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Tackling Food Security Together

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Community Organizing: An Introduction

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History of CO

It is safe to say for the recorded history of mankind, in every period of time were informal associations of people who always tried to do good to people in need and protect the rights of society

Pre-Colonial Era

Community organizing practices in the Phil. is said to have started in the form of *damayan* and *bayanihan*.

- venue for Filipinos to express mutual aid, and foster cooperation and unity among their clan, kindred and the barangay.



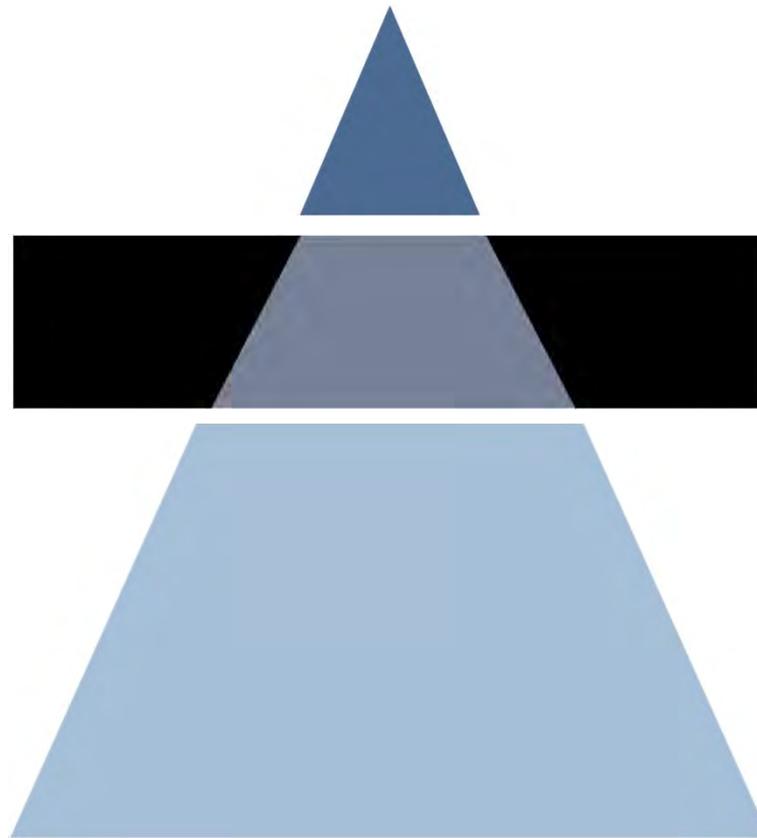
Bayanihan spirit

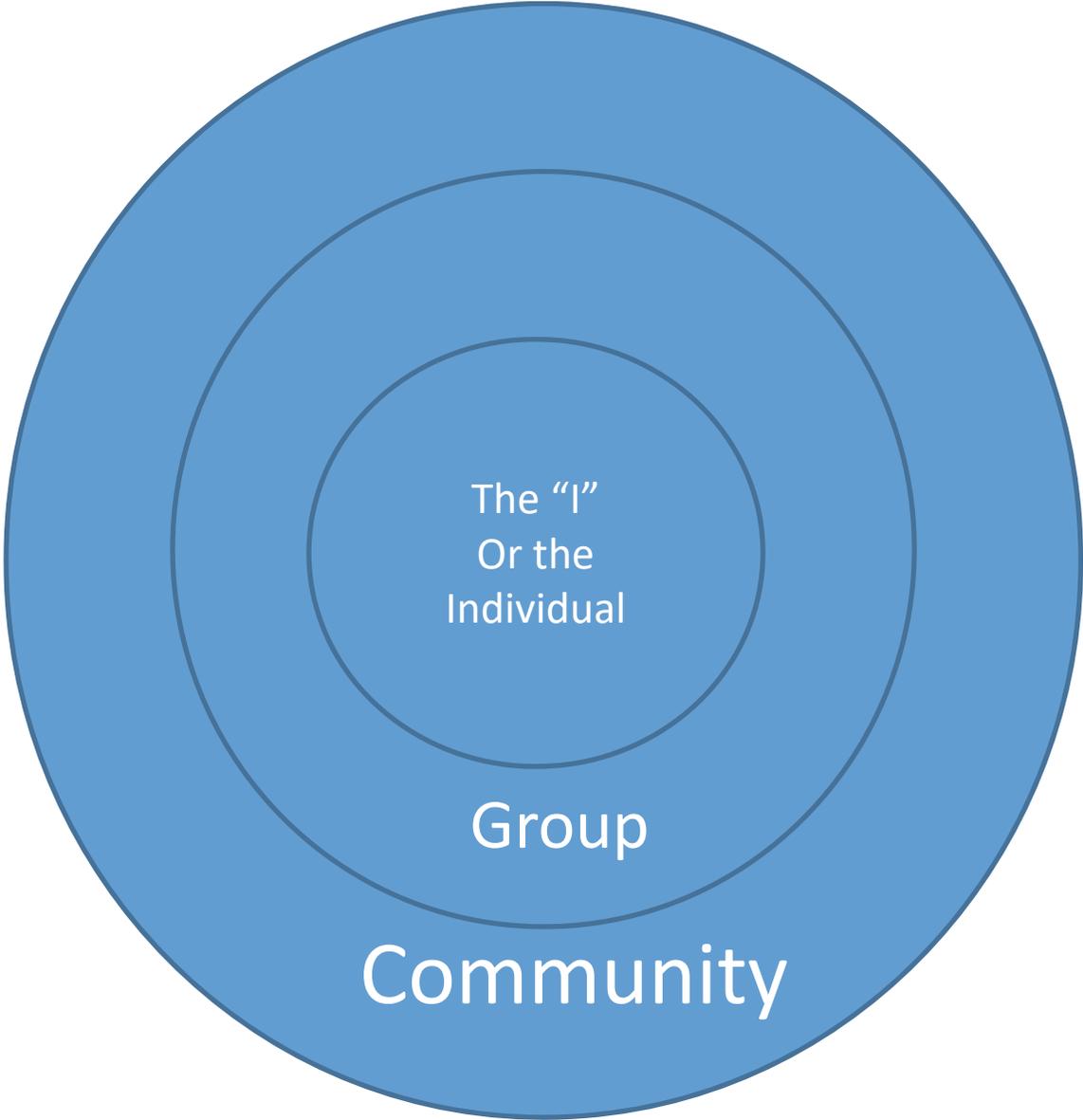
Why are we doing CO?

Established
coops/association

Growing
coops/farmers
associations

Unorganized,
newly organized
farmers/individuals





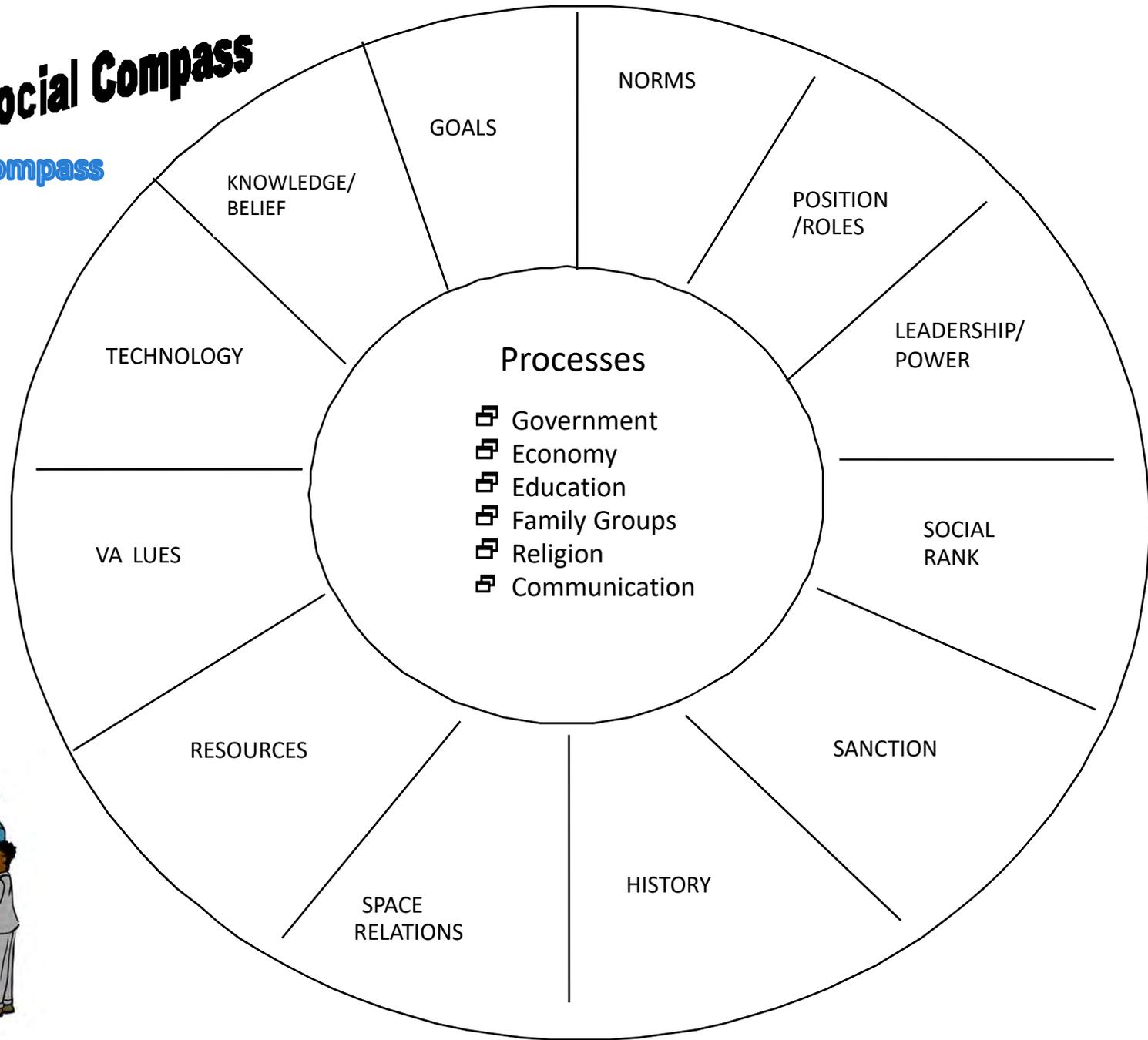
The "I"
Or the
Individual

Group

Community

The Social Compass

Community compass



Defining CO

- ❖ Community organizing is both a ***process*** and a ***method***
- ❖ CO as a process requires some kind of **structure** and **social organization** through which the aims and efforts of the people are channeled.
- ❖ As a method, it calls for **strategies and techniques** necessary to effectively address problems and issues.

Community Organizing is one of the methods in Social Work Practice that has long been recognized in various development institutions, be it government, non-government or people's organizations.

It has been widely accepted as an effective strategy not only in terms of implementing development programs but more so in **liberating people from their state of oppression.**

Community Organizing

- is a problem-solving approach whereby the community is empowered with the knowledge and skills to identify and prioritize its needs, and problems, harness its resources to deal with these problems and take actions in a participatory way.

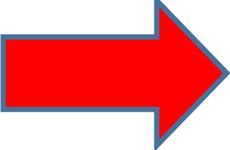
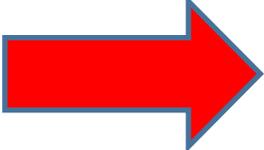
Community Organization

*(as a major concrete output and,
the community or the people's vehicle for:)*

- Sustained process of educating the people to work collectively and efficiently towards the solution of short-term and long-term problems
- Approach and a strategy to development
- Process of problem-solving
- The collective process of working together towards the solution of community problems and the attainment of its goals that should lead to people's empowerment and a community that is controlled and managed by them.

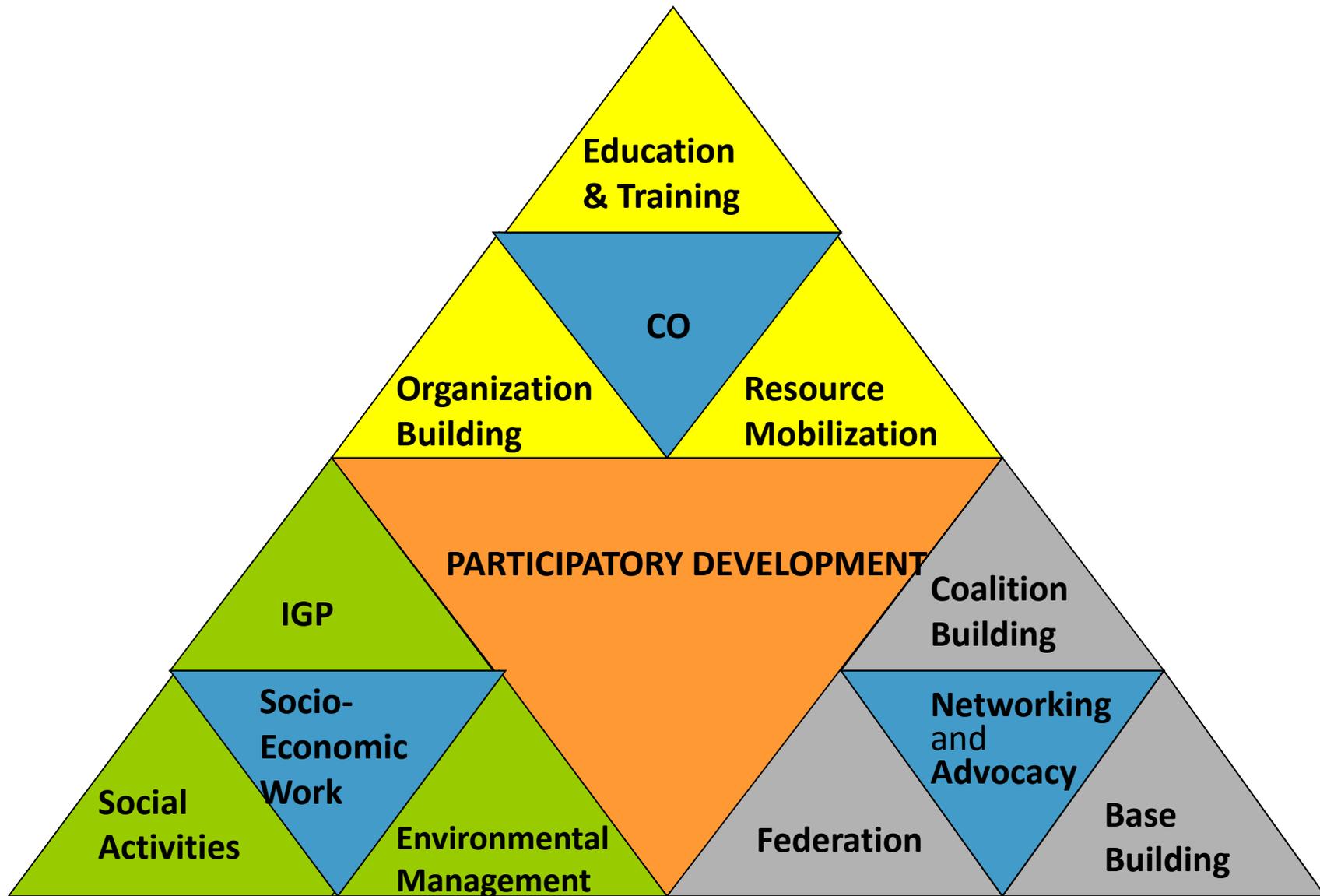
Goal of Community Organizing

- Community Organizing

towards  People's Empowerment
 Participatory Development

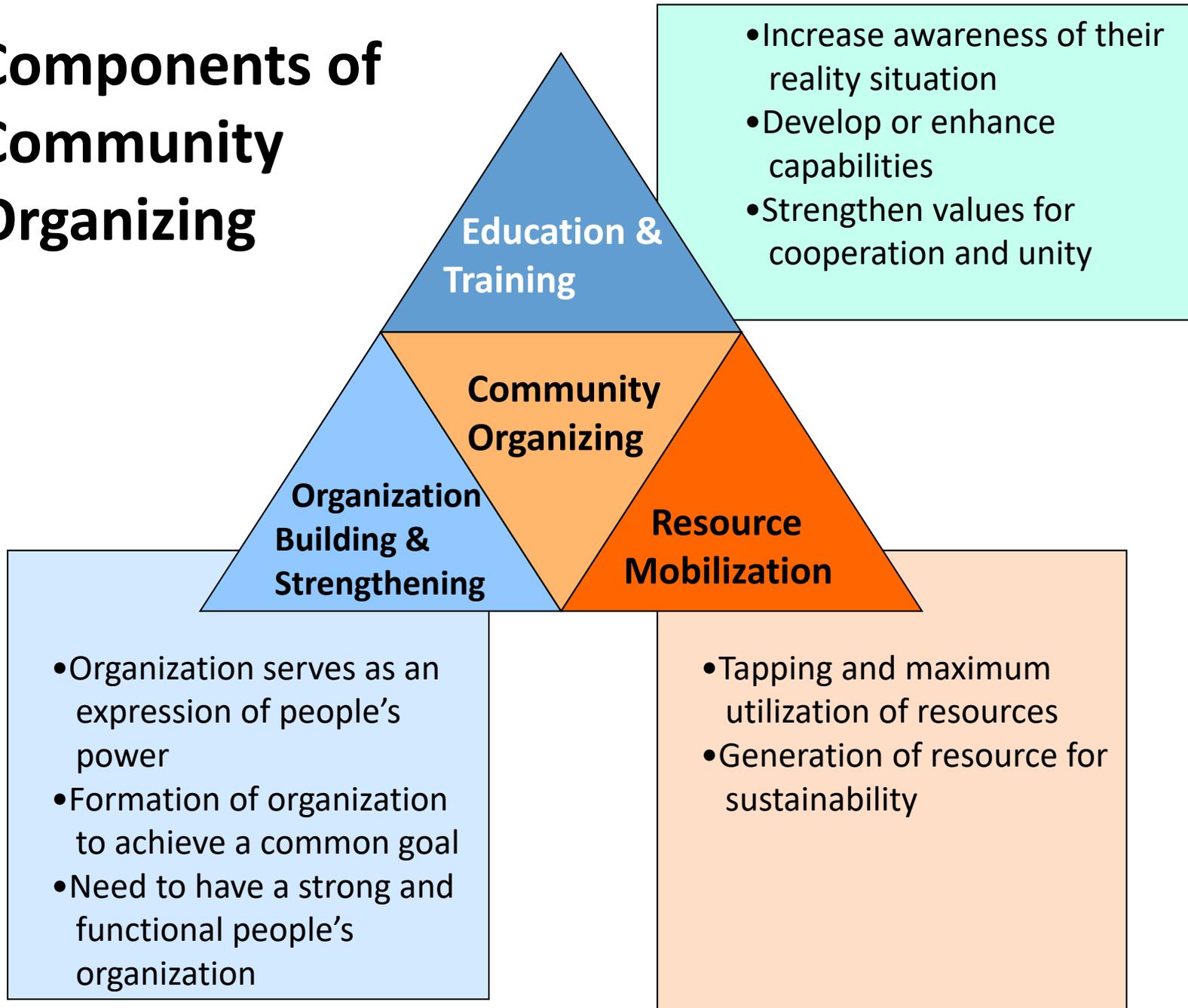
- Participatory Development

“development of the people, by the people and for the people”



Three-Pronged Approach to Participatory Development

Components of Community Organizing



CO PROCESS

CO PROCESS: *Four Interrelated Phases*

FOUR INTER- RELATED PHASES

**Social
Preparation**

- Institutional preparation*
- Area selection*
- Community Entry*
- Community integration*
- Social investigation*

**Leadership
Development &
Capability
Building**

- Spotting of potential
leaders*
- Core group building*
- Capacity building of core
group*

**Organizational
Development &
Management**

- Setting up of the
organization*
- Committee formation*
- Election of officers*
- Establishment of
organizational systems,
mechanisms & structures*
- Formulation of Constitution
& by-laws*
- Direction setting*

**Consolidation &
Expansion/
Phase out**

- Strengthening
organizational mechanisms*
- Education & training*
- Committee work & project
development*
- Resource mobilization*
- Networking & advocacy*
- Setting up of phase-out
mechanisms & structures*

INHERENT PROCESSES:

***Documentation,
Monitoring & Evaluation***



COMMUNITY ORGANIZING PROCESS

Four Phases/Stages of Community Organizing Process

CREDO OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Go to the people

Live among them

Learn from them

Plan with them

Work with them

Start with what they know

Build on what they have

Teach by showing

CREDO OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Learn by doing

Not a showcase but a pattern

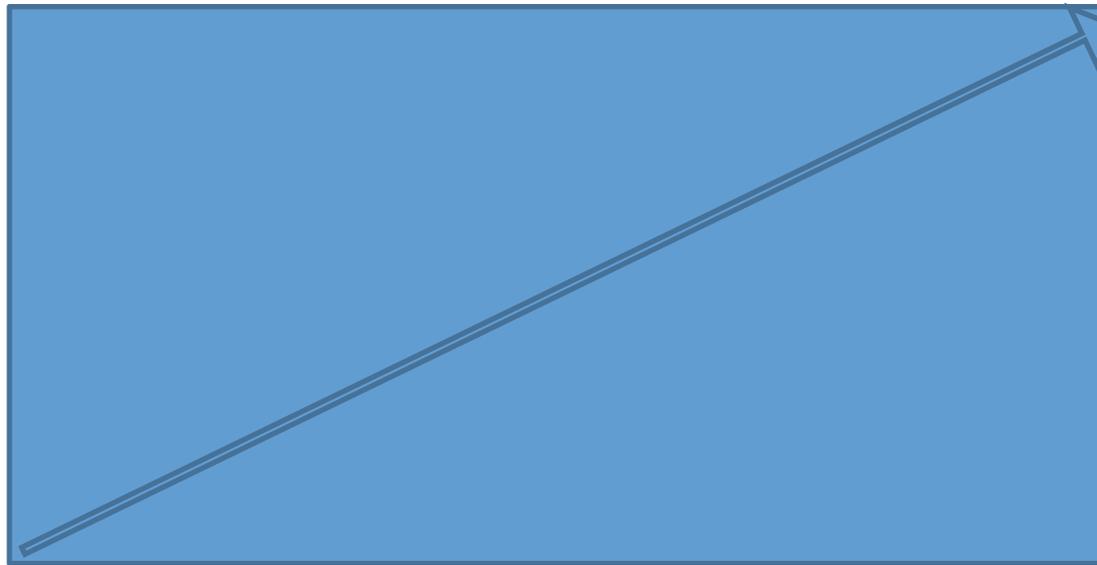
Not odds and ends but a system

Not piecemeal but integrated approach

Not to conform but to transform

NOT RELIEF BUT RELEASE

Development Worker's Role



Community's Role

I. SOCIAL PREPARATORY PHASE

- This phase/stage includes Area Selection, Initial Assessment of the community situations and needs, Consultations with local groups, and Identifying Contact Persons. all these become the basis for planning initial co activities
- Foundation for the subsequent phases/stages.

AIMS:

- a. To assess the context of the organizing work before actual organizing.
- b. To gather Information about the CHARACTERISTICS of the area as well as the LOCAL GROUPS is important to help the worker identify appropriate CO interventions at various stages.
- c. To make your purpose known to potential leaders and determine its acceptability. CO should not be imposed on the group or community, but must be rooted to their expressed needs and interests.

Major Activities in Social Preparation

A. AREA SELECTION

Undertake only if organizing work is done by outside agencies or groups.

AIM: To determine the scope and target of organizing efforts

Set of criteria needs to be established as basis for selection.

Factors to consider in AREA SELECTION

1. Depressed area and presence of low income groups.
2. Presence of development agencies or other support agencies in the area.
3. Willingness of local groups to link up with organizing programs.
4. Stable peace and order situations.
5. Accessibility

Factors to consider in GROUP SELECTION

1. Geographical location
2. Dialect/local language
3. Population: number of target individuals, families, households.
4. Level of organization (organized vs. unorganized)
5. Sectoral groupings (women, youth, farmers etc.)
6. Heterogeneous vs. homogenous membership
7. Basis for organizing: common problems and expressed needs

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B. COMMUNITY ENTRY

Crucial when the organizer is new in the community.

AIM: Sets the tone in the relationship between the organizer and the local groups through out the organizing process.

METHODS for community entry

1. Meeting with local officials
2. Consultations with local groups and agencies.
3. Attendance in barangay assembly
4. House to house visits to key leaders
5. Formal launching of the program

C. COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

- It is gradually imbibing community life by understanding and empathizing with the community conditions.
- Mutual trust and good rapport bet. the worker and the people in the community are built upon shared experiences.

Different integration methods are:

1. House to house visits
2. Living with selected families, preferably with key leaders.
3. Informal individual and group discussions
4. Sharing/participation in household and community activities.
5. Attendance in social gatherings
6. Assistance in actual production work.

Pointers in establishing good rapport with the community

1. Be one with them
2. Try to talk, act and dress as community residents do
3. Establish good interpersonal relationship
4. Keep a low profile, be humble
5. Be sensitive in how your presence affects the community and the people you deal with
6. Socialize and be friendly
7. Be respectable and practice what you preach.
8. **Sensitivity to the local culture**

D. SOCIAL INVESTIGATION

It involves the gathering , systematization and interpretation of important information about the community, which will become the basis for identifying and prioritizing needs and problems, as well as determining appropriate methods and strategies for organizing work.

Will also help the organizer determine the factors that facilitate or hinder change in the community.

Data gathering techniques :

1. Ocular Visits
2. Informal interviews with key informants
3. Review of records/documents
4. Group discussions
5. Observations

Social Preparation Methods

1. CONSULTATIONS

- Meet and get initial feedback from: local officials, community leaders, organizations and gatekeepers.
- Listen to their ideas and you can also explain your own options.
- You begin to recognize the contribution of the people in arriving at better decisions.

2. CONTACT BUILDING

In doing area selection, social analysis and integration, it is important to work closely with CONTACT PERSONS or Key informants who can assist in the organizing work.

Qualities of contact persons:

- a. Knowledgeable about the community
- b. Has gained credibility among the residents
- c. Interested to assist the organizer
- d. Willing to work for the community above self.

3. MAPPING

- Maps help visualize the physical characteristics of the area.
- It need not be complex. It can be a simple location map to indicate major landmarks, house clusters, key facilities, sources of livelihood, and land use pattern.

4. ACTION PLANNING

- Based on results of social analysis, initial plans for organizing can be drafted.
- Tentative activities for the next three months (or less) which can help actual group formation or strengthening.

II. Leadership Development and Capability Building

- Throughout the organizing process, community leaders play a crucial role in terms of initiating, managing and sustaining organizing efforts.
- One of the organizer's task then is to identify leadership potentials among local residents and help them develop certain knowledge, attitudes and skills as leaders.

SPOTTING POTENTIAL LEADERS

Assessing individual's abilities and willingness to work for social change.

Criteria considered in identifying potential leaders:

1. Belongs to the low to middle income sectors of the community and thus, represents the majority.
2. Credible and well respected by the people; has wide sphere of influence.
3. Has capacity for critical thinking and leadership.
4. Has good communication and interpersonal skills.
5. Willing to exert effort for the good of the community.
6. Actively involve in community life and dynamics.

CORE GROUP FORMATION

Is important in laying down the foundation of a strong people's organization.

Aims to bring together 5 to 10 key leaders who can lead and take initiative in forming the organization. They are chosen from the list of potential leaders. Advanced individuals can be included in the CORE GROUP.

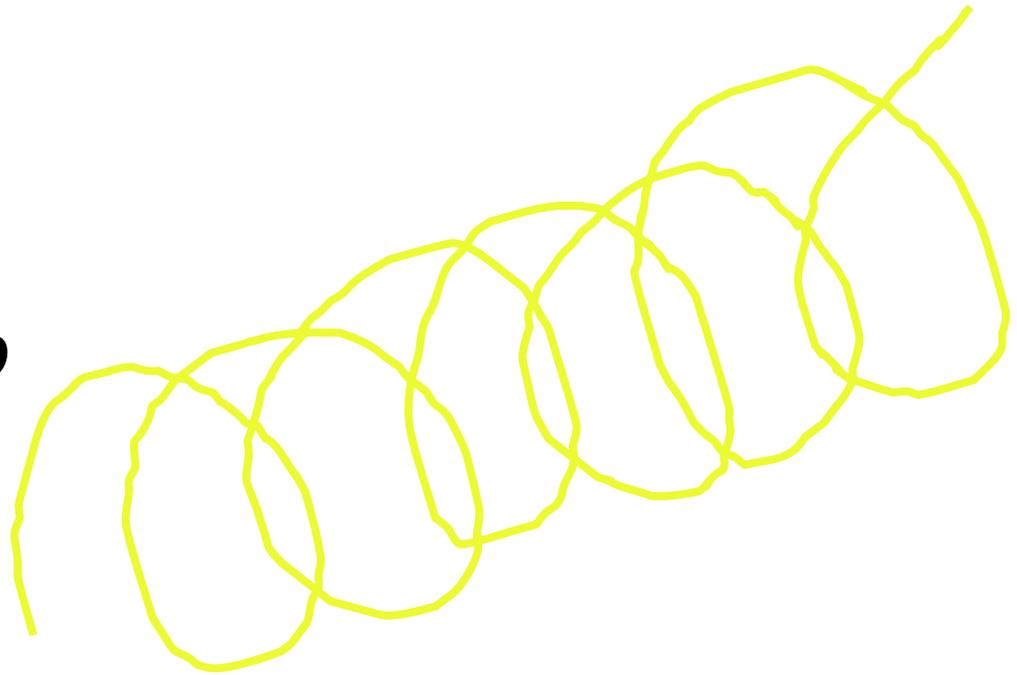
As the term "core", implies, the core group becomes the locus of decision-making of the organization.

Suggested functions of the core group:

1. Serves as training ground for shared leadership
2. Assists in mobilizing other community members
3. Provides direction in organizing activities
4. Plans activities towards formalizing the setting up of the organization.

We are here in this world for
a purpose . . .

**Action,
reflection,
action**



III. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

- With capable community leaders, we can now start setting up the organization.

COMPONENTS:

A. SETTING UP THE ORGANIZATION

- > Building people's organizations have to be based on people's needs and capabilities.
- > Common process for setting-up the org.:
 - a. Awareness building
 - b. Group mobilization
 - c. Formalizing the organization

* Organization can start from the core group.

Activities Related to Setting-up the Organization

1. Group discussions to formulate objectives of the org.
2. Forming work committees
3. Series of consultations among leaders and members
4. Preparation of the Constitution and by-laws
5. Election of officers
6. General Assembly

*

Organizational building and strengthening of organization

- regular meetings
- taking responsibility of encouraging others to attend meetings
- the stage of seeing to it that leaders are trained and formed
- leaders are expected to perform their duties and develop their skills to serve the community
- members should be encouraged to focus and identify their problems and needs

D. REVIVING EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

In communities where there are existing organizations, we can start with organizational assessment.

Pointers for reviving dormant groups

- a. Find out the present status of the organization, including nature and causes of organizational problems and potential for reactivation.
- b. Present findings to the organization for validation, discussion and analysis.
- c. Work out a strategy for solving the problems.
- d. Implement strategies to improve the organization: redefine or clarify VMO, Re-structure the org. etc.
- e. Monitor and evaluate these activities periodically. Based on the results, follow-up plans can be undertaken.

E. STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION

1. **GROUP PROCESSES:** An organization gives importance to group accomplishments rather than individual success. As group members reinforce each other's potential, cooperation and unity within the group are strengthened.
2. **MEMBER PARTICIPATION:** Member participation should not be confined to attendance in meetings. They should contribute to decision-making, project development and conflict management.
3. **GROUP BUILDING:** In organizing, we help people develop their potentials and move on to higher levels of group action.
4. **TEAMWORK:** Specific tasks can be accomplished

Through team effort.

➤ Based on individual capabilities and organizational mechanisms, sub groups can help contribute to organizational goals.

5. **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT:** Since conflicts are part of organizational growth, these need to be properly analyzed and resolved immediately so as not to create irreparable damage to the group.

F. ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGNOSIS

> A systematic process of assessing the organization's status as basis for improvements and follow-up activities.

Content of organizational diagnosis/assessment

1. Leadership performance
2. Communication process
3. Decision-making
4. Problem-solving
5. Management
6. Membership
7. Outputs/Accomplishments
8. Linkages with other groups
9. Group conflicts
10. Growth potentials

IV. CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION

- When an organization has gained basis of unity and ability for collective decision-making, consolidation and expansion activities can be pursued.
- Organizational consolidation includes strengthening commitment and capabilities of group members for managing and sustaining organization based on one's assessment of past experiences.

Strategies for organizational consolidation:

a. **Committee Work**

Is a strategy for accomplishing specific tasks as well as strengthening group skills.

It decentralizes decision-making and facilitates delegation of responsibilities.

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b. Institutionalizing Organizational Mechanisms

Setting up formal organizational structures and mechanisms provide the lines for decision-making and venues for wider participation.

Includes regular meetings, consultations, action planning, assessment and summing-up sessions.

C. Project Development

Group projects may any of the following; livelihood, health, cooperatives, fund raising and other socio-economic concerns.

These project may have two pronged objectives;

- To respond to immediate poverty or welfare needs.
- To strengthen the organization

Projects should not be merely concerned with increased income nor provisions of services and facilities. But also become venues for strengthening group cohesion and capabilities.

d. GROUP MOBILIZATION

Mobilization activities aim to provide venues for wider participation of members.

Local issues are often used as starting point for mobilization

f. RESOURCE BUILD-UP

Without funds, the organization may have difficulty in undertaking long-term and more substantial projects and activities.

fund sourcing maybe in a form of membership dues, tapping local and outside resources, project proposal development, etc.

Book keeping skills and systematic financial procedures is therefore important.

g. NETWORKING

As the demands and functions of the local org. grow, more complex and varied assistance from outside agencies may be required. Thus networking is necessary.

It involves establishing working relationship with different development agencies and other people's organizations.

INDICATORS FOR PHASE OUT:

1. Gradual phase-out of the organizer and the organizing agency
2. New type of humane relationship
3. People running their own affairs
4. Leaders in place of the organizer
5. More linkages and participation
6. Sharing of experiences with others
7. Strengthening of capability for continuity and service

Skills of a Community Organizer:

1. Problem analysis
2. Resource mobilization
3. Conflict resolution
4. Organizing meeting
5. Writing reports
6. Networking
7. Facilitator

Trends in Community Organizing

- ***Gender and Development as a framework;***
new tools for gender analysis.
- ***Sendai framework of Action (2015-2030)-*** a new framework for DRRM; New tools for DRRM e.g. Hazard and Vulnerability Assessment

- ***Integrated Care for the Elderly*** – a new framework for organizing and caring for the elderly
- ***Organizing along specific concerns in the environment*** (e.g., water, energy, etc.)

Challenges

- **Continuing poverty and increasing gap between the rich and the poor**

The 2015 monthly national food threshold for a family of five based on PSA data is Php10,969 (\$210) in order to eat, have shelter, travel, buy medicine, go to school among other life necessities.

Similarly, the national poverty threshold for a family of five in 2015 is Php7,638 (\$148) for a family to have regular meal.

- **Rapidly changing climatic conditions**
- **Unstable political situation**
- **Ever tightening economic competition among nations**
- **Change in administration**

Potential Response

- Continuously upgrading knowledge and skills as community organizers or mobilization officers
- Stronger engagement with communities and other stakeholders.
- Helping develop local leaders
- Developing new tools and strategies for participatory approaches in development
- More systematic monitoring and documentation
- Continuously drawing lessons from people's experiences.

Tips...

- There is no one way of solving poverty, it has many faces, therefore it would also require a combination of methods and approaches.
- There is no one way of achieving our goals, it cannot be done through templates, every community would have its own context and interventions should be based on this, (peoples' capacities and limitations), but
- There will always be strength in numbers when we talk of poor communities, therefore, community organizing will always be relevant and will actually be the major strategy in achieving the goal for people's empowerment and transformation.

If you give me fish
you have fed me for a day.

If you teach me to fish

Then you have fed me until the river is
contaminated or the shoreline seized
for development.

But if you teach me to organize

Then whatever the challenge I can join
together with my peers

And we will fashion our own solution.



**BUT OF THE BEST LEADERS
WHEN THEIR TASK IS DONE;
THEIR WORK ACCOMPLISHED,**





The people all
remark ...
“WE HAVE DONE IT
OURSELVES.”

☺ Maraming Salamat.
Thank you. ☺

