

## Networks of Rural Youth Education and Training in Asia

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# 아시아 농촌 청소년 교육과 훈련의 연결망

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### Summary

국제연합에서는 15~24세의 젊은이를 청소년이라고 정의하고 있는데 그 중에서도 특히 농촌청소년은 미래 농촌발전의 핵심주체라 할 것이다. 일반적으로 농촌청소년은 그들 부모세대보다 더 높은 교육수준과 도전의식 그리고 더 높은 창의성을 지니고 있기 때문이다. 더욱이 그들은 미래가 자신의 장래와 직접적으로 연결되어 있기 때문에 장기적인 전망, 미래의 비전에 관심이 크다. 청소년에 대한 교육은 민주사회의 미래에서 한 사회가 할 수 있는 가장 중요한 투자 중의 하나라고 인식되며 현재 진행되고 있는 고도의 경쟁적인 시장경제로의 진입에서 청소년의 사회경제적 비전을 향상시키기 위해서는 교육과 훈련의 질적 양적 향상이 최우선시 되어야 할 것이다.

세계무역기구 출범 이후 농산물 수출국가와 선진국에서의 소득균형은 일반적으로 향상되었으나 순식량 수입국가나 개발도상국가에서는 소득균형이 더 악화되고 농업영역의 쇠퇴를 초래하고 있는 부작용이 국제연합 식량농업기구 등의 분석이다. 더욱이 식량안전상황은 농산물의 급격한 수입으로 여전히 불안하고 농가 판매의 지속적인 악화, 농촌과 도시간의 소득격차가 큰 것으로 나타났다. 특히 인간의 건강과 환경에 유해한 유전자조작 농산물(GMO)의 교역은 소비자의 식품안전과 잠재적 위해 때문에 합당한 조치가 요구되고 있는 실정이다.

이러한 상황에서 농업교육, 연구 그리고 지도, 특히 아시아의 주요작물 영역에 대한 더 많은 투자가 필요하며 많은 아시아국가들에서 우선적으로 요구되는 농촌 청소년교육은 빈곤퇴치, 식량의 안정적 공급 및 식품의 안전 그리고 지속적이고 균형있는 농촌개발 등이다. 이를 위한 정부와 국민, 특히 농촌 청소년들의 연결망을 통해 함께 협력해야 빈곤퇴치와 식량의 안정적 공급 및 식품의 안전 등 농촌의 사회경제적 발전이 가능할 것이다. 이 연구에서는 아시아지역 농촌사회 및 식량농업의 발전을 위한 청소년 연결망을 예시적으로 검토하고 미래사회에서의 협력을 위한 접근을 탐색하였다.

**Key Words :** Rural youth, Rural youth education & training, Youth networks.

## I. Introduction

Youth refers to 1,025 million people between the ages of 15 and 24 living in the world. Over the next 35 years, our global youth population

will experience the fastest growth in history. The vast majority of this growth is expected to take place in southern Asia and Africa, in countries considered among the least developed in the world. This global explosion of youth population

in those countries means growing up in poverty, in need of an education, skills training and a job.

Rural youth have important contributions to make toward local development. For this reason a joint effort is required between technical experts, officials, leaders, teachers and others in order to jointly set up development plans stemming from the proposals of youth in rural communities, reflecting their concerns, visions, fears, opportunities and limitations. The contribution of rural youth to the development of their community is based on their educational levels which are relatively higher than those of their parents, on their more favorable attitude towards innovation and, often, their greater creativeness. Moreover, they have longer-term prospects and a vision of the future, since the future is directly linked to their own lives.

The population explosion is most evident in our cities. Over the last 10 years, city populations in more than 85 countries have doubled. Contributing to the dramatic growth of cities is the rising tide of rural-to-urban migration, with entire families moving to urban areas in search of opportunity. Research reveals that a growing number of rural-to-urban migrants are young people, ages 15 to 30. Experience has shown that most of these young people face enormous challenges including inadequate food and housing, rising unemployment rates, poor sanitation, crime, congestion and dangerous air and water pollutants. Growing poverty in urban areas has contributed to a dramatic increase in the number of so-called "street children" in the world, and current estimates place the number of street children at roughly 100 million, with the majority living in developing countries.

## II. Education and Training of Rural Youth

Youth, as a distinct social group, are defined by the United Nations as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. The building blocks of the World Program of Action for Youth comprise 10 priority areas: education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities, girls and young women, and the full and effective participation of youth in society and decision-making.

### A. Quality of Youth Education

Education is considered one of the best investments a society can make in the future of its citizens; yet nearly one-third of children growing up in the developing world lack a primary school education. If present trends continue, by the year 2035, the number of 15-to 19-year-olds in developing countries who grow up without a primary school education will have increased dramatically. Increasing the level of education of a nation's citizens has been linked to an increase in that nation's economic growth and agricultural productivity. According to the World Bank, increasing the average level of schooling of a country's citizens by three years is associated with a 27 percent increase in the country's gross domestic product.

Increasing both the quality and availability of education must be viewed as an international priority if we are to increase the economic and social prospects of millions of young people entering a highly-competitive marketplace. Yet focusing purely on schools is not enough. Just as important as improving educational opportunities

for youth is investing in and supporting the teachers, parents and youth workers who influence young people's attitudes toward education.

### 1. Enhancing access and quality of Education

The World Program of Action for Youth lists three main concerns regarding the current systems of education in the world. The first is the inability of many parents in developing countries to send their children to school because of local economic and social conditions. The second concerns the paucity of educational opportunities for the more disadvantaged sub-groups of youth: girls, street children, young people in rural areas and young people with disabilities. The third concerns the quality of education, its relevance to gainful employment and its usefulness for assisting young people in the transition to full adulthood and active citizenship, as well as to nurture their idealism and creative thinking so that they may become change agents in creating their own future.

### 2. Basic education

Basic education is important since it largely defines the quality of life of youth, and the human life cycle requires that basic competencies and life skills be acquired at an early age.

### 3. Literacy levels

The prevailing education level of the adult population represents the culmination of past investments in education. In countries that have previously had low levels of investment in basic education as a percentage of national income or

per child, any policy commitment to pursue rapid improvement in the overall educational level requires investment in adult education, particularly literacy programs.

### 4. Quality of education

The issue concerning quality of education has become increasingly important. "Quality" of education for youth may require attention to several different levels of issues. Four different aspects of "quality" are; 1) the most basic level, quality of existing education is a concern in many countries in view of the persistent problems of drop-out and repetition. 2) the efficiency and effectiveness of the education system in providing adequate productive manpower to meet the requirements of the rapid socio-economic and technological changes taking place in the region. 3) its role in empowering young people and 4) nurturing new values for them to live their adult lives in the globalizing world.

Young people are a global priority. They will either threaten or contribute to the global economy and global security now and in the future. The goal for young people must go beyond survival to development and involvement. It is in their and our interests to ensure an adequate standard of living and protect them from economic, sexual, emotional, and physical harm or exploitation. But global productivity and security will hinge on developing their full potential and engaging them not only as beneficiaries, but as participants and problem-solvers.

Research confirms what parents around the world know: Every young person needs five basic things to not only survive but thrive: 1) At least one adult who is irrationally committed to

his or her well-being. 2) A safe place for sleeping, playing, learning, working and being. 3) A healthy start and a healthy lifestyle. 4) The chance to contribute and serve others. 5) Opportunities to learn values and marketable skills for adulthood, and while specific definitions may differ across cultures, research also suggests that there are four basic sets of characteristics associated with the young person who is ready to contribute: Confidence, Connection, Character and Competence.

The competencies that we want for young people go well beyond academics to include social, physical, civic, vocational and cultural competence. Safety, structure, belonging, purpose are the essential elements of Maslow's basic needs hierarchy. Young people need places, services, instruction. But they also need supports including relationships and networks that provide nurturing, standards, and guidance, and opportunities for trying new roles, mastering challenges, and contributing to family and community. We focus too heavily on structuring services to solve problems and too little on strengthening supports and opportunities to increase potential. In thinking about vulnerable, disadvantaged, or marginalized youth, the "fix-problems-first" assumption is antithetical to the dynamic of development. While problems must be addressed, it is a commitment to development that motivates growth and change.

There has been an extensive amount of research done on adolescent development and little of it has been put into daily practice. What is known? 1) Development is uneven. This is the most obvious feature of the adolescent development process. 2) It is complex. Try as we may, it is difficult to affect one aspect of development without acknowledging if not addressing the others. 3) It requires engagement. It is fostered

through relationships, influenced by environments and triggered by participation. Services can be delivered without engagement, but development only occurs when young people are engaged. 4) It is both ongoing and resilient. We cannot just intervene at one point and assume all will be fine; neither can we with good conscience not intervene, assuming that it is too late.

We have reduced the challenge of youth development to a series of problems to be solved, leaving the core inputs for development -- supports and opportunities -- to be addressed in a catch-as-catch-can fashion. Substance abuse prevention, pregnancy prevention, dropout prevention, and violence prevention programs all have separate funding and separate evaluation measures. But the core of what is offered in these programs is the same: opportunities for membership, social skill-building, participation, clear norms, adult-youth relationships, and relevant information and services.

## B. Approaches to Youth Education and Training

Before asking ourselves why youth should be included in development strategies we should ask ourselves what type of development are we betting on. Our development approach will define, to a great extent, the actions we will take, the objectives we will pursue and the people, youth and others who will participate in defining the strategies. A large number of development projects, programs and initiatives are being implemented in the world. These projects are drawn up with a development approach which varies according to the people involved and the realities they address. However, we can observe trends on a scale going from approaches that strengthen authoritarianism and the imposi-

tion of proposals to approaches that promote democracy and equitable participation.

### 1. Transfer of Technology Approaches

During the 60s, the type of development which began to be promoted was transfer of technology, an approach which is favored up to now in many development projects. Transfer of technology is based on the results of scientific research transferred to the peasants through extension educators and promoters. Although food production has increased in some favorable areas, this strategy, at the same time, has generated a centralization of human and financial resources in research centers, ignoring small producers, favoring peasants who are more apt to adopt the technology and causing environmental degradation in the medium term.

The people involved in development strategies based on transfer of technology have mostly been medium scale male peasants living in the most easily accessible geographic areas, under favorable climatic conditions and producing only one or two crops. In addition, the adoption of technology by the producer has created dependence on the project because of the need for credit, information and inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, seeds). Also, extension educators are involved. They transfer information to the peasants through field visits, demonstration plots or booklets. Technical experts are the protagonists of this development approach in the sense that they prepare the agenda on the basis of research and by defining what is best for the peasants. The flow of information is vertical and unilateral and goes from the technical expert to the peasant. Therefore, it is not surprising that rural youth have not been considered in the transfer of technology approach because the main

addressee is the one who produces and receives the technology, in general the male head of the household or his father.

### 2. The System Approach

Evaluation of the deficiencies of the transfer of technology approach suggested a new trend which proposed investigating the farming system, taking into account social and gender aspects, the market situation and marketing possibilities, the advantages of combing crops on the farm and others. The methodologies that have been used include surveys, socioeconomic questionnaires and rapid rural appraisal (RRA).

The gap between the researchers' and technical experts' agenda and the peasants' needs is thus reduced. However, peasants can only move within the framework defined by the technical expert, answering his or her questions which to a large extent correspond to his or her interests. The communication attitude of the technical experts is extractive, which means extracting information and knowledge from the peasants to be taken into account in the formulation of his plans.

### 3. Participatory Approach

Gradually peasant knowledge of both men and women is being acknowledged by some who value their experience, acquire a better understanding of their communication networks and appreciate their capacity to make decisions, put forth proposals and innovate. The shift to a participatory approach was also the result of actions taken by the rural population itself which showed that they were not satisfied with the imposed and authoritarian interventions, leaving little room for their opinion and participation.

This change has reached a stage in which the role of women, children and the aged, of youth and of peasant organizations, is often the subject of research and requires the development of different methodologies aimed at making these actors, their interests, actions and proposals visible.

At the same time, the transformation of unilateral information has led to forms of dialogue and communication, generating an exchange of ideas and proposals on the basis of respect and equity. The extension educator has assumed the role of facilitator, facilitating the process of information exchange between technical experts, male and female peasants, local governments, non-governmental organizations and other actors involved in rural development. The participation of people, and especially peasants, in development projects is no longer utilitarian nor functional; it is not limited to teaching, providing and requesting information. Rather, participation is understood as ways to attribute a protagonistic role to the principal actors of rural development such as the rural population, its organizations and institutions when defining proposals which will affect their lives and future.

Training of men and women, young and old, is considered a central theme of development initiatives because increasing and strengthening their capacities places them in a better position to define their own future, make proposals, enter into negotiations and improve communication with other development actors. What is being proposed is decentralization of decision-making and design of proposals, with more decisions being made at the local level with the participation of local governments, grassroots organizations and other local actors. The design of development projects inserting a component involving rural youth is not a solution to rural

poverty unless this effort is accompanied by a development approach favoring democracy and participation aimed at a rural population in a better position to face and solve their problems.

### C. Training : The Key to Improve the Perspectives of Rural Youth

One of the assumptions of the development approach promoting the population's participation in development proposals is the decentralization of decision-making, services, etc. In general it is stated that decentralization involves greater levels of local democracy and makes bureaucracy more responsible vis-a-vis the user, while at the same time it captures the energy and resources of civil society. But when the main purpose is limited to reducing the expenditure of the central government, the result will be that the vicious circle of inequality affecting the poorest areas may be aggravated by decentralization. Even in cases in which total resources at the local level increase in real terms, there is a risk of strengthening the structures of authoritarian clientism instead of promoting democracy. This risk makes it necessary for special programs from outside to strengthen the weaker local and regional social actors, such as youth and the peasant communities in which they are inserted.

Strengthening the local capacities of the weaker actors is necessary to achieve democratic and participatory development processes. Rural youth have their own life prospects that lead them to take decisions regarding their future. However, their options are often limited because of the scarce possibility for a good education in their localities, limited prospects in agriculture, unemployment, rapid changes in market conditions, among others. Training is one of the challenges for rural youth to expand their options

-- training which will provide them with better opportunities as agricultural producers, entrepreneurs, local leaders, etc.

Desirable Youth outcomes, according to the International Youth Foundation (IYF), are as follows :

1) Confidence - having a sense of: a) Self-Worth, The ability to contribute, and to perceive one's contributions as meaningful. b) Mastery & Future; Awareness of one's progress in life including the ability to project progress into future.

2) Character - having a sense of: a) Responsibility & Autonomy; Accountability for one's conduct and obligations. Independence and control over one's life. b) Spirituality & Self-awareness; Connectedness to principles surrounding families, cultural groups, communities, and higher deities. An awareness of one's own personality or individuality.

3) Connection - having a sense of : a) Safety & Structure; Being provided adequate food, clothing, shelter, and security, including protection from hurt, injury, or loss. b) Membership & Belonging; Being a participating member of a community. Being intimately involved in at least one lasting relationship with another person.

4) Competence - having the ability & motivation: a) Civic & Social To work collaboratively with others for the larger good, and to sustain caring friendships and relationships with others. b) Cultural; To respect and affirmatively respond to differences among groups and individuals of diverse backgrounds, interests, and traditions. c) Physical Health; To act in ways that best ensure current and future physical health, for self and others. d) Emotional Health; To respond affirmatively and to cope with positive and adverse situations, to reflect on one's emotions and surroundings, and to engage

in leisure and fun. e) Intellectual; To learn in school and in other settings, to gain the basic knowledge needed to graduate high school, to use critical thinking, creative, problem-solving and expressive skills, and to conduct independent study. f) Employability; To gain the functional and organizational skills necessary for employment, including an understanding of careers and options and the steps necessary to reach goals.

### III. Meeting the Challenges of the Future

#### A. Promoting Human Resource Development

The objectives of ensuring people's participation and promoting human resource development for sustainable agriculture are as follows; a) To promote greater public awareness of the role of people's participation and people's organizations, especially women's groups, youth in local communities and small farmers, b) To ensure equitable access of rural people, particularly women, small farmers, U-turn farmers, and land-less and indigenous people to land, water and forest resources and to technologies, financing, marketing, processing and distribution; c) To strengthen and develop the management and the internal capacities of rural people's organizations and extension services and to decentralize decision-making to the lowest community level.

For the activities of promoting human resource development for sustainable agriculture, governments at the appropriate level, with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should: a) Develop and improve integrated agricultural extension services and facilities and rural organizations and undertake

natural resource management and food security activities, taking into account the different needs of subsistence agriculture as well as market-oriented crops; b) Review and refocus existing measures to achieve wider access to land, water and forest resources and ensure equal rights of women and other disadvantaged groups, with particular emphasis on rural populations; c) Develop policies in extension, training, pricing, input distribution, credit and taxation to ensure necessary incentives and equitable access by the poor to production-support services; d) Provide support services and training, recognizing the variation in agricultural circumstances and practices by location; the optimal use of on-farm inputs and the minimal use of external inputs; optimal use of local natural resources and management of renewable energy sources; and the establishment of networks that deal with the exchange of information.

Governments at the appropriate level, and with the support of the relevant international and regional organizations, should collect, analyze, and disseminate information on human resources, the role of governments, local communities and non-governmental organizations in social innovation and strategies for rural development, and appropriate international and regional agencies should: a) Reinforce their work with non-governmental organizations in collecting and disseminating information on people's participation, training and education for human resource development; b) Help develop information available through non-governmental organizations and promote an international ecological agricultural network to accelerate the development and implementation of ecological agriculture practices.

## B. Revitalizing Rural Educational Philosophy

Over the years, educators and policymakers have paid scant attention to educational philosophy. Even scholars, for instance, rarely analyze the behavior of people in schools to discover the philosophy behind it. The Greek philosopher Plato examined a similar view over two thousand years ago. In the parable of the star-gazer, Plato described the situation of a ship's captain, who spends many hours gazing at the stars. The sailors view him as useless, or worse--a parasite. Yet, without the work of the captain, the sailors would be lost, and their work would be in vain. So it is, Plato argued, with philosophers.

The major philosophical difference underlying rural and urban living is the relationship of people with nature. If nature is the home of human beings, then they must care for that home wisely. This circumstance does not confront urban people so forcefully as it confronts rural people. For example, farming, fishing, and logging--typical rural enterprises--must be carried out in ways that conserve the natural world. Future production requires conservation and preservation of the soil, the waters, and the forests. This principle seems less relevant in an urban setting, where production can often be pressed to whatever level the market will bear. If rural dwellers are to have real communities, then, the equilibrium with nature must be re-established. People must care intimately for one another and cherish the land they inhabit. They must also care more closely for the ways they know one another, the rituals of their daily lives, and their knowledge of the local environment.

## C. Young People's Aspirations

Aspirations are strong desires to reach



something high or great. Young people's aspirations guide what students learn in school, how they prepare for adult life, and what they eventually do. Aspirations reflect individuals' ideas of their "possible selves," what they would like to become. Realizing aspirations requires the investment of time, energy, and resources--both from the young person and from others. The extent to which communities mobilize such support bears on the quality of life--both among students and among adults. Conditions in the community interact with the imaginations of students as they realize their aspirations. Rural schools, the community, and the nation must work together to raise aspirations of young people,

A few examples of what can be done follow:

- 1) Elementary schools need to provide all students with the tools necessary for success. These include a firm grounding in basic content, in learning to learn, and in higher-order thinking strategies.
- 2) The secondary school curriculum should stress the kinds of skills adults need, for example, working cooperatively and problem-solving.
- 3) Schools also should organize to address the social and emotional needs of students. Matching small groups of students with a caring adult can provide students the coaching they need to jump all the hurdles.
- 4) Parents can raise their own expectations for their children's academic achievement.
- 5) The community can signal its commitment to education by providing scholarships, recognizing academic as well as athletic prowess, helping to improve local schools, creating apprenticeship and work/study opportunities.
- 6) Communities, local and national governments can create economic and technological development policies that encourage diversification of the rural economy.

## IV. Networks of Rural Youth

### 1. Teenagers as Teachers

Teenagers can be extremely effective teachers of younger children. Children respond well to teenaged teachers. Having teenagers teach is also efficient. A team of eight teenagers can teach 60 or more children working in small groups. Moreover, teenagers benefit from being teachers. Attitudes toward teachers and school, self-confidence, and sense of accomplishment can all improve. Teenagers can also be positive role models for younger children. There were 10 elements that were found to be essential to the success of teenagers as teachers programs; 1) Dedicated Adults Who Support Teens, 2) Active Teen Recruitment, 3) Strong Curriculum, 4) Initial Training, 5) Ongoing Training and Support, 6) Attention to Details, 7) Recognition and Reward, 8) Team Building, 9) Setting Teens Up for Success, 10) Feedback and Evaluation.

However, these positive outcomes do not magically occur. Extension staffs who conduct or train other organizations to conduct teens as teachers program should be aware of the complex planning and skilled implementation that are essential to create programs that benefit both teenaged teachers and the children whom they teach. The effort and dedication devoted to producing high-quality teens as teachers programs can have multiple payoffs. The community benefits because programs such as teens as teachers can help create an ethos of cooperation, caring, and mutual respect. The children who are taught by teens benefit as they learn from an educational enrichment curricula taught by positive role models. Most important, teens benefit as they are challenged, are successful, and contribute positively and significantly to their

communities. When adequately prepared and supported, teenaged teachers can make tremendous personal gains.

## 2. Face-to-Face Benefits

As we enter the twenty-first century, advances in communication technology have changed how agents deliver programs and work with clientele. The electronic world makes it very easy for educational information to be delivered quickly and efficiently. These advances must be regarded as program-delivery improvements. However, communication technology has also reduced the amount of face-to-face, personal contact with and among clientele, which used to be a hallmark of extension work. Can we keep some face-to-face benefits while going forward in an "e" world? Simeral found holding extension committee meetings in clientele homes is of value for a number of reasons; 1) Teaches Diversity & Tolerance, 2) Strengthens Committees, 3) Encourages Long-Term Relationships, 4) Provides Opportunity for Sociability/Hospitality, 5) Encourages Family Development, and 6) Recapturing the Value. Extension has a history of being not only a deliverer of information but also a conduit for learning social and interaction skills. Since Extension was founded, we have helped people develop tolerance, understand diversity, build community, learn hospitality, and enjoy stronger family units. We do not have to lose these values in our "e" world.

## 3. To Create and Sustain Community Coalitions

A coalition is broadly defined as an effort to bring individuals and organizations together to work for a common purpose. Coalition building

is appropriate when an individual or group recognizes that they alone do not have the technical capability or people power to effect a real impact on an issue. As people work together, they expand their individual views of issues to a broadened perspective influenced by their coalition companions. In order to effectively carry out coalition work, community members often need training in both the process of public policy and the content of the issues to be addressed. A coalition development and training program to create and sustain community coalitions could use the steps as follow:

- 1) Recognize and express concern about the problem. Assess local needs to verify the extent of youth at risk issues.
- 2) Become involved and identify all players. Community coalitions are encouraged to be inclusive and expand their membership base by partnering with businesses, schools, parents, and youth.
- 3) Clarify the issue. Learn the extent of the problem and consider all sides. Remain open to new ideas by setting aside personal biases.
- 4) Consider alternative solutions. Examine all alternatives and encourage coalition members to identify existing solutions and brainstorm new ones.
- 5) Consider consequences for each alternative. Explore the positive and negative consequences for people on all sides of the issue. Doing nothing is an alternative.
- 6) Inform others of the choice. Learn how public decisions are made, who makes them, and how citizens can participate in the process.
- 7) Activate the choice. Provide input to policy makers, or carry out the plan.
- 8) Evaluate the choice. Evaluation occurs informally throughout the process. Formal evaluation at the end of the project may lead the coalition into new concerns and problems.

## 4. Extension Education

Extension, as a non-formal educational input, can make important contributions to sustainable agricultural production and rural development. There is a critical need for well-trained extension educators in many developing countries. However, the extension methodology portion of the curricula and programs of study of many agricultural education institutions is inadequate and in need of review and revision. There is a tendency among many institutions to place emphasis primarily on providing students with scientific and technical knowledge in the various agricultural disciplines. Often, too little attention is paid to providing the types of courses that are important for preparing students as agricultural extension workers who can effectively communicate with diverse rural groups as well as support these groups in a process of collaborative problem-solving.

Students studying extension need to see and work with applied technology on farms. Curricula should place less emphasis on theoretical models and more on practical application of research. There is a need to provide an interdisciplinary perspective into which a wide range of different disciplinary components can be integrated and to provide experiential, field-based learning activities. Learning should emphasize inductive reasoning skills so that students can interpret problems and devise solutions. Furthermore, curricular revisions for training extension workers should take into account a number of the issues identified in this paper -- the decline in public sector employment, the deterioration of the natural environment, population education, and the changes in the roles and responsibilities of women farmers.

In many developing countries, small-scale family farms constitute the majority of the total number of agricultural holdings. A major

challenge for extension is helping them advance in sustainable ways from subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture. Agricultural education institutions have a key role in training extension educators so that they are oriented towards addressing the improvement of small-farmer agriculture, and in particular improving their food crop production and marketing capabilities. Extension educators should be encouraged to adopt new communication technologies to improve their rural youth guidance methods. Agricultural institutions and organizations should be encouraged to adopt youth-oriented approach including the development of a computer based as well as group guidance for rural youth.

## 5. Strengthening Rural Youth Culture

What is culture?/ Culture is the habits of the heart/ Ways of understanding life / and ways of living it / The unwritten laws of culture / are called values and norms, / they were developed as guidelines / in the remote past, linked to religion; faith and superstition./ Culture is always handed down / from the past to the present, / influencing the future. / It is thus conservative, / yet never static. / It is continuously adjusting / to a changing reality, / but not parallel to that reality change. / Culture is the modification of change, / it is what ensures variety in a globalizing world / by insisting on a local common denominator./ Culture is bound to space and time /- and so are human beings. / As habits of the heart, culture operate mostly / on the unconscious level, through feelings and behavior, / considered normal in each given social environment. / It is hard to discuss culture and what it does to people, / because it is intangible. It is there, but it is difficult to prove. / Values and norms are the fundamentals of

culture. / It is the glue that keeps societies together, / invisible but effective. / It stipulates right and wrong, / good and evil, / true and false. / It creates obstacles for the individual / by creating a we-ness for all, / - within certain boundaries./ The effects of culture / are always modified by personal characteristics / and affected by external influences. / Internal and external forces often overshadow / general and commonly held values and norms / - if everybody in a community shares some traits, / but are distinguished by personal attributes and style, / we normally focus on the peculiarities, / not the similarities. / A global culture is a possibility, / it cannot be rejected as a future goal / for a united humanity./ For the time being, however, / people need to follow cultural guidelines, / different as they are from place to place./ And, to understand people from other places, / we need to know their cultural codes.

## 6. Networking Youth

Founded in 1990, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) is an independent, international, non-governmental organization dedicated to the positive development of children and youth throughout the world. Youth Net International (YNI) is IYF's vehicle for the development and exchange of information on effective programs and practices that support the development of children and youth ages 5 through 20. The IYF supports YNI as a part of its ongoing commitment to identify and promote what works. YNI's goals are; a) to increase the knowledge base on effective programs, practices and policies that support child and youth development by linking the field experiences of programs around the world to academic and policy research. b) to increase the effectiveness, scale, and sustainability

of programs by promoting standards for program excellence and encouraging program assessment and evaluation through funding and/or coordinating tools, technical assistance, and training opportunities. c) to raise awareness of children and youth issues and of existing programs and strategies which address those issues by promoting youth participation and the youth development field and by developing materials and strategies which help move programs, communities, organizations, and governments to act and build on what is known. and d) to foster networking and interaction among those with common concerns and interests through organizing workshops and meetings, disseminating published and electronic information, and facilitating partnerships and learning exchanges.

## 7. Industrial Skills Training Program

ISTP Fostering economic opportunities for youth through training in skilled and needed labor; Manila, Philippines. There are large numbers of idle out-of-school youth living in Tondo, Manila, Philippines. Lacking marketable skills, they often succumb to poverty and crime. Recognizing this crisis, in 1971 the Don Bosco Youth Center-Tondo established a vocational training center in Barrio Magsaysay, for unemployed dropouts, ages 17 to 23. The center offers an Industrial Skills Training Program (ISTP) which stresses positive work attitudes and exemplary industrial skills. Youth complete training in welding, technology, industrial electricity, automotive mechanics and machine shop technology. The Center's placement program then helps them find jobs. Unlike graduates of the country's traditional education system, ISTP graduates are likely to find employment. Demand for vocational skills is high. In 1993, close to

94% of the program's machine shop graduates found full-time employment. Thus far, the Industrial Skills Training Program has trained 4,000 young people. Similar programs are offered in 13 Philippine provinces and in other countries where Don Bosco has a presence.

## 8. FFA(/FFJ/FFK)

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems. FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. Half a million students across the country are becoming leaders, building self-esteem and preparing for career success. Behind each member is an advisor who works one on one with students to help them find their strengths, develop new talents, and match their skills and interests to the perfect career area. The FFA's 455,306 members and 7,226 chapters represent all 50 states, as well as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. FFA is a diverse organization, operating in rural, urban and suburban schools. Students aged 12-21 enrolled in agricultural education programs are eligible for membership.

## 9. 4-H

4-H is an international youth organization involving more than seven million members in eighty countries around the world. 4-H is the Cooperative Extension System's dynamic, non-formal, educational program for today's young people. The program partners the cooperative efforts of youth, volunteer leaders, state land-

grant universities, state and local governments. 4-H has spread internationally through The International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) program. This is an in-depth learning experience in which 4-H alumni and other young adults live with host families in other countries to increase global awareness, develop independent study interests, and improve language skills. 4-H has more than 110 program areas, including: arts, communications, community service, consumer and family sciences, environmental education, earth sciences, healthy lifestyle education, leadership, plants and animals, science and technology, and local county Extension offices are ready to help members and volunteers to join or participate in the program. Through a 2-year pilot project called "Powering Up," National 4-H Council examined how computer and Internet technology can add to youth and community development in isolated areas. Council provided teams of youth and adults in CES-supported pilot sites with technology training and access to an online community of their peers. The project yielded valuable lessons about planning for technology integration into youth and community development. It also showed strategies where professional youth workers and youth and adult volunteers can use technology to strengthen the voice of youth.

## 10. Environmental Stewardship

Environmental Stewardship is the concept of teaching young people how to proactively serve their communities as conservators and protectors of the environment. Youth learn to understand and appreciate expertise and values from a broad range of perspectives and to take responsible action -- not only on their own behalf, but on behalf of future generations. The specific goals

of the Environmental Stewardship program include: understanding ecological concepts, building an awareness of environmental issues and values, developing scientific investigatory and critical thinking skills, and learning skills needed for effective action. In general, these goals foster leadership skills that allow youth to work as full partners with others to develop creative, community-based solutions to difficult environmental challenges.

Environmental Stewardship recognizes that young people, their families, and communities are interdependent and capable of working together to shape their reality and address challenges. Using the community development process, Environmental Stewardship seeks to involve youth as full partners capable of leading program initiatives. Each piece of the Environmental Stewardship program features hands-on, developmentally appropriate activities designed to develop critical thinking and leadership skills. Each piece of the program encourages youth to develop their capacity to plan and take effective, well-reasoned action.

## V. Conclusions

Our global village is severely stratified. The dividing line runs deep between those who live in freedom and with dignity and those without even food, shelter, education or basic health care. Moreover, poverty, injustice and uncertainty about the future breed prejudice and intolerance. We need to Think Globally Act Locally, and sometimes we need to Think Globally Act Globally. Some people use the term Glocalization to represent think and act globally and locally at the same time.

Asian policymakers may make major decisions that could delay the accomplishment of the

economic development in rural areas or hasten it. Although the region's economy has hit a rough spot, governments may not turn away from a market orientation if they are to carry through the balanced rural development along with poverty alleviation and environmental improvement. Good governance is a key to sustained growth. Transparent and responsive governments must increase the level of investment made in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension, education, health, training of rural youth and expand the reach of social safety-net programs. While some Asian countries struggle to catch up, the rest will need to continue to increase incomes and the quality of life in rural areas. This will have to be done even as rural populations continue to grow. Failure to do so will lead to accelerated migration to the cities, a process that will have its own social and environmental costs, and a growing risk of social conflict and violence over the use of natural resources. Economic growth must continue in order to provide the means to solve these problems. but at the same time that growth must be equitable and environmentally sustainable.

Unprecedented rates of rural and national economic growth have transformed many parts of rural Asia, but not all developing Asia shared in this transformation. In the face of this challenge, the accomplishment of the rural development of Asia will take renewed efforts on the part of governments. Meeting the challenge must also involve a renewal of governance itself: transparency, responsiveness, and eradication of corruption are all keys to sustained growth in the 21st century.

Governments will also have to increase the level of productive investment made in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension, education, and health, as well as expand the

reach of social safety-net programs. There is also considerable scope for getting more with less\_ by improving the efficiency of many of the public institutions that implement public investments. This requires changes in governance structures, with increased transparency and accountability to key stakeholders and greater roles for the NGOs where they can better provide the required services. If poverty and malnutrition are to be meaningfully reduced within the next generation, additional allocation of central government funds will be required.

Rural development strategies must aim at achieving multiple objectives. While the primary concern is poverty reduction and improving the quality of life of the rural population, the strategies that will lead to these outcomes (win-win-win strategies) must be broad-based and far-reaching. Some of the main elements of the strategies include increasing sufficient levels of public investments in agricultural research, extension, rural infrastructure, education, health, and training rural youth so as not to jeopardize the future.

Investing more in agricultural teaching, research, and extension, especially in the field of Asiatic staple crops will be needed since most present activity in the field of bio-technology is conducted by multinational companies and neglects Asia's crops and problems. Managing natural resources holistically will be needed to cope with impending problems of scarcity.\_ Priority areas of rural youth education in many Asian region countries are reduction in poverty, improvement in food security, and sustainable and balanced rural development.

Some countries could meet a significant part of these costs by reducing wasteful public expenditures in rural areas, particularly on input and credit subsidies, and by improving the

efficiency of public institutions. Natural resources should be better managed as well. Accomplishment of the rural socio-economic development, radical reduction in poverty, and improvement in food security in rural Asia are attainable if governments and people, especially young and energetic people, are willing to work together.

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