

**Learning the Roles of
Participation and Culture
through Work in the Philippine Highlands**

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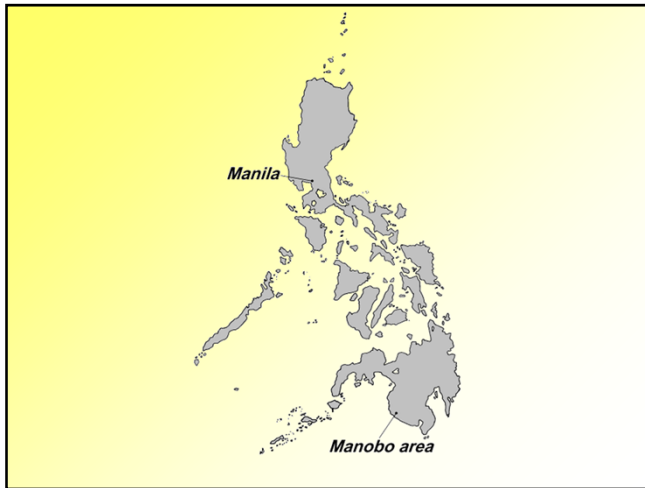
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Introducing us...

Photo of family, have Meg stand up. Came to understand that God exists and that He loves us and has made a way for us to know Him and be His, and gave our lives to Him when we were in our late teen years. That led us to be interested in sharing His love with others, which extends to practical things like being hungry and sick. So, got training in things that would help us fulfill that aim. Meg and I met and married partway through that process. I got a BS and MS in Agronomy. Meg earned a BS in Youth Leadership and an MS in Food Science and Human Nutrition. When we finished graduate school, were ready to do what we'd trained for. That's when we met the people who would become a big part of our lives.





Introducing the Manobo people...

Live in the highlands of the Southern Philippines.



Look like most Filipinos.



Lived in isolation from other peoples.



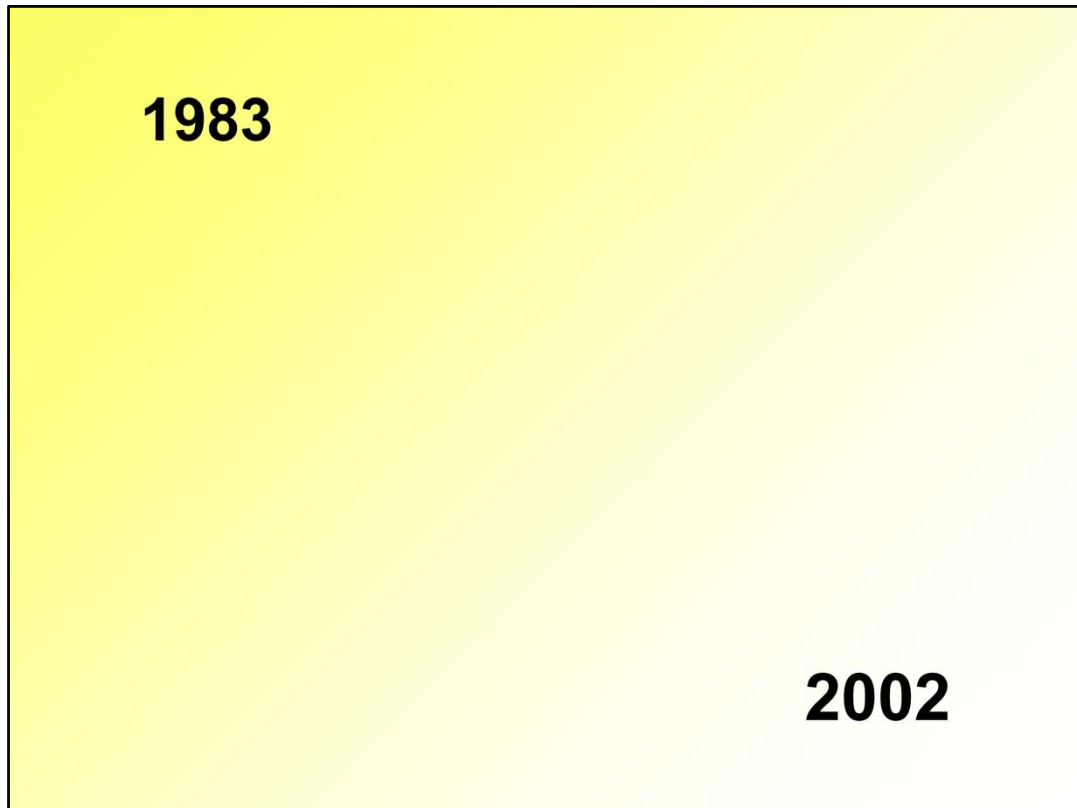
Relied on shifting cultivation until after World War II.



Then, the arrival of logging companies and settlers forced them off most of their land.



Manobo are learning new agricultural techniques, so they can provide for their families in the new situation they are in. But they have little land and almost no protected land rights, so they remain among the poorest people in the Philippines.

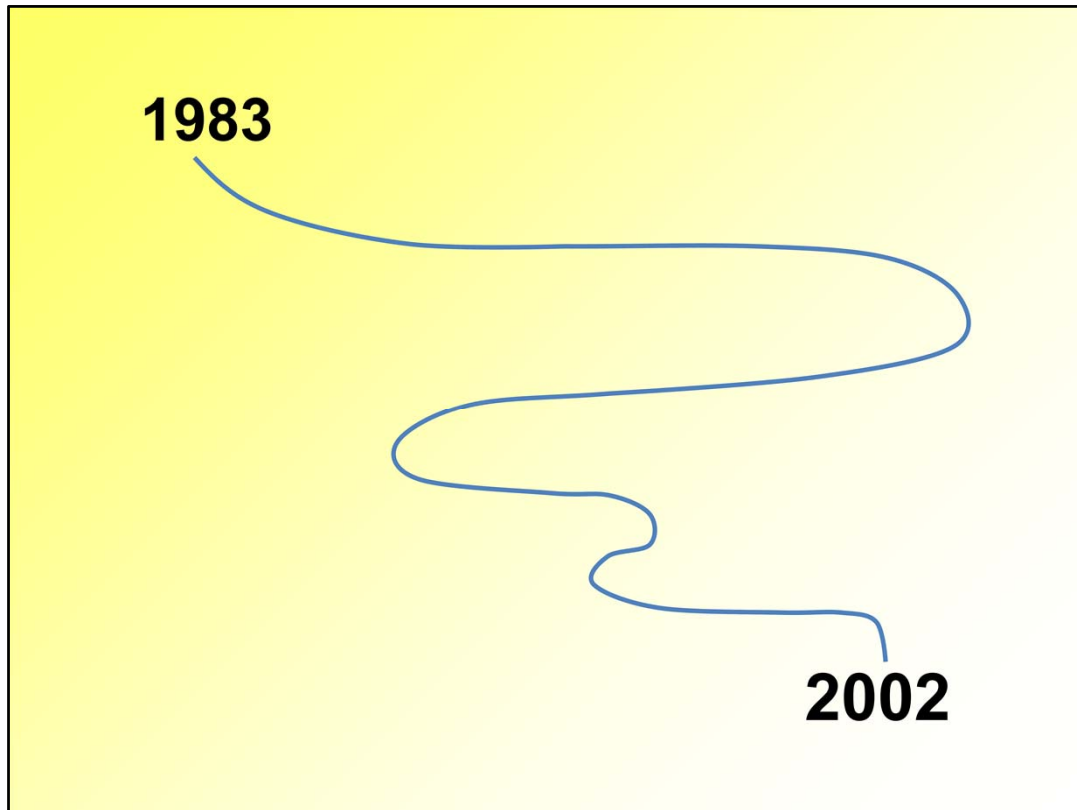


Introducing our work...

We worked with the Manobo from 1983 through 2002. We were with a small Philippine mission the first three years, and with SIL International after that. Our assignment was community development – that is, helping the Manobo communities grow in their abilities to meet their needs in every area of life on their own initiative.

Introducing the point of this talk...

We worked with the Manobo for 19 years. When we began, we had advanced degrees in agriculture and food science. We were dedicated to the Manobo's well-being, to respecting them and working with them, and to working in harmony with the culture.



But it took us a long while to become effective. My purpose today is to share some of what we learned through our mistakes, in the hope that you'll become effective faster than we did.

Their value...

community participation

working with the cultural grain

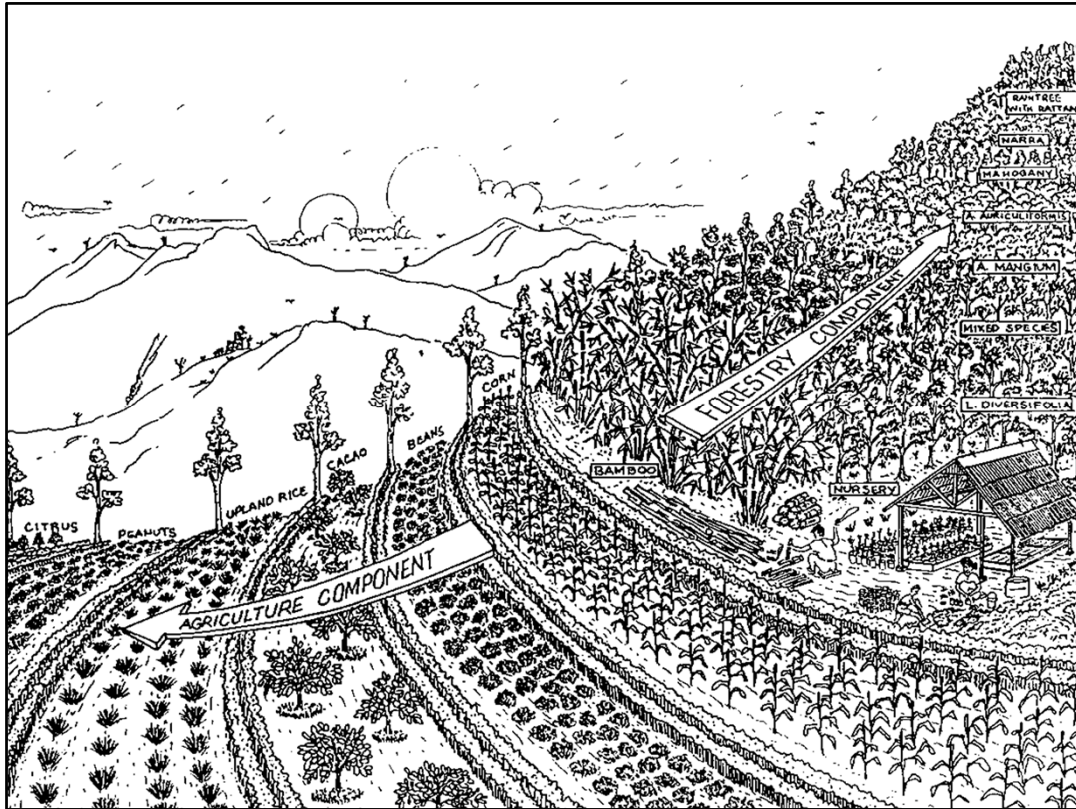
How to achieve them...

Want to convince you of two things, and to give you some suggestions on how to achieve them:

- value of community participation
- how to achieve community participation
- value of working with the cultural grain
- how to achieve working with the cultural grain

Experience

Arrived in 1983. Learned language. Began working with Manobo after 1 year.



Promoted ideas that had looked successful other places. SALT was developed in the Philippines and worked well on Meg's and my own garden, but no one else was interested.

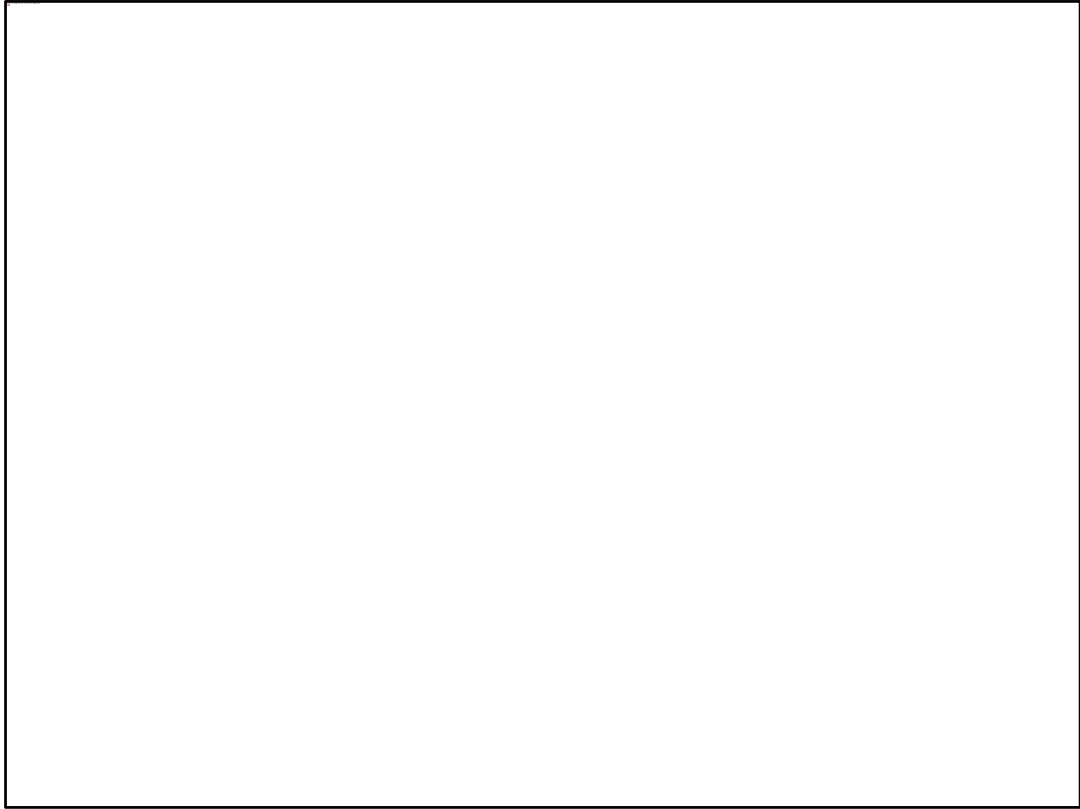
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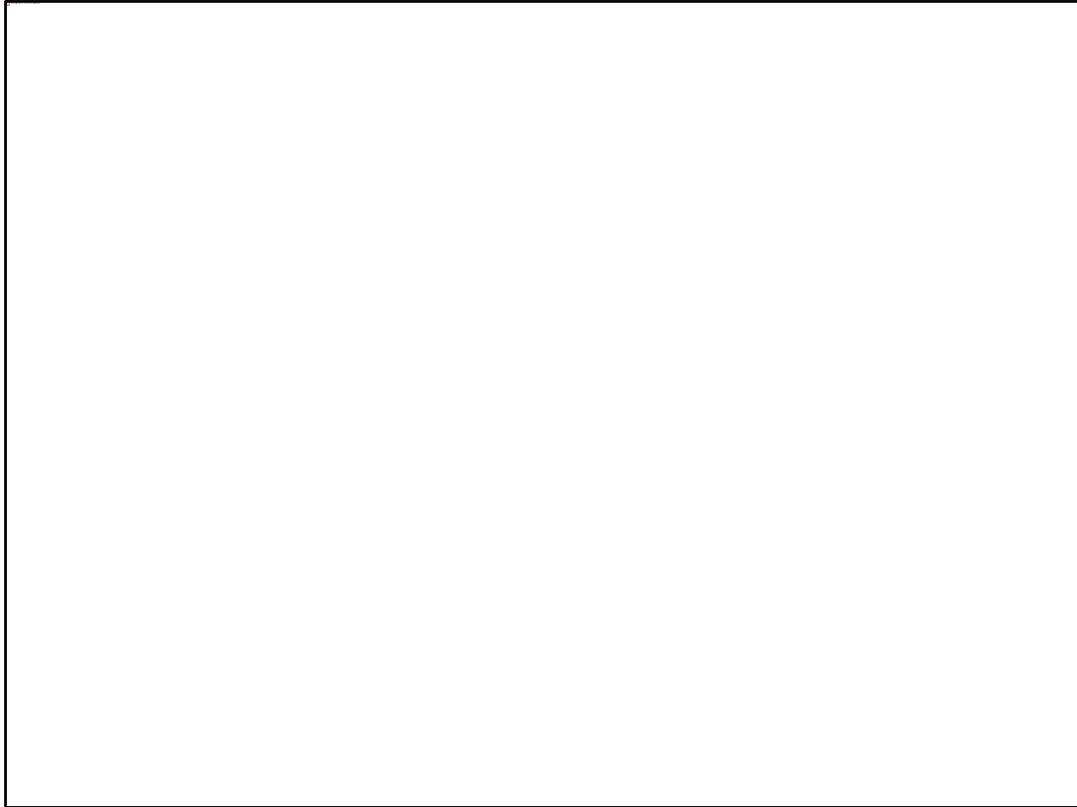
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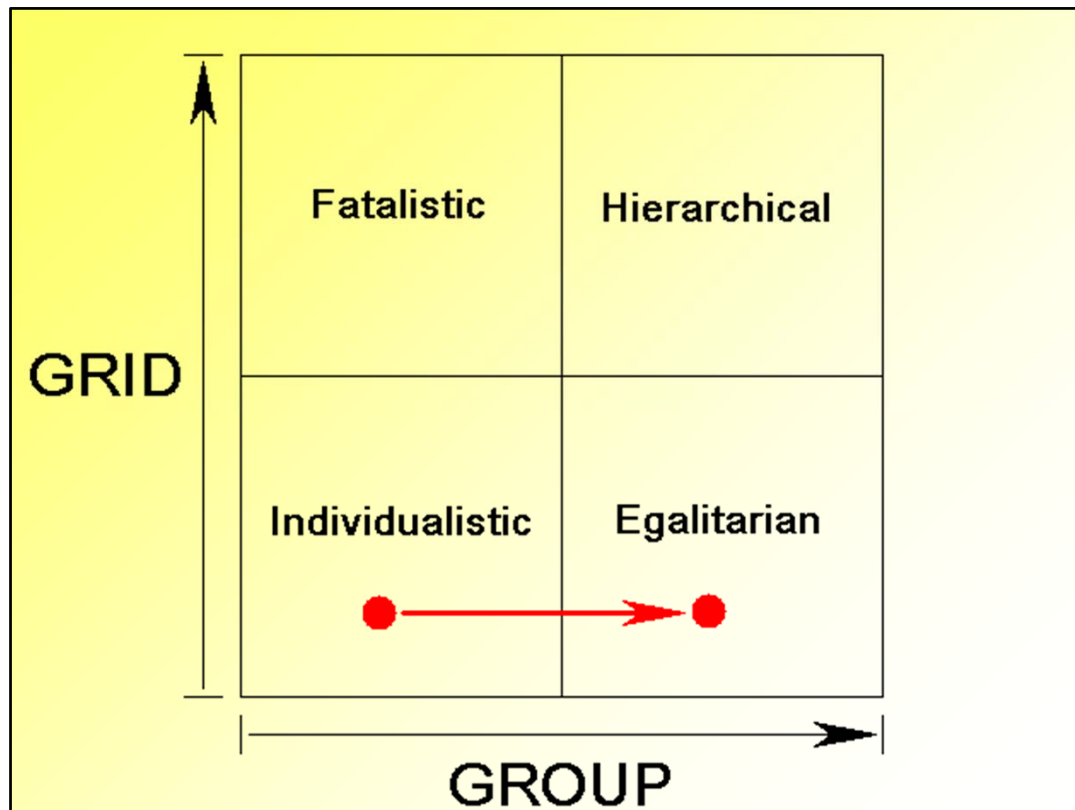
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**Kelusoy rice shots**

Then people in one village came to us for help with starting irrigated rice project...
Figured out group projects didn't work, but didn't know why.

Workshop participants or scenes

Started looking for answers, inc. training in anthro. Workshop on SO conducted by Sherwood Lingenfelter, αλ-ist visiting SIL's center on Mindanao, very helpful in providing answers. Sherwood introduced us to a theory called G-G theory, originally produced by Mary Douglas.



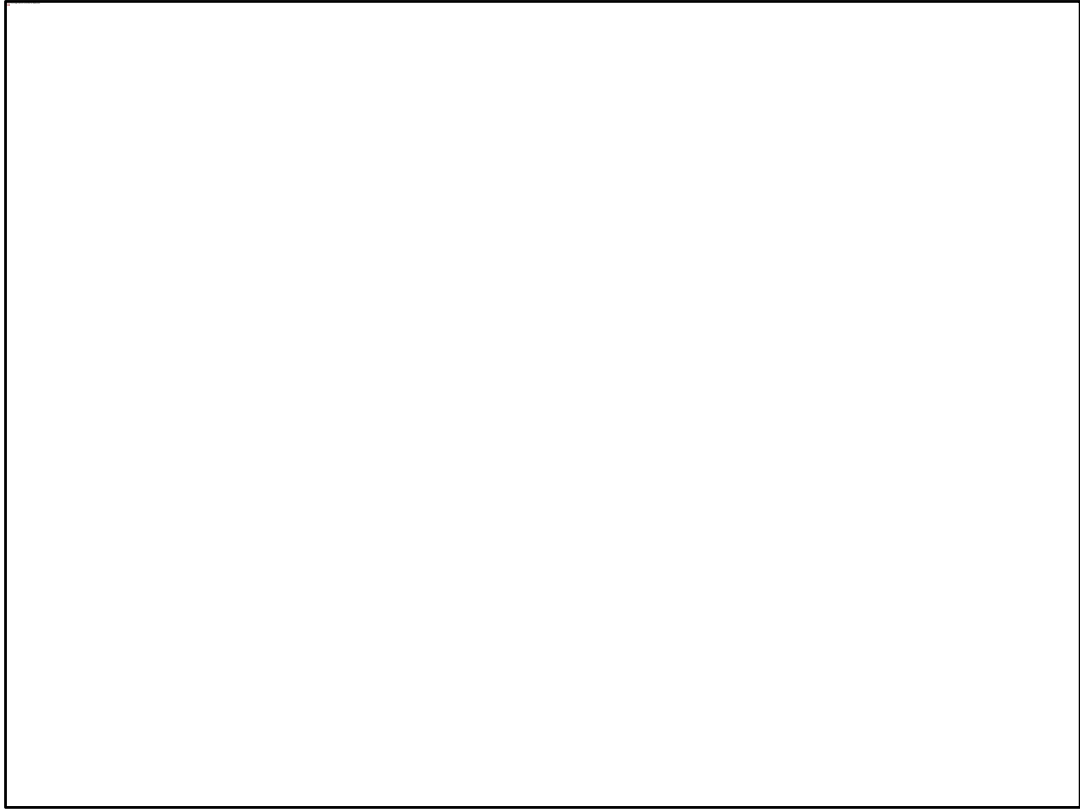
Indiv. in everyday matters, Egalitarian in “crises.”

EXPANDED:

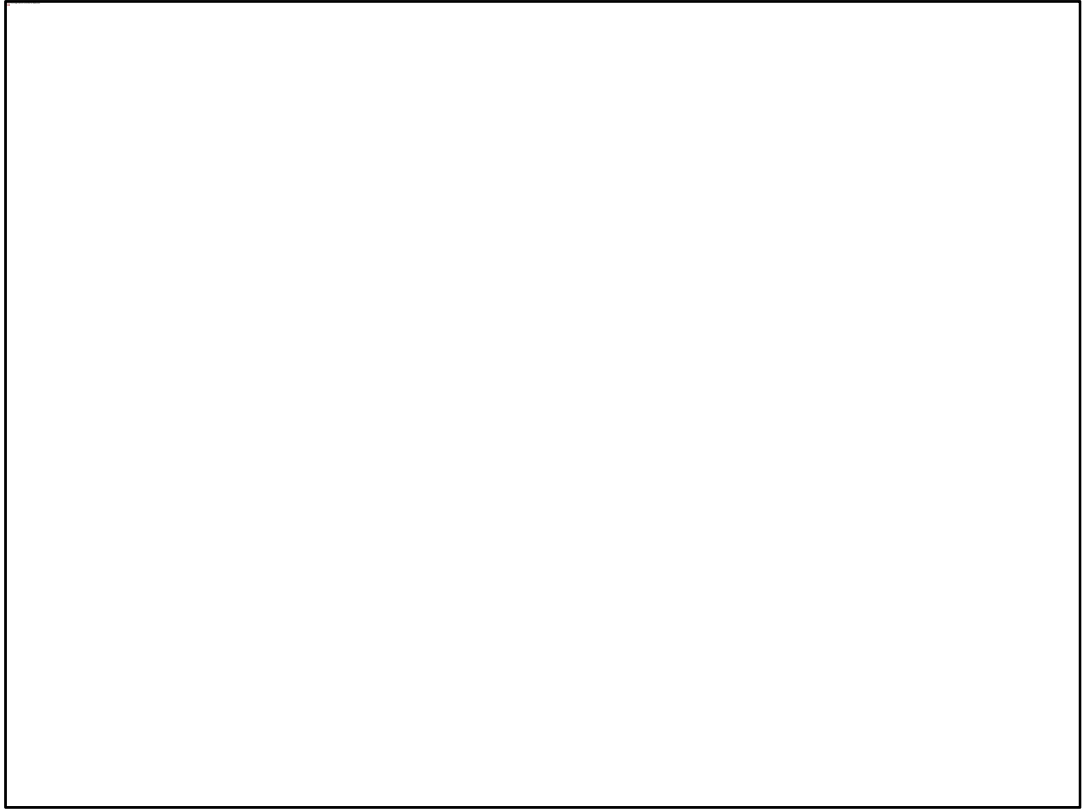
Realized we needed some anthropology. Took some courses and workshops and began studying the Manobo culture. Interested in how the Manobo work together, so looked at what everyone does – farming. Learned that the Manobo are very individualistic when it comes to ownership, labor, and making decisions. They work as part of a group when there is a crisis, but most of the time they give power to no one else.

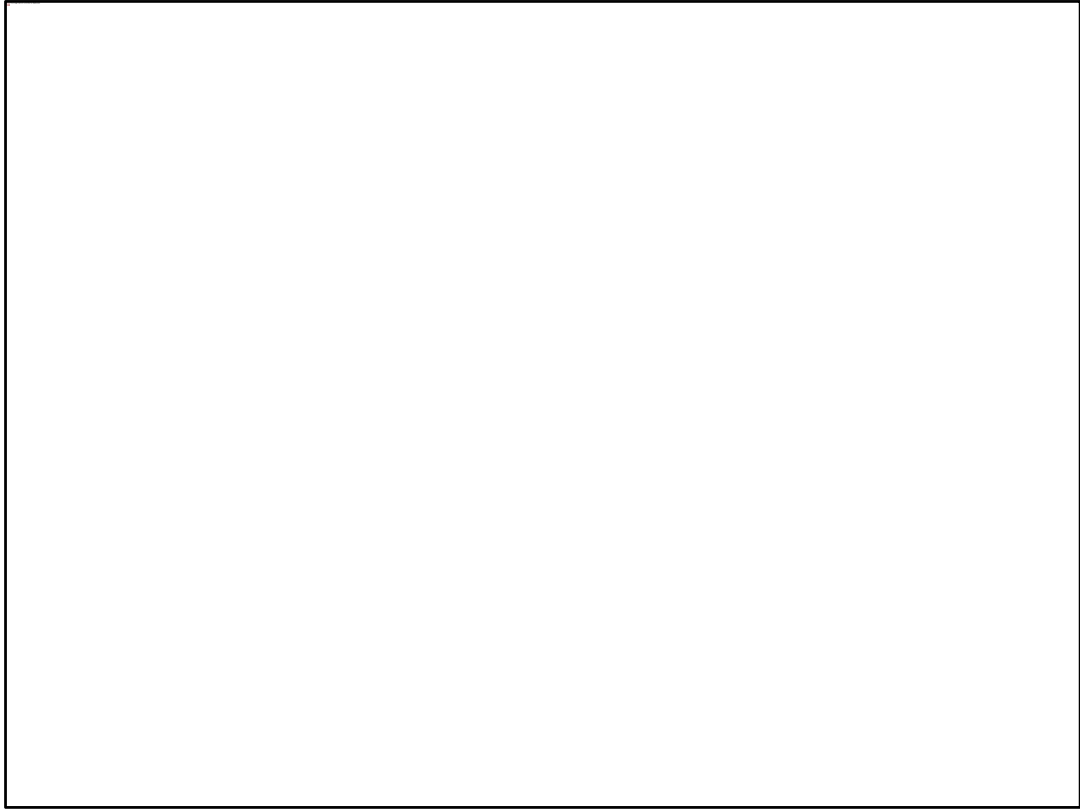


The village we lived in had a problem: the clinic never had medicine. Talked about what we were discovering about Manobo culture with individuals and then the whole community. The community decided to make the clinic individual-owned rather than group-owned. Results.

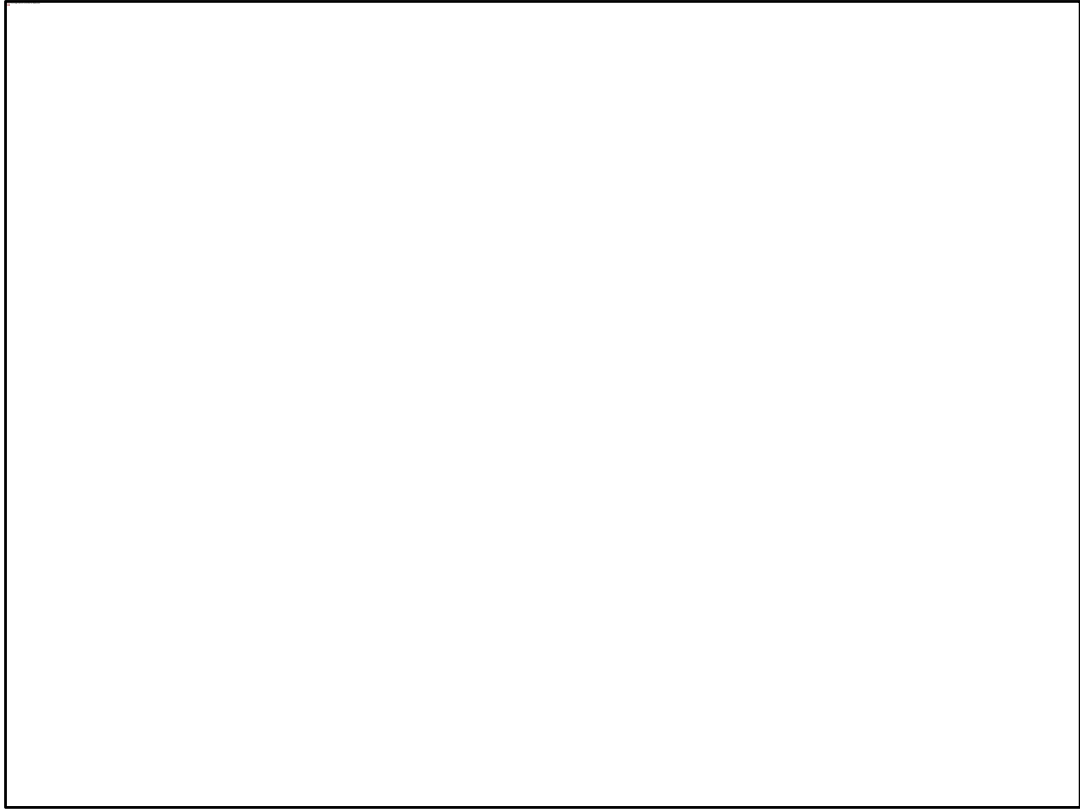


Then applied to ag extension. (NEXT SLIDE, TOO.)





After this, began working with Manobo to identify enterprises gave good return to labor & capital. A couple who had heard about the Manobo gave us \$500 to help the Manobo. But how to use it? Subsided Manobo starting to practice new farming techniques: tools for making fish ponds and rice paddies; piglets; green onions.



Had begun to learn how to think together with the Manobo. Realized that many of the things we'd promoted – even things the Manobo said they wanted – weren't being used. Visited a few villages to ask what would work. They decided on fruit trees... 1st year: 15 farmers, 8 villages, all in one municipality, bought 210 trees. 2nd year: 184 farmers, 18 villages, in two municipalities, bought 1,500 trees.

The story in short form:

- Learned language.
- Promoted what we thought was good.
- Responded to felt needs.
- Investigated culture.
- Investigated what to do and how to do it, together: start-up subsidy, then fruit trees.

The story in short form

- Learned language, lived with them. Demonstrated respect and concern.
- Promoted what we thought was good. Wasn't practical or wanted, but showed we were technically competent.
- Responded to felt needs. Failed for cultural reasons. Showed we needed to understand the culture.
- Investigated culture. Resulted in sustainable efforts. But, still limited effect. / First application (clinic) was in one village. Second application (ag extension) was language-group wide.
- Investigated what to do and how to do it, together.
 - Cooperated in seeking better efforts: subsidy for start-up. (What will bring high return for their investment (of both labor and capital.) Improvement. / Application was in area within travel distance the village where we lived.
 - Cooperated more in seeking better efforts: fruit trees. More improvement. / Application was in one municipality and 8 villages 1st year, in two municipalities and 18 villages 2nd year (with aborted attempt to do in a 3rd municipality).

Lessons

- Learn a useful technical skill.
- Learn the language and the culture.
- Try out some ideas of your own.
- Respond to expressed needs.
- Encourage development, as a not-in-control partner:
 - dream
 - high-return options
 - discuss costs and benefits
 - discuss what culture supports

YOUR OWN IDEAS: Start small, in a situation that affects only you. Find out what works and what doesn't. At same time, talk with people in the community, ask their suggestions, listen to their reservations. See if anything catches on. Establishes mutual respect, and establishes your technical competency.

EXPRESSED NEEDS: Realize that these may not be the most important needs, or the ones that give the greatest results. But they're a good place to start. They establish your concern and respect and competency, and they will probably help to some extent.

Be a partner...

**but leave control with the
community.**

Follow-up opportunities: workshops

Workshop 1

answer questions

resources for participatory approach and for participatory methods

Workshop 2:

useful theory for understanding culture

practical technique for learning culture