in general has been the finalization of the land allocation process of the agrarian reform, which will make possible the purchase of housing sites by the title owners. The process, which has been in motion since before the initiation of the project, has been of foremost concern in Sol de Septiembre over the last year as residents have begun to imagine a more stable future in the community. Through a series of community meetings, residents have become aware of the process, several additional families have submitted requests, and all await the decisions of those agencies

presently handling the process. A special commission has been formed to keep updated as to the progress on these matters. In addition, the community has been concerned with the allocation of public land to house community facilities. With a concern for community design as well as the need to house programs which are now in process, the community, in a series of meetings, created a land-use plan, which would make possible the construction of a community center, a pre-school complex, an industry building and a garage for a machinery pool and service center. A number of community residents offered to assist in the responsibility for land purchase. The mayor of Lanpa has offered municipal help in holding the designated community land until the legalization process would permit another disposition. The community awaits the decision of the government agency presently dealing with land administration.

11) Beautification - In the midst of deliberating the future use of community land, the leadership of Sol de Septiembre has moved ahead to beautify anticipated public space. In the spring of 1979, a tree campaign was held throughout the population center, using trees donated by community residents and nurseries. A commission of young men spear-headed the campaign to line streets and initiate the planting around the plaza. With the planting of the trees and the termination of the land preparation work, a commission of women was formed to assume responsibility for the planting and maintenance of the plaza. Securing donations of plants and flowers from residents of Sol de Septiembre and Lanpa, the women have created a tranquil, cared-for space in the heart of the community.

12) The Community Center - Central to the community's social life has been the Community Center, a temporary facility that has provided space for the children's programs, adult training programs, community meeting space and special events. Demonstrating the potential of multiple use of space, the community center has been maintained and managed by the community itself. The Community Center is programed daily and houses a variety of events and programs: the daily after-school study hall, an elders' tea, a September 18th historical drama and folk music show, a weekly women's sewing class, a weekly catechism class, a mass held monthly and periodic dances. The Community Center has demonstrated the value and need of public space and facilities.

13) The Recreation Center - In September 1979, the Recreation Center was launched, using a currently unused room in the Bakery. A ping pong table and a Fuse Ball game provide focal points for the activities including a variety of other table games. The Recreation Center has been in operation during holiday periods and has been helpful in providing supervised recreation for the youth of the community. In

addition, the Center has been used for women's gatherings, social events and special parties. It has been successful in providing a variety of activities for community residents while providing an additional source of income for the bakery.

14) Social Development - Over the past year a great deal of emphasis has been given to the process of leadership development in the midst of program management and skills training. The capacity to participate in programs, assume responsibility for their management, and plan their future has been a major focus during this phase of the project. Over 30 community leaders presently involved in programs have participated regularly in a weekly leadership development course.

15) Adult Education - Adult education has been focussed through a scholarship program that has emphasized on-the-job training for the community residents who are taking responsibility for the children's programs, the management of the bakery, the management of the sewing industry, the up-keep of the plaza and the community garden and rabbit project, and the coordination of the community offices. A weekly training meeting in which 30 community leaders have focussed on needed skills and understandings has enhanced this program. In addition to the scholarship and leadership development program, special courses in sewing, tractor maintenance, rabbit pelt curing and baking have provided needed skills for those engaged in building and strengthening community programs and industries.

16) Health - The forces of the National Health Service have been augmented by the creation of the Sol de Septiembre Health Team which is composed of community volunteers. On the completion of two first aid and basic health courses, participants continued their training under the supervision of the Municipal health team, and volunteered their time to supplement the team's service to the community by assuming responsibility for home visitation, the distribution of appointment notices and polyclinic maintenance. Supplies for the community health kit were purchased, and the community van has been made available for health emergencies. Through these efforts, polyclinic attendance has doubled, and health emergencies have been dealt with quickly and effectively, utilizing local resources and municipal services.

17) Nutrition - During the past six months, a multi-dimensional campaign to illincinate the problem of malnutrition in Sol De Septiembre has been launched. The campaign is composed of the community and home garden program, the rabbit project, the laying hen project, the conserving class, the feeding program and the weight and height monitoring. All components are aimed at raising the community's nutrition level, especially among the families of 23 children determined to be

in the range of inadequate nutrition. The following programs have been instituted out of the understanding that at a community level there is no excuse for hunger or malnourishment.

18) The Community and Family Garden Projects - Over one year ago, the community garden project was launched by the clearing of a vacant housing site loaned for the use of the garden. Simultaneously, home visitation revealed an interest among residents for gardening on their home sites where fertile land was available. With the technical assistance of Diakonia, the first plantings were done in the community garden, and seeds were made available to those interested in home gardens. In its first year, the community garden produced three harvests, providing for nourishment for five families and making possible a contribution to the school lunch program. Whereas there were three home gardens a year ago, there are now twenty-three, with a growing interest being shown by more families. All but five families having mal-nourished children have participated in either the family garden project or in the community garden.

19) The Rabbit Project - Shortly after the initiation of the Human Development Project, the Rabbit Project was started with the acquisition of 25 female and 2 male rabbits from Diakonia. A plantel, or central location as well as four family projects were begun, with the intent of providing supplemental income, as well as a source of protein for the families. Systematic breeding has been carried out at the plantel and the participating families have benefited from the periodic sales to laboratories and pet stores. This past January, five more families--three of which have mal-nourished children, were incorporated into the family project. All participated in an introductory course and trial period before receiving the rabbits and all are presently being visited regularly to receive advice on the care of their rabbits. In the future, these families will receive instructions on the preparation of rabbit meat to provide a protein source for their family diets.

20) The Hen Project - Another approach to nutrition, aimed at providing a protein source for families in need, is the laying hen project, which is presently being initiated. The acquisition of 30 laying hens to be cared for in a central hen house will make a regular supply of eggs available within the community. The project is designed to provide work for the mothers of mal-nourished children. Working in turns to care for the cleaning of the hen house, the feeding of the hens, and the gathering of the eggs, the women will be paid in eggs. One day's work will be enough to supply most families (and the mal-nourished children in particular) with a weeks' supply of eggs. The project is designed to demonstrate the potential for self-help in the fight against malnutrition.

21) The Consumer Class and Conserving Class - In March, 1979, the National Secretariat of Women organized a course in Consumer Education for interested mothers. A group of seven women attended weekly to learn money-saving techniques of food preparation. This interest led to the formation of the Conserving Class in November, 1979. The class was begun to introduce new techniques in food preparation. With a concern for year-round nutrition at its core, the course demonstrates the potential of using resources at hand to provide for the needs of the future. As the group of twelve women have learned food conserving techniques, they have systematically dedicated their knowledge to the service of the community by conserving a quantity of fruits and vegetables for future use in the community kitchen. To date, green beans, tomato sauce, peaches and strawberries have been conserved for use.

22) The Community Kitchen - The organization of the Feeding Program in the Community Kitchen was initiated by the Conserving Class, as they raised the question of how to insure that children in need could receive the food products that are available within the community, but which, for lack of structure, are going to waste. Organizing mothers to take turns in cooking and farmers to donate extra produce, the Community Kitchen program will provide meals to all children participating in the childrens' programs and will demonstrate a community's potential to care for its own needs.

Education

23) The Pre-school - Sol de Septiembre, like other rural communities in Chile and across the world, historically has struggled to provide a sound education for its children. Since its beginning 12 years ago, the community has worked to make maximum use of the resources at hand to provide effective education. Seven years ago, residents banded together to build an elementary school building and to seek a staff of teachers from nearby Iampa. Throughout this past year, parents have worked diligently to create the support systems to strengthen the program of basic education within the community.

It is not surprising that the Pre-school Program was the first to be initiated in the Human Development Project. The program began in a borrowed room with a core of six students and five community women in training to assume teaching roles. Working daily with initial supervisory technical assistance, the community women wrote the daily curriculum to be taught to the children (see attached example) which included basic skills such as pre-reading, mathematics and writing, as well as social awareness and individual self understanding. Since its beginning, the original group has expanded to twenty children. Two classes of ten and seven have been graduated to enter first grade. A component for children ages two and three, the Mini-school, has been added to introduce the youngest children to a daily schooling routine and an educational environment. Two new community women have been

added to the pre-school staff and two former pre-school teachers have assumed responsibility for the after-school program. The pre-school record of effectiveness was confirmed when four out of the top five students to complete first grade in basic school were pre-school graduates.

24) Niños del Sol After School Program - With the establishment of the pre-school program in Sol de Septiembre came the formation of an after-school program for elementary school students ages 6-12, "Niños del Sol". Designed to under-gird the formal education program as well as to provide a variety of extra-curricular learning experiences, the Niños del Sol program has included a study hall for completion of homework, activities in arts, community services and a recreation program. The program has a staff of four community women who have been assisted by three community youth. The program has been held for three hours everyday during the school year, and during the summer months for three hours during the morning and three hours during the afternoon. Effective in forming a spirit of unity and a sense of community service among the children, the program has also demonstrated an effective means of undergirding the basic school education.

25) The Youth Group - The foundation of the pre-school and Niños del Sol program has been strengthened by the formation this year of the local youth group. Designed for the participation of young people age 13-17, the group is led and advised by a staff of local young people ages 18-25, who themselves were trained in project programs. Focussed on community service, the youth group has cared for community maintenance, has assumed responsibility for children's sports activities, has written and presented historical dramas for celebration of national holidays and Christmas, has formed a folk-singing group, and has been host for out-reach programs such as a day for crippled children in Sol de Septiembre and a slide show for elders in a rest home in Imapa. In addition, the group has hosted a community wide celebrations and has carried out their own calendar of planned events.

26) The Community Newspaper: "La Voz de Sol de Septiembre" ("The Voice") - A critical aspect of sustaining motivity in the process of community renewal is providing a means by which those participating in the process can rehearse their struggles and accomplishments. An effective means for doing this has been through the bi-weekly publication of "The Voice of Sol de Septiembre". Written by a group of community residents, the "Voice" relates stories of initiating and sustaining community programs. Translated by friends of the Project in Santiago, the "Voice" is delivered not only to the community residents but sent to project supporters in Santiago and to other community residents around the world who are involved in similar projects.

27) Outreach to Other Communities - One objective of the Sol de Septiembre Human Development Project is to provide an example for other communities and agencies engaged in integrated development initiated at the local community level. One means of doing this has been to host visitors from other communities and to visit others, telling the story of Sol de Septiembre. Because effective community development rests on the decision of community residents themselves in coordination with external resources, the catalization of peoples' imaginations to envision progress is critical. Equally important is the transference of methods that will allow them to analyze blocks and create solutions from their own resources. One means of doing this has been through the Womens' Forum programs, which has been held in Sol de Septiembre, Lampa and Santiago. In the Forum, the community-minded women have focussed their thinking on problems of the world as they are manifest in their own communities and on possible solutions for these problems. From these initial forums has emerged the interest and anticipation of other Women's Forums, Community Forums, Youth Forums and leadership training events.

28) Support Network - The integrated development of a rural community like Sol de Septiembre depends on the support of those with resources to join forces with community residents to solve foundational problems. Sometimes resources come in the form of donated cash and goods and at other times, the donation of technical know-how and services makes possible necessary development. Sol De Septiembre, in its process of development, has been fortunate to receive support from both the private and public sectors, as well as from agencies related to the Church. Multinational corporations such as Esso, Burroughs, Dow Chemical and Braniff and J. Walter Thompson have joined with such national concerns as Banco de Trabajo, Sergio Besa & Cia., DAVISCO Electronat, Ingenieros Lorca and El Mercurio in making cash or in kind donations. International development agencies such as US-AID and Foundation Chile have joined national agencies and institutions such as the National Secretariat of Women, the University of Chile, the National Health Service, The Municipality of Lampa and others in providing funding, training courses and technical assistance to the development effort in Sol de Septiembre. International Church related groups such as Misericord and Maryknoll have made cash donations, while the local parish priest has been instrumental in expanding services of the Church to residents of the community.

Beyond business and agency support, the development process in Sol de Septiembre has hinged on the involvement and interest of individuals in Santiago who are willing to invest their training and experience and resources in the development process of the community. Santiago women have accompanied associates of the Sewing Industry on marketing trips for products ready for market. A greenhouse technician has helped train the partners in the Demonstration Farm in the needed technology. A social worker assigned to the National Health Service

has worked with community women in introducing them to general health practices. Several large farm owners have hosted community farmers introducing them to new systems of cultivation and irrigation. A teacher in Santiago has done training workshops with community teachers to expand their teaching skills. An owner of a local bus company has created a special schedule to transport school students to and from Lampa as a service to the community. A Santiago bakery owner has taught a baking class to the women of the bakery. In this exchange, bridges between resources and needs are brought into being. These bridges are critical to the on-going process of development.

Critical to its self-understanding as a community in development has been Sol de Septiembre's exposure to the world. The participation of ten community residents in the Human Development Project Training School in Venezuela, the participation of international consultants in the two-week planning consult that initiated the project, and the opportunity to work together with international ICA auxiliary members to participate in other development projects in Brazil and California has dramatized the community's capacity to care not only for its own future but for the future of others as well.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs

The Sol de Septiembre Human Development Project is one of over 300 such pilot projects in local integrated social and economic development initiated by the Institute of Cultural Affairs. The I.C.A. is an international, private, voluntary, not for profit organization concerned with the human factor in global development. Over the past 25 years, it has concerned itself with research, training and demonstration focussed on issues of development in local communities. The ICA has developed a battery of development methods, training events and planning formats designed to catalyze and coordinate locally initiated development. The use and continual adaptation of these methods and approaches has established their effectiveness in releasing creative human potential at the local level.

The I.C.A. works in over 30 nations through coordinated efforts of locally registered groups and international staff. Coordinating centers are in Hong Kong, Singapore, Bombay, Nairobi, Brussels and Chicago. The work is supported by a wide range of funding sources, foundations and corporations account for about 40%, individuals 50% and churches and governments make up the remaining 10%. Base funding sources within each nation are sought to insure the stability of programs at the local level. International monies are also sought as needed.

The programs of the ICA represent a wide range of seminars, work shops, problem solving and program designing consultations and the Human Development Projects. All programs are offered on the basis of cost or mutual benefit to interested people. The ICA staff, national and extranational, voluntary, self-supporting, work on a residential basis in pilot projects and hold in common a concern for the world and the well-being of the future.