

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
in
RURAL AMERICA

THE INDIAHOMA HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
INDIAHOMA, OKLAHOMA

The Institute of Cultural Affairs
P.O. Box 87
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RESEARCH BRIEF

IHDP

The Indianoma Human Development Consultation represents the initial step in a comprehensive development project in the USA and the Southwest. The project name, Indianoma, is derived from a combination of the words "Indian", from the Comanche, Kiowa and Apache tribes who settled in the area, and "Oklahoma", the state in which it is located. The project began through the effort of interested community residents and city officials in conjunction with the Institute of Cultural Affairs and deals with both social and economic issues in a comprehensive development program. The intention is to develop a commercial and industrial base by tapping existing local expertise and natural resources, to provide viable social structures and services now lacking and to involve the creative potential of the residents. The project is seen as a demonstration whose methods can be repeated in other rural communities of the Southwest.

UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA

The United States of America has always been known among governments for its dramatic experimentation with applied democracy. The rapid development of the nation's vast resources has been founded upon the shoulders of its small communities. The rapid explosion of the urban has taken place at a considerable loss to those closest to the land and its resources. As the decade of the 70's unfolds, many recurring themes are gathering momentum in the nation's life: conservation of natural resources, honest government, fiscal responsibility, discipline in education and increasing concern for the role of local man and local community in determining the future. In the midst of these concerns, there is a renaissance of participation by small communities in the life of the nation and a reaffirmation of basic values of human dignity often associated with rural community life. Those in the public and private sectors most concerned with refocusing national vitality and purpose are increasingly aware of the importance of the struggle for responsible change at the local level. There is no longer any doubt that recovery of viable local economies and vital community life is essential in rural towns as well as urban neighborhoods, not only in the United States, but around the globe, as each community participates in the common struggle of human development.

Oklahoma is a unique land, both from the standpoint of natural and human history. The creation and development of the state and its people covers a period of six-hundred million years. The region conveys both a sense of the primordial in its Wichita Mountain Range, formed nearly five-hundred fifty million years ago and a sense of the brand new, having become a state only seventy-one years ago. For centuries, Indians traveled over the area, many settling there,

THE REGION

so that today sixty-seven tribes are represented among the state's residents. More recently, the oil boom of the 1920's and 1930's prompted reenactments of the nineteenth-century gold rushes, leaving a deposit of oil wells and an entrepreneurial spirit which makes the most of the available natural resources. The people of Oklahoma are well aware of both their Indian and Western heritage, as reflected in their institutions, attitudes and activities which reflect a sense of openness and opportunity.

INDIAHOMA

Indiahoma is located in Southwestern Oklahoma in Comanche County, one-hundred miles southwest of Oklahoma City and nineteen miles west of Lawton. It is located in rolling wheat country and lies on the southern edge of the Wichita Mountains which rise one thousand feet above the adjacent terrain. The Fort Sill Military Reservation is located immediately to the northwest of Indiahoma. Presently five hundred residents comprise the town's population with a number of people on the surrounding farms who relate to Indiahoma. Its present population is comprised of three basic peoples: American Indians, Mexicans and Anglos. Indians, which constitute nearly one-third of the populace, represent the Comanche, Kiowa and Apache tribes. In the earlier days the town's population was double that of the present and was a center for a cotton ginning industry and nearly forty other business concerns. The town was incorporated in 1903, four years before Oklahoma became a state. Today, cotton is no longer grown, the gins have closed, and no one industry dominates the economy, though approximately a dozen enterprises are located in Indiahoma. The town plan is a typically, small, rural design including paved streets for the main thoroughfares, with the Frisco Railroad forming the diagonal northern boundary of the town. There are a number of longtime residents with deep community pride and concern who, together with the more recent residents, exhibit a deep resolve to work together for the revitalization of the community.

EDUCATION

The Indiahoma school serves the surrounding area and provides education for students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Current enrollment is 265 students: 160 in K-6 and 105 in 7-12. There are twenty teachers, most of whom live in Indiahoma. Twenty-five percent of the high-school graduates go to college with just over 5% returning to live in Indiahoma. Fifty percent of the high-school juniors and seniors participate in a vocational program which allows them to attend the Lawton VoTech School during the morning and Indiahoma High School classes in the afternoon. A supplemental education program is provided through two classes of special education emphasizing remedial reading. At one time a Head Start school was initiated in Indiahoma, but soon closed due to inadequate facilities. There are no formal educational opportunities for adults within the community.

Part of Indiahoma's social relationships revolve around its two-thirds white population and one-third Indian population. Both groups operate primarily in their own social circles with very little interaction between the two. English is the predominate language with Kiowa and Comanche spoken by some of the Indian elders. The town is politically divided into three wards with a

COMMUNITY LIFE

City Council comprised of a mayor and two city councilmen. Seven churches are located in Indianhom, all Pretestant, one of them being a Mennonite Indian mission, which no longer conducts an Indian school, but instead serves as a training center for Mennonite missionaries. Several active youth organizations including FFA, FHA, 4H, Little League, Christian Athletes and school sports teams elicit a great deal of community support.

BASIC SERVICES

Basic Services in Indianhom are in place, yet need attention to enable their full development. Of the approximately 150 houses in the town, about 12 appear to be abandoned. Most of the residences are one-story wooden-frame structures, though, perhaps 20-30 are brick. Few sidewalks, curbs or drainage ditches exist. Public buildings are in abundance, though many are closed including the Affiliated Grocery Store, the bank, the cotton gin, two cafes, and several other buildings whose former use is unknown. Electricity is available to all residents and a relatively new post office was constructed several years ago. Telephone service is provided to approximately two thirds of the residents. There is a question about the quality of water in Indianhom as it has an unusually high count of fluoride. This situation is now being investigated by county authorities. Residents of Indianhom travel to Lawton, Cache and Synder for medical care. No public transportation is available, but automobiles are plentiful. Garbage pick-up occurs every Tuesday morning.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Almost all of the employed residents of Indianhom hold jobs outside the community in Lawton, Fort Sill, Frederick or other nearby towns. About 8% of the population are custom-cutters who harvest wheat during the late spring through the summer, travelling over the U.S. wheatbelt. Others are self-employed, including the farmers. The town has two small grocery stores, both attached to gasoline stations, a car wash, a laundromat, a beauty shop, an automotive repair shop and a T.V. and radio repair center. Industry and agri-business include a cattle company, a lumber yard, a grain elevator, a meat-processing plant, a feed store, and a rooster farm. Possibilities exist for establishing a satellite industry in conjunction with the Goodger factory newly established outside Lawton.

AGRICULTURE

Indianhom is situated in an agricultural area whose largest cash crop is wheat. Some cattle herds exist. Previous years have been marked by declining wheat prices, although current prices are much improved. Heavy rains, however, have detrimentally affected the 1978 wheat yield. Families who farm generally own and operate their own equipment, except for grain harvesting equipment, which is sub-contracted to custom cutters. One family, professional custom cutters, own nine combines, seven trucks and a mobile repair shop. A local elevator serves the vicinity and is serviced by the Frisco railroad. The growing season averages 215 days between April 2 and November 3. Within the city limits are a number of small family vegetable gardens, some cattle, goats and chickens, but not on a commercial scale, except for the rooster farm which raises fighting cocks. The number of vacant lots in town suggest the possibility for small scale truck farming.

Project Brief

THE
REASON

The essence of our democratic greatness as a nation has always been the active participation of local people in the decisions which shape their future. And yet, efforts at economic and social development have been frustrated by the apparent lack of motivivity among local people. The slow pace of state and federal level programs, and the perpetual questions over their long-term benefit serve to increase this frustration. Effective development of our towns and cities can happen only if local initiative is catalyzed. In response to this need for a method for engaging local people in the development of their own communities, the Institute of Cultural Affairs will initiate twelve Human Development Projects throughout the United States in May and June, 1978. These projects will be located in rural communities such as southwest Indian and Mexican-American, northwest lumbering, midwest rural, Appalachian mining and New England farming. At least one project will be within an easy day's drive from any community in the United States, thus providing a demonstration across the nation of revitalized community.

THE
FOUNDATION

The Institute of Cultural Affairs is a private, not-for-profit organization concerned with the human element in world development. It has been engaged in comprehensive socio-economic development at the local level since the initiation of the 5th City Human Development Project some 15 years ago. The residents of 5th City, on the West Side of Chicago, understand their community to be the pilot project out of which 24 similar Human Development Projects around the world have grown. Throughout the United States over 3500 communities have participated in the Town Meeting, a one-day community event which capsulizes the methods developed in 5th City to demonstrate to a community its potential for planning and implementing its development with its own initiative and resources. The twelve new Human Development Projects will serve as models and provide the training opportunities to release locally initiated development in communities across the country.

THE
METHOD

The twelve sites will be spread geographically across the nation and are chosen for their potential for rapid change. Each site is representative of the human suffering typical to that region. Geographic insularity and easy access are both necessary if the site is to be an effective demonstration of possibility. A project begins only with an invitation from the local community. Each project will be initiated with a week long consultation involving the total community, ICA staff and volunteer business and professional consultants representing technological expertise appropriate to the community. During the consultation the community is enabled to look objectively at its practical vision of the future, and the contradictions preventing the realization of that vision, and to create concrete proposals, tactics, and programs that will make that vision a reality. A Consultation Summary Statement is published the following week detailing the work plans built and consensed on by the community for its own comprehensive development. An auxiliary staff of eight remain in residence during the two years of the project as a catalytic presence.

THE
SUPPORT

The work of the Institute of Cultural Affairs is supported by private foundations, corporations, concerned individuals and government departments and agencies on the national, state, and municipal levels. Gifts from the private sector of the U.S. will provide the primary source of funding during the preliminary phase of these twelve projects. Foundations, corporations, and individuals are being asked to provide the seed monies to allow this significant human effort in comprehensive revitalization of communities to be launched.

THE
COMMUNITY

Indiahoma, its name derived from the two words "Indian" and "Oklahoma" is a typical small farming community in Southwestern Oklahoma. Indiahoma is located 19 miles west of Lawton, just south of the Wichita Mountains, and is bypassed on the north by Highway 62. The community lies in rolling wheat land, and is surrounded by traditional family farms and larger towns on either side. The town has a population of nearly 500 persons, approximately one third of whom are Comanche and Kiowa Indians. The community has a proud past but has been crippled by the loss of businesses and other essential services, along with its young people moving to the larger communities. Residents must travel to nearby towns to acquire basic services and employment, and because of this the town sees itself as a forgotten community. Yet Indiahoma, with its abundant natural resources, local pride and ingenuity has the potential for rapid socio-economic development. The willingness of the local residents to make Indiahoma a model "showplace" for this part of the United States ensures the success of the Indiahoma Human Development Project.

THE
INVITATION

Participation in the project has been strongly endorsed by the citizens of Indiahoma. Leading citizens, including Mayor P.J. Stoll and School Superintendent, Don Dale, signed a letter, dated May 3, 1978, inviting the ICA to work with the community on the two year Human Development Project. Support has been offered by interested individuals across the state and from the more than 150 Oklahoma communities that have held a Town Meeting.

THE
LAUNCH

The Project will be launched with an initiating Consultation on June 18-24, 1978, to be held in Indiahoma, with 30 volunteer consultants from a variety of business and professional backgrounds joining a larger number of townspeople for the 6-day planning session. A comprehensive series of 12 to 18 economic and community programs, developed during the Consultation, will be implemented immediately thereafter. ICA staff will train community residents to assume full responsibility for all phases of the project in the first year. The demonstration will be completed by the end of the second year.

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First Year Budget (15 months)

April 1978 through June 1979

I. COMMUNITY PREPARATION: April through June 1978		\$ 6,150
- site selection	- local orientation	
- consultant recruitment	- facilities improvement	
A. Local transportation	\$ 3,000	
B. Communications: telephone, postage	1,500	
C. Materials, supplies	1,250	
D. Site selection team	400	
2 persons, 5 days, \$40 per day		
II. PLANNING CONSULTATION: June 12 through July 1, 1978		\$ 14,750
- consultant hosting	- leadership honoraria	
- meeting facilitation	- document production	
A. Consultant food and lodging	\$ 6,000	
B. Leadership team	3,000	
5 persons, 3 weeks, \$200 per week		
C. Materials, supplies	1,900	
D. Transportation, communications	1,250	
E. Document preparation	2,600	
III. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION: July 1978 through June 1979		\$ 46,000
- program initiation	- project coordination	
- leadership development	- technical advice	
A. Capital expenses	\$ 15,500	
facilities, equipment		
B. Operational expenses	30,500	
1. Communications	\$ 9,000	
2. Transportation	9,000	
3. Materials, supplies	5,500	
4. Leadership training	5,000	
5. Technical consultation	2,000	
IV. AUXILIARY SUPPORT: April 1978 through June 1979		\$ 45,700
A. Stipends	\$ 39,200	
1. 4 persons, \$350 per month,		
April through May 1978	\$ 2,800	
2. 8 persons, \$350 per month,		
June 1978 through June		
1979	36,400	
B. Housing and utilities	6,500	
TOTAL FIRST YEAR BUDGET		<u>\$112,600</u>

First Year Funding Projection (15 months)

April 1978 through June 1979

I. IN-KIND DONATIONS	\$ 15,000	
II. INDIVIDUAL GIFTS	25,600	
III. FOUNDATION GRANTS	40,000	
IV. CORPORATION CONTRIBUTIONS	32,000	
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TOTAL FIRST YEAR FUNDING PROJECTION		<u>\$112,600</u>

Explanatory Notes to the First Year Budget:

1. The first phase of the Project, April through June, 1978, includes the site selection process, the activities in preparation for the Consultation, and the Consultation week. ICA staff will move to Indianhoma by May 20th. The Planning Consultation covers a three week period: one for set-up, one for the planning itself, and one for writing the summary document and beginning program implementation. Thirty volunteer consultants are being enlisted for the second and third weeks.
2. The Project programs are designed during the Consultation. Each program will operate with a separate budget. Major funding for these programs will come from local investment in the form of funds and labor, in-kind donations, corporations and foundations, and state and federal programs. Section III of the budget will provide seed money to initiate programs, and funds to cover the overall coordination of all the programs.
3. Project staff are called "auxiliaries" and work under a volunteer arrangement and receive a stipend. All are highly qualified people, well educated, who choose to engage in this kind of service. The entire staff works together in relationship to all the programs.
4. Funding will be generated throughout the two-year Project. Non-cash donations will be solicited primarily for items IIA, IIC, IID, IIE, and IVB of the budget.