

# **Church Development Perspective: Policy Formulation and Implementation**

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*Culled largely from the explicit pronouncements and actual practices of the churches for the period covering 1972-1990, this article is an attempt to piece together the church sector's development perspective using the policy formulation and implementation framework. The record of the performance of the Catholic Church and the Protestant member-churches of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines indicates the potential of historic social institutions, religious belief systems, and churches as organizations in the continuing task of accomplishing the much desired progress and development of Filipino society.*

## **Introduction**

In the continuing concern for development and its challenges to Philippine public administration, a recurring question is whether or not there are workable ideas and strategies emanating from Philippine society itself, rather than from purely western models.

The notion of indigenization could mean purposively drawing out and situating knowledge about development from Philippine conditions, experiences, culture, and historical lessons for the benefit of the Filipino people.

Focusing on one constituent sector at a time trims down this tedious task. The church as a social institution is one starting point. As an organization, it has a membership with a common religious belief system; it has structure and ways of behaving. Historically, certain churches in the Philippines have surfaced visibly as actors in social, economic and political issues.

The study of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, as well as the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) and its Protestant member-churches, uncovered a (1) theoretical model for development, and (2) a model of development praxis in the context of Philippine conditions.

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What is herein called as the "church development perspective" refers to the definition of and strategies for development from the viewpoint and experiences of these churches. This consists of both theory and practice.

The experiences of the Catholic Church, the NCCP and its member-churches in development work call attention to the contemporary role of religion and church in social change. Other religions, in terms of beliefs and practices, and religious groups or organizations of believers, which have been called churches, carry impact in their respective societies. For instance, Islam and the Moslems in the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia, as well as Buddhism and the Buddhist monks in Thailand have been largely involved in social, economic and political issues. The theology of liberation from the Catholic Church in Latin American countries has even extended influence to other Third World nations.

### **The Churches' Theoretical Model of Development**

To date, the Catholic Church, the NCCP and its Protestant member-churches pursue a line of thought on the issue of development. What is here called the "churches' theoretical model of development" consists of statements defining and stipulating the indicators of and the strategies to pursue and attain development in the Philippines. This presents a vision of a "developed Philippines" and the processes to get there.

The churches' view of development has been drawn from pastoral statements, statements of concern, and other press releases, as well as decisions and resolutions of their authoritative policy and decision structures. Due to the nature of these sources, a policy framework can be used to analyze the churches' position on development.

Policy has been defined as:

... a course of action of a person, group or government within a given environment providing obstacles and opportunities which policy proposed to utilize and overcome in an effort to reach a goal or realize an objective or a purpose.

... a purpose, course of action directed toward the accomplishment of some purpose or goal.

... a purpose, a course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem as matter of concern (Anderson 1975: 3).

Policy statement is the declaration itself of the position taken on the matter; and policy content refers to the implicit and explicit goals and objectives including guidelines or strategies for action (Grindle 1980: 6-10).

The definition and strategies for Philippine development may be viewed as an institutional stance because these were arrived at according to the churches' system

of policy decisionmaking. This signifies the prevailing and collective choice of those placed in authority, over and above individual decisions or opinions. Disagreements, debates, and consultations have only sharpened the focus on issues.

With the strong representation of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines, policymaking is identified with the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). In the case of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), the General Convention charts the direction until the next biennium, with an ad-interim Executive Committee to carry out the functions of the Council. The NCCP member-churches are guided by the principles of collegiality and commitment to consultation.

### Setting the Scenario of Philippine Underdevelopment

The evolution of the churches' position on development takes off from its analysis of Philippine social realities. The significant time periods are: the beginning of the 1970s prior to martial law, 1972-1974 which marks the imposition of martial law and two years thereafter, about 1975 to the 1986 EDSA Revolution against Marcos, and 1986 with the rise to presidency of Corazon C. Aquino.

The onset of the 1970s sparked the interest of the churches on the issue of development. There were a number of factors for this surge of consciousness. One was the activism among the students, peasants, and laborers. Some groups lashed out at the Catholic Church for its affiliation with the wealthy and its possession of excessive wealth, thereby perpetuating social inequalities (Vatican II 1969; Cuenca 1970; Macatuno 1970: 20-23).

Despite exposure to social involvement through Catholic action in the 1950s and social action in the 1960s, criticisms and clamor for more relevant directions were raised even within the ranks of the Catholic Church. The early experiences were guided by the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*. However, the then new social encyclical *Populorum Progressio* and the innovations by Vatican II brought new directions. The emergence of the theology of liberation from Latin American countries further flared new thoughts in Catholic and Protestant circles (Gremillion 1976).

For all the churches concerned, the declaration of martial law and its immediate consequences aroused their consciousness and led them to examine their role given the conditions of the times. Furthermore, the United Nations declared another Development Decade for the 1970s calling the attention of the Third World nations (Hammar skjold 1975).

### *The Catholic Bishops' Social Analysis*

Four dominant issues were perceived by the Catholic Bishops as the social problems in the early 1970s: poverty, overpopulation, concentration of wealth in the hands of the few, activism and drug addiction among the studentry. Their initial analysis revealed that the majority of the people are poor and weak, and politically and economically powerless. It was argued that the poor continue to face inhuman and intolerable situations while the more privileged enjoy sufficiency of goods (CBCP 1984: 36-37).

Through their reading of the "signs of the times," the Bishops recognized that the Philippines is a microcosm of the Third World with its income inequalities, foreign ownership and control of industry, dependence on foreign capital, depletion and wanton use of the nation's environment, unemployment and poverty. They saw the issue of internal colonialism, referring to the unequal relations between developed and underdeveloped areas within the Philippines (CBCP 1984: 36-37).

The Filipino bishops admitted their lack of social relevance despite their history of charitable works and philanthropic initiatives. Confronted with the Philippine situation, the Bishops acknowledged a new responsibility to the present and the future (CBCP 1984: 36-37).

### *The NCCP-Protestant Views*

The NCCP emerged out of a history of struggles for unity among various Protestant denominations. The member-churches were accustomed to traditional social services such as schools, hospitals, clinics, relief and rehabilitation projects. However, the NCCP at its inception declared in the Constitution that it would speak on religious, moral, social and other issues which affect the church and the civil life of the nation (NCCP n.d.(b)).

The NCCP viewed the premartial law situation as oppressive, with rampant graft and corruption, poverty and injustice, aggravated by high population growth. Activist groups awakened to the people's consciousness to the issues of imperialism, feudalism, exploitation and revolutionary change. This challenged the NCCP to strive for social relevance (NCCP 1972c).

## **Development Under Martial Law**

Upon declaration of martial law, the CBCP expressed the need to be discriminate in the kind of support it could extend to regime activities. Activities that uplift the

conditions of the underprivileged are considered worthy of the churches' attention. This can be gleaned from CBCP's declaration:

In the Philippines today, especially under the rule of martial law and the avowed aim of the government to create a "new society," our service as Church, as Community, must take the form of support of all that is genuinely good in the new directions being taken. For these new directions are nothing more than concrete means towards the development we have been speaking of here.

Thus, the Government's programs of land reform, peace and order, good government, more equitable distribution of wealth—all are worthwhile in themselves and look towards the total human development of our people, of the *Common Tao* especially, the great mass of the underprivileged (CBCP 1984: 72).

However, the CBCP cautioned that development be pursued with justice, truth and charity, recognizing the threat to basic human rights and process of law (CBCP 1984: 72).

In the same tone, the NCCP initially supported martial law and intended to cooperate with the state in the humanizing efforts to eliminate social unrest and achieve economic, cultural and educational reform. The NCCP felt after a while that it should be speedily lifted to stop the threat to individual liberties and freedom. In the meantime that it was imposed, the organization undertook initiatives toward social transformation by commending worthy changes and criticizing policies on moral and ethical grounds (NCCP 1972c).

Some of the individual member-churches similarly lauded the early stage of martial law with the aims of reform and development. However, the consequences of the Marcos regime provided impetus for the churches to do their own version of development independent from the government (UMC 1972: 169; LCP 1974; Iemelief 1974).

### What is Development?

#### *The Catholic Discourse*

For the Catholic bishops, development is:

... a series of changes, well or poorly coordinated, abrupt or gradual, from a phase of life perceived by a population and all of its components as being less human to a phase perceived as more human (CBCP 1984: 65-66).

Development is seen as social and individual, material and spiritual; extending beyond the socioeconomic level; dealing with the integral development of the whole man and of every man (CBCP 1984: 65-66).

The Catholic hierarchy searched the sociocultural base of Philippine national life and culture and identified the elements facilitating development. These are:

- (1) *pagsasarili* - the will to secure for every Filipino the development as a responsible human being;
- (2) *pakikisama* - the willingness to share with one another the burdens as well as the rewards of living together;
- (3) *pagkakaisa* - the building up of an articulate national community through forms of social organizations, understood, accepted, and undertaken by the people themselves;
- (4) *pakikipagkapwa-tao* - human solidarity, as a dedication to the development of one's own nation that will enable it to participate on free and equal terms in the total development of mankind; and
- (5) *pagkabayani* - the readiness to put the common good of the nation above private interests, whether of one's own personal class (CBCP 1984: 66-68).

The wariness over authoritarian regimes moved the Catholic Bishops to stress justice as an essential element of development. They said:

If we want to see love and justice in our midst, then we should respect the human person. This respect for the human person without discrimination of age, sex, social standing, political color, race, or nationality, requires the acceptance of the vision of man as the center and master of all creation because by his origin and destiny he is far superior to all of creation (CBCP 1979b: 173-199).

With justice as a norm, the Catholic Bishops described Philippine realities under the Marcos regime as a fertile breeding ground for violence. The social setting showed: poverty and misery, deprivation and injustices weighing on the poor and marginalized sectors of society; use of force by the wealthy; corruption in public service; violation and denial of human rights; and, failure to obtain justice through the courts (CECP 1983: 2; 1979a: 1).

Education and solidarity for justice, not violence, was the way to development. Peace with justice, dialogue and genuine reconciliation, have a greater potential than violent revolution (CBCP 1983: 4; 1979b: 175-178).

The Catholic Church applied the full force of their views on human development by declaring the "preferential option for the poor." This means "to look at the world—its reality—through the eyes of the poor." But this does not just refer to any poor but to those who have come to open their eyes to their human dignity and destiny, and are prepared to do something about them if they have not yet taken their destiny into their hands. This does not mean working for the poor as in the traditional paternalistic way

but working with them, learning from them, sharing their needs and struggles, and enabling them to participate and shape their history (CBCP 1985).

### *The Protestant Discourse*

For the Protestant NCCP sector, two documents defined development in the Philippine context: the 1974 Angono and the 1985 Tagaytay documents.

The Angono document defined development as the process by which:

...the poor and the oppressed, being the primary bearers of humanization liberate themselves from all forms of enslavement and create a condition in which there are no oppressors and oppressed. This frees persons, communities and nations to realize their full potential as every individual has access to wealth, power, respect, knowledge and well-being. This liberation process involves fundamental changes in the structure of the social order we live in (NCCP 1974a: 122-124).

The NCCP emphasizes that this position had to be based on "concrete analysis of society, structure and culture because development covers the total gamut of liberation from whom, by whom and for what." Underdevelopment exists in a situation where people and nations are divided between rich and poor, powerful and powerless; where the few appropriate for themselves the resources that are the patrimony of all; where unjust social structures reduce the crown of creation to the wretched of the earth.

To attain development, the people themselves have to create their own future and engage in the process of transformation. The oppressed are not the only ones needing liberation, even the oppressors need to be liberated from their witting or unwitting participation in this evil. Development is a liberating process which enables persons and communities to realize their whole human potential (NCCP 1974a).

The NCCP Statement of Concern on Evangelism and Development stressed the task of encouraging and supporting the forms of service for the common good and welfare under the principle of justice and the spirit of the gospel.

With this initial direction of thought, the NCCP and their member-churches attempted to engage in implementation. Ten years after, they met in a consultation in Tagaytay to affirm their views. The 1985 Tagaytay document declared:

The Filipino people are in bondage. All sectors of Philippine society—the peasants, the fishermen, the workers, the urban poor, the national minority, the students and the youth—are groaning from underdevelopment and the concomitant poverty of the great masses which can be traced to the basic sociopolitico economic structure (NCCP 1985: 114-121).

Specifically, social analysis identified the Philippines as a neocolonial economy controlled by foreign economic forces; feudalism keeps the great majority of the population in destitution; bureaucrat-capitalist government structure resorts to military power to suppress the people's strivings for change (NCCP 1985: 114-121).

Among the Protestant member-churches, there is a common trend of thought stated in their respective pronouncements. The United Catholic Churches of the Philippines (UCCP) stressed the upliftment of the conditions of the poorest of the poor, for provision of basic needs, employment, and industrialization that benefits all (UCCP 1972; n.d.(a); n.d.(b)). For the United Methodist Church (UMC), development is a process of man's legitimate aspiration to enjoy the basic amenities of life distributed with minimum equity (UMC 1972: 160).

The Philippine Episcopal Church said development is improvement of human condition through the empowerment of the people; the development of their capacity to transform their own situation by their own means; and by a sustained social and economic justice, democratic participation and freedom (PEC n.d.: 1).

For the Philippine Independent Church, development is a continuing process and growth toward human fulfillment (PIC n.d.(a), (b), (c), (d)). And, for the Convention of Philippine Baptists, it is

... a total process within the concept of faith, toward enhancing the capacity of man to pursue his own well-being, which includes political, social, spiritual, and economic whose concern is not only the underdeveloped but also that of the people of the developed countries (CPBC n.d.).

### **Strategies for Development in the Philippine Context**

The various specific indicators of and strategies to achieve Philippine development stated in similar patterns among the churches can be summarized into three categories: sociocultural, economic and political.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Sociocultural Development*

From the churches' statements, a list of values may be culled and placed under the sociocultural dimension of development because of emphasis on value formation. These values are: self-reliance, human dignity, participation, people empowerment, nationalism, dignity of labor, respect for human rights, stewardship in the use of resources, Christian charity, and justice.

The cultivation of such values can be brought by a process of people empowerment characterized by:

- (1) conscientization - awareness and consciousness of the impact of social conditions
- (2) education and training - formal or informal acquisition of knowledge and skills
- (3) people participation - individual and community involvement in common concerns
- (4) people organization - formation of articulate groups, associations, organizations as solidarity of individuals
- (5) sectoral representation - articulation and advocacy of interests in various socioeconomic and political structures
- (6) community building - group or communal efforts towards promoting common welfare

The targets for empowerment are mainly the poorest of the poor consisting of the urban migrants, cultural minorities, internal refugees, political prisoners, peasants and laborers.

### *Political Development*

The churches' stand on critical political issues altogether contribute to a set of indicators for political development. There is an affirmation of choice of democracy as the suitable system of government and politics. Given the background of authoritarian rule under Marcos, and the subsequent change to the government under Corazon Aquino, redemocratization for the church means:

- (1) restoration of the rights of suffrage, public opinion, freedom of speech and press, right to strike, right to life, freedom from arrest and torture;
- (2) free, honest and clean elections;
- (3) political participation of the people;
- (4) government based on constitutionalism;
- (5) government based on consent of the governed;
- (6) political legitimacy of state and government and officials;

- (7) political accountability of government;
- (8) sectoral representation;
- (9) separation of church and state;
- (10) people power;
- (11) abrogation of unequal treaties; and
- (12) nationalist and anti-imperialist foreign policy.

The education, conscientization and solidarity of the people toward peaceful, nonviolent political change are important processes contributory to the realization of these indicators.

### *Economic Development*

On the transformation of Philippine economy, the churches emphasized social justice in the agrarian sector through land reform, the formation of peasant organizations for people empowerment, and the appropriate logistical support for agricultural production. Social justice in industry meant the formation of labor organizations for people empowerment, redistribution in terms of wages, employment generation, as well as pro-Filipino and nationalist economic policies.

### **Model of Development Praxis**

The churches adopted the following approaches in translating their pronouncements into action:

- (1) structural-functional and administrative approaches to maintaining the life of the organization doing development work;
- (2) program approaches to development; and
- (3) project implementation-evaluation.

The churches' experiences in these areas are significant to the concerns of Philippine public administration and the streams of administrative theory. Traditional public administration focused on the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and economy in bureaucratic structures and systems of service delivery. Development administration engaged in the specific problem of underdevelopment by using structural and methodological interventions in policymaking, planning, program and project implementation-evaluation. New public administration raised the importance of the principles of responsiveness, equity, representativeness in

administrative structures and systems (Henry 1980; McCurdy 1977; Riggs 1964; Heady 1984).

A number of strategic approaches were specifically adopted by the churches such as the following:

- (1) creation of a specific structure or unit to function with respect to development;
- (2) responsiveness to structural-functional changes to accommodate gaps in implementation and correspond to changes in policy orientations;
- (3) values and mission clarification;
- (4) decentralization by regionalization and subregionalization;
- (5) consultative program planning and evaluation;
- (6) participative processes and claims to democratization;
- (7) commitment to principles of collegiality among the Protestants and subsidiarity within the Catholic Church; and
- (8) integration and/or coordination of programs and program units.

#### *The National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA)*

The NASSA was organized by the CBCP primarily to efficiently and effectively undertake the necessary activities for development. In 1966 it served as information center, clearing house, promotional arm for setting the diocesan social action centers with permanent directors. In addition, it was a service agency, a coordinating body, an office for education and training programs. In 1968, it was placed under the Episcopal Commission on Social Action; and, reorganized into national, diocesan and parish levels (NASSA 1969-1974).

*Organizational Responsiveness.* The metamorphosis of NASSA into its present form was a response to the various stages in the formulation of the churches' view and stand on the nature of Philippine development. This organizational responsiveness was shown by attaching the component of justice and peace in 1969; then to the stress on conscientization and people empowerment; then to international linkages for research and project development.

By 1972, NASSA affirmed its identity; in 1973, it moved to firming up its structures. NASSA became a federation of social action centers, but this gave rise to problems in national-local relationships (NASSA 1972, 1973).

*Regionalization.* Regionalization and subregionalization decentralized the functions and scope of operations. Created were the Mindanao-Sulu Social Action Secretariat, the Visayas Secretariat for Social Action, and the Luzon Secretariat for Social Action. The dynamics of relationship among these structures followed the principles of participation and subsidiarity—meaning that the interactive and integrative processes of the parts and of the whole guided their transactions (NASSA n.d.(a): 70-73).

*Structural-Functional Clarification.* Program units were functionally defined to address the increasing operationalization of development orientations by projects. The terms of reference helped focus the functions of NASSA, the levels of project operations and the jurisdictional boundaries of program units at the national, regional and local levels (NASSA News 1974). Further functional clarification stimulated by the 1983 Aquino assassination raised issues of focus of operations and the structure of program units (NASSA 1974, 1983).

*Operational Capability.* Program management and the administrative machinery aimed at effectiveness through processes of program-project assessment and administrative-management evaluations. These brought out the deficiencies in planning, monitoring, operations, evaluation, and even staff development. Failure to deal with these hindrances could have undermined the flow of action (NASSA 1983, 1988b).

*Essential Nature of the Organization.* Still further, the very nature of the organization was questioned as to whether it should be a secretariat, a council, a forum, a corporation, a foundation, a federation, or a coordinating body. The fourfold personality of NASSA created confusion. As a corporation, it was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. As a foundation, it was registered with the National Science and Development Board. At the same time, it served as secretariat and as a federation of social action centers (NASSA 1987).

The fall of Marcos and the rise of the new Aquino government in 1986 further called for program assessment that had implications for the structural-functional design. One critical issue was the charge of communist infiltration. The fact-finding committee dismissed the charges as without sufficient bases (NASSA 1988a: 11, 15).

NASSA persisted as an implementing arm of the hierarchy. Its corporation-foundation nature was abolished. It became a nonstock and nonprofit federation of about 66 diocesan social action centers of the Catholic Church, with three autonomous regional secretariat (NASSA 1987).

Constant clarification of identity and purposes, and evaluation of implementation, enabled NASSA to pursue organizational change in response to the environment of Philippine underdevelopment and to the thrusts of church policies.

The reorganization after the EDSA Revolution of 1986 retained NASSA as the Secretariat of the Episcopal Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace. The NASSA National Committee has a national director and three regional executive secretaries. The general assembly has become a forum for participation without necessarily deciding on policies. Annual conventions provide the fora for diocesan directors to spell out thrusts for a particular period with guidelines for implementation (NASSA 1989b: 5, 11, 14).

To date, NASSA functions through the following departments: (1) Justice and Peace, engaged in conscientization and liaison work among various social action groups; (2) Relief and Rehabilitation, to provide the traditional provision of cash, food, clothing and other necessities in cases of disasters and calamities; (3) *Alay Kapwa*, a development and evangelization activity to promote concerned, responsible stewardship and sharing of time, talent and treasure; (3) Research and Publications, for data-gathering and analysis of the social environment and its publication and dissemination; (4) Projects and Special Services, which links project proponents to agencies funding development activities by assistance in project planning, monitoring, evaluation and training (NASSA 1989b: 5, 7, 11, 14).

#### *NCCP Structures*

The NCCP is a fellowship of Protestant churches as well as of organizations with the common objective of unity of Christians. Since it is the result of efforts to transcend pluralism, the NCCP moves with much care to preserve unity and collegiality among the constituent members (Sitoy 1989).

Initially, it was the Commission on Social Concerns which carried the objective of channeling united witness and common action on matters affecting the moral, social and civic life of the nation. This had a division for labor and a division for concerns as family planning, maternal and child care and nutrition (UIM n.d.).

With the conflict in Mindanao, the NCCP initiated the Mindanao Agricultural Resettlement Agency in 1969. Subsequently, a Committee on Project Proposals was set up due to the number of proposals presented for development work (NCCP 1971).

By 1974, the increasing demand for active engagement with development turned the Commission of Social Concerns into the Commission on Development and Social Concern. The Committee on Development Projects was set up as a "clearing house for development programs and projects seeking partnership relations with outside development agencies that would like to participate in the process of transforming the church and society into a more humane, just and participatory community" (NCCP n.d.(a)).

The capabilities of the NCCP in carrying out development work can be traced to the recourse to program and structural integration, regionalization, democra-

tization, and conflict resolution; as well as their commitment to collegiality, consultation and participation (NCCP 1989a: 16; Bautista 1985: 70-80; Mercado 1985: 46-56; TIC 1985).

*Integration.* The 1981 Integrated Program provided the organizing principle for the different program activities and for the functions of respective program structures. This affected and directed the way of organizationally "doing development" by assigning specific areas of development priorities to units on one hand while linking and focusing on common thrusts on the other.

*Regionalization.* Integration also spurred the concept of regionalization to bridge the gap between the NCCP, its member-churches and their local churches. The formation of Regional Ecumenical Committees served as an important milestone in the ecumenical movement among churches.

Regionalization allowed "wider awareness of and increased participation of people in the ecumenical enterprise toward united witness and mission at the grassroot level." Regionalization was expected to facilitate communication, participation, representation, networking with other entities in various parts of the country, resource-sharing, and responsiveness to a narrower environment. It placed the locus of activity and ecumenicity at the grassroot-local levels for common action and commitment on issues of common concern (NCCP 1989a: 16; Bautista 1985: 70-80; Mercado 1985: 46-56; TIC 1985).

*Democratization.* With development implementation came the clamor for democratization. Observation cited that males dominated the higher positions; the socioeconomically prominent assume leadership positions. Democratization touched on the internal bureaucracy of churches which have implications on the implementation of programs. It raised issues that go into the fundamental character of church organization and bureaucracy that either speed up or delay the work of development (DCS 1988). To give way to this issue, consultations became the method to arrive at decisions collectively, to facilitate participation and consensus-seeking (NCCP 1987a: 47-49).<sup>2</sup>

With whatever had been done by the churches, conflict emerged on image of the NCCP. Some sectors expressed perceptions that development activities were anti-Marcos and anti-government (NCCP 1987a: 47-49).

The consultation that was called for resolved questions on the leadership's directions and clarified issues of "ideological motivations and left-wing inclinations" within the NCCP (NCCP 1987a: 47-49). The 1985 Tagaytay Consultation on Development cleared the areas causing reluctance among member-churches to fully participate in the NCCP development thrusts. These interventions addressed the dynamics of organizational conflict that inhibit action; and allowed the conflict to check or confirm organizational goals and strategies.

### *The Ecumenical Center for Development*

The Ecumenical Center for Development (ECD) evolved from the First National Consultation on Development (otherwise referred to as Angono 1974). It turned into a "broad fellowship of Christian pastors, priests, church workers, religious and lay persons organized under regional development fellowships, brought together by a common perception of the social problems of the Filipino society and have a common involvement toward its transformation into a just society" (KSB 1986).

The ECD assists churches in development work. The Center is engaged in building capabilities for the implementation of people-oriented programs and increasing the chances for success of projects by effective project study and evaluation (ECD n.d.).

To effectively carry out its mission and goals, the ECD itself had to build its own organizational capability: to define and prioritize areas of operations, and to structure specific units to undertake specific functions. It set development education as a primary task, carried out by a formation department for seminars and training programs. The preparation of feasibility studies to ensure success prior to project implementation, and the evaluation of performance after some time, turned out to be a major contribution of ECD's Projects and Services department (ECD 1986: 9, 41).

Resources to facilitate work and achieve objectives were maximized by using the strategies of:

- (1) regionalization - establishing regional development fellowships in different parts of the country;
- (2) linkages - networking with various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs);
- (3) linkages - networking with international funding agencies; and
- (4) participation of the grassroots.

Development implementation for the ECD highlighted the importance of coordination, monitoring, communication in clarifying program thrusts, linkages and networking, promoting involvement and participation in the grassroots. The ECD's emphasis on the project system as an enabling mechanism marked its significance to church-related development programs and NGOs (ECD 1980-1983).

### *Protestant Member-Churches*

On the development activities of NCCP member-churches, not a few raised the observation that activities remained traditional. In 1972, there were incipient changes that created specific program units to undertake development thrusts within their respective churches.<sup>3</sup>

Generally, the member-churches were reluctant to fully get involved with the central NCCP development activities for some reasons—like leftist or antigovernment inclinations and inadequate resources. But with the affirmation of the Tagaytay document in 1985, they strengthened their development program units. They ventured into the nontraditional areas of people-empowering activities (NCCP n.d.(c): 78-87).

### Program Approaches

Pronouncements on development needed to be turned into concrete and tangible programs and projects to attain the objectives or indicators of Philippine development. Policy implementation takes place on the level of activities relevant to predetermined goals and strategies.

The types of activities called projects, interrelated into broader categories called programs, can be determined on the bases of (1) intended outcomes, (2) processes of designing the project, (3) structures, systems and processes in managing the project, (4) and the way activities are carried out. The features along these elements shape the very nature or content of the program or project.

From the work done by the development program units of the churches, certain patterns of program approaches can be identified. A program approach will here be taken as the plan or model for development activities consisting of specific objectives, strategies and delivery processes.

#### *The Catholic Church Program Approaches*

*Community Development Approach.* In the early 1960s, The National Secretariat for Social Action of the Catholic Church engaged mostly in community development. This approach referred to the organized effort to improve the conditions of community life in the rural as well as urban areas. It sought to work primarily through the organized self-help and cooperative activity of the residents. Social action workers served as catalysts for change, to awaken the people and train them to use their potential. Prominent activities can be classified as (1) economic projects as credit unions and cooperatives, (2) health and medical services, and (3) community valued institutions as the setting up of community or recreation centers, and (4) much needed services and infrastructures.

A number of projects were credit unions and cooperatives. The upsurge of credit unions were attributed to: the felt need of the people to escape usurious interest rates, the demand for easy terms, the absence of lending institutions in the vicinity, dislike for the paper work required by lending institutions, the lack of land titles as collateral for loans, and the stimuli from the church-sponsored seminars. Cooperatives followed

the same processes of community awakening as the credit unions, but instead, goods and services became the object of the enterprise (Mendoza 1969: 9-10; ASI 1968: 156, 282-285).

Basically, socioeconomic projects started off with the felt needs and problems of the community, particularly of income, livelihood and employment. Information campaigns and orientation sessions solicited the support of community leaders and members. A project feasibility study was needed before starting operations, although in some cases no such study was undertaken, which made the difference in the implementation results.

*Some Experiments Attempted at Development Models.* Selecton narrowed down to five multifaceted community development projects on the parish level and four on the prelatures or regional levels. This marked the incipience of the concept of coordinating center and of multifaceted projects. In practice, there were different but simultaneous activities coordinated by the center—not of the integrated type where one activity covered different objectives (ASI 1968: 173-190).

The experiments were conducted in the following areas: San Jose, Antique; Northern Cotabato; Tagum, Davao del Norte and Oriental; and Infanta, Quezon (V13). Particularly in Infanta, Fr. Mondoñedo popularized the ideology of community development, with the concepts of self-determination, growth, education, and a full life. It intended to form self-determining groups and communities as well as foster internal growth within a geographically stable group of people. The process entailed Step 1 - indoctrination; Step 2 - experiential learning; and, Step 3 - self-initiated projects using surveys for pilot projects. The setting did not have land tenancy problems, no *Huks*, no sharp economic gaps between rich and poor, and the people were mostly Catholics and Tagalogs settled as one population (Murphy 1969: 8-9, 23).

There were both benefits and criticisms in the use of the community development approach. Beneficiaries claimed this enhanced their level of knowledge, and it also led to an increase in income and productivity from the training, and cultivated values of cooperation versus individualism. However, the approach did not directly address issues of social inequality (Impact 1968: 9).

*Justice and Peace: Liberation Approach.* June 1968 marked a turning point in the program-project approach to development; comments and suggestions for new program concepts surfaced. In 1973, a different set of activities which could be classified into four program areas evolved:

- (1) relief in times of disasters;
- (2) social welfare;
- (3) liberation from man-made oppression; and
- (4) liberation from natural causes (NASSA 1973: 1).

Social action was no longer operationalized by the community development concept and approach. Social action was the involvement of people as agents of development, that makes people aware of their potentials and responsibility in charting their course of action (NASSA 1973: 1).

With the concept of development as liberation came a gamut of programs and projects. In the initial years, projects were classified as: *socioeconomic* like cooperative development, agriculture, livestock raising; *socioeducation* such as conscientization activities geared toward political maturity; and *socioreligious* as family planning. Social action centers in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao differed in their programs because of differences in priorities in response to unique local conditions (ASI 1975: 117, 151-171).

At first, the Catholic Church's implementing arm, NASSA, linked up with the government. Later, it was deemed best to move to critical collaboration, then finally to disengage from the Marcos government (ASI 1974: 1-41, 62-63; SAC 1972; CBCP 1974).

### *1. Health Care in the Hands of the People*

In 1974, the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines invited the diocesan social action centers to apply as regional pilot areas for community based health programs. This program had innovative objectives, which are to:

- (1) build Christian communities by drawing commitment to total human development;
- (2) stimulate awareness of objective social conditions;
- (3) organize community action for affecting changes;
- (4) develop self-reliance to the limits of personal and local resources; and
- (5) increase participation of the people in decisionmaking (Deza 1977: 135-140).

The concept of community-based health program (CBHP) expected to build local community organizations, develop self-support systems for primary health care, provide field experience, and improve relations with existing public and private health resources.

The CBHP process differed from previous ways of providing health and medical care to the poor. In the preparatory phase, the health program staff integrated with the community and learned their attitudes and behavior; conducted surveys and social investigation; and gathered opinion leaders to participate and support the program in a barrio assembly meeting.

The program staff solicited nominees for training from the community and asked the nominees to respond to the community about their willingness, availability, hindrances and limitations. If there was a lack of volunteer health workers, the staff left awhile.

In the seminar phase, the program staff arranged to have sympathetic and committed resource persons, used local language, synthesized and evaluated the sessions, and ensured deepening of commitment. Graduation of the trainee depended on knowledge of project concept, health care delivery system, effective communication, and seminar participation.

Towards the last stage, the formation of a local community organization for health served as support system for the community health workers. The program staff would leave when the system is self-managing, to start up again in another community (Murphy 1976: 350-353).

## *2. Sectoral Organizing*

The enunciation of the "preferential option for the poor" engaged the Catholic Church in a new form of organizing, beyond its experience with organizing labor and peasants in the 1950s to 1970s. This time justice and peace for the liberation of the poor included:

- (1) promoting Basic Christian Communities-Community Organizations (BCC-CO);
- (2) promoting and enhancing the development of pastorally integrated peasant associations; and
- (3) supporting the education, organization, mobilization of genuine trade unions and associations (NASSA 1977-1980).

The process of sectoral organizing started with conscientization, to awaken the people to their social conditions, potentials, capabilities and available resources. This initiated the grouping of persons with a common plight into a sector; then organizing the sector into an association and a community organization. The people's sectoral organization to mobilize political action is the application of pressure on people in authority. In the long run, the organization engaged in community self-help and self-reliant ventures; in spiritual, biblical, and theological reflections.

## *3. Funding Development Projects*

To engage in action, the centers required other types of resources. Funds were also needed by other institutions or organizations that linked their development work with the Catholic Church, as well as by other non-church organizations and groups

engaged in development. Hence, NASSA established a program area that may be labeled as *funding development*. This refers to the activity of linking with international funding agencies and processing development project proposals from church, church-related and non-church groups. Majority of the projects attended to the multisectoral groups, farmers, industrial workers and the urban poor. The proposals were mainly education and organizing, socioeconomic, and welfare projects (NASSA 1989a: 4).

### *The Protestant Program Approaches*

The central office of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines and the Ecumenical Center for Development spearheaded the "nontraditional" development programs. The Protestant member-churches eventually followed with varying pace and degree of commitment.

*Programs for National Development.* Early in 1972, the areas for church action were: land reform, community development, urban-industrial mission, rural development, industrialization, agroindustrial groups, manpower training, resettlement, disaster relief, family planning and health (NCCP 1972a, 1972b, 1974b).

Agricultural projects took the form of technical training to farmers, cooperatives and credit unions as well as infrastructure type as dams, wells, irrigation, electric or water facilities. In the industrial sector, educational and leadership programs aimed at awakening labor and church people toward industrial problems.

For instance, the Mindanao Agricultural Resettlement Program is a complex integrated program in Talacogon, Agusan del Sur, which attempted to allocate and distribute lots to cultural minorities and pioneer settlers and in the long run build the communities. Encouraging results in three years prolonged the program which in ten years developed into:

- (1) farmers associations and cooperatives;
- (2) agricultural production options;
- (3) irrigation works and agricultural services;
- (4) social and community development; and
- (5) Christian community development (NCCP 1971).

*Community Building and Organizing.* The initial experience with community building and organizing along the liberation concept began in 1979. A two-month BCC-CO introduced methods of social analysis, conscientizing and organizing in response to oppressive structures. This was in cooperation with the Catholic Church, but the Protestant sector embarked on its own line with the 1981 Integrated Program on grassroot involvement in development (Aguilar 1988: 19, 24, 109).

The Ecumenical Committee on Health Concerns facilitated people-oriented community-based health programs to veer away from the traditional medical

mission type of approach. The Protestant group other NGOs in advocating indigenous healing methods and resources and the social-community enterprise of preventive health care (NCCP 1987b: n.d.(d): 11-13).

*Sectoral Organizing: Action Groups.* The Urban-Rural Mission of the NCCP organized the poor and marginalized peasants, laborers and fishermen; provided technical, financial, material and moral assistance; and established linkages and networks with other institutions and organizations. By 1989, work in this area organized working groups of church people, professionals, organizers and leaders of peoples' organizations (NCCP-URM 1989).

Sectoral organizing resulted in what has been called *action groups*. These are distinguished from other types of groups by their (1) involvement in Christian faith and practice in dealing with the people's struggles; (2) use of social analysis; (3) work addressed to the poor and social transformation; (4) processes of shared leadership; and (5) state of suffering in various ways from censorship, if not harrassment (Ocampo 1985: 22-26). The involvement of the NCCP with action groups went further from organizing into financial assistance.

*Funding Development.* The realities of development implementation showed the need for financial capability. The NCCP and the ECD began linking church-related institutions and non-church action groups to international funding agencies. This entails project analysis and processing of proposals on the basis of the criteria that projects are engaged in development education, community organizing, and advocacy of good government and people's welfare. The target beneficiaries have mostly been tribal Filipinos, workers, peasants and fisherfolk, the urban poor, youth, professionals, or multisectors (ECD 1988-89; Simbayan 1988-89: 30-31).

#### Evaluation of Project Implementation<sup>4</sup>

The churches themselves acknowledged the importance of evaluating project implementation. They followed the generally accepted designs and methodologies used in the social sciences. A selective focus on the evaluation reports of church health programs and peasant organizing shows lessons in project structure and administrative delivery processes, and the general impact on the beneficiaries.

#### *Factors for Success of Community-Based Health Programs (CBHP)*

The churches intended to set up integrated, holistic, and comprehensive community-based health programs that included social awareness, community action, changed attitudes, and skills-knowledge on resolving health problems. These were innovative programs as distinguished from the tradition of free medical and dental services.

The experiences showed that confusion on the site can take place when implementors are doubtful about their job descriptions, and when coordination and

communication within the project management-administrative structure come slow and unclear. The motivation of the staff can also be dampened by lack of dynamic management leadership and opportunities for staff development; and, by meager compensation and resources.

It was important that the program staff be well-oriented and trained on the nature and innovative features of the community-based program. The implementors need commitment to the processes of social preparation, the education and value formation among the people prior to community organizing. In turn, community organizing becomes successful only when the community undertakes their own health activities.

The success or failure of implementation tended to show the difference between using or not using participation of staff-implementors and beneficiaries in planning, decisionmaking, delivery system, monitoring and evaluation processes. In encouraging participation, the project structures that were lean, simple, and flat or less hierarchic, brought better results. The management's responsiveness to participation created a favorable leadership style and organizational climate conducive to the project's success.

#### *Modifying Doleouts in Health Services*

Where it was still inevitable to engage in doleouts of health services, the churches innovated by including the components of educating and organizing the people. Projects with these features trimmed down the negative effects of competition, superstition, and individualism. Beneficiaries claimed that they learned positive values toward health, nutrition and child care, community cooperation and participation; as well as developed social awareness of Philippine social problems.

#### *Peasant Organizing*

The objectives of peasant organizing in various sites took account of the specific and experiential problems of the peasants. In many cases, peasants were harrassed on land ownership; training and education activities faced military opposition. Sectoral organizing focused on helping peasants exert pressure on their local and national environment against conditions causing their continued poverty and deprivation. Beyond this, organizing proceeded to training peasants to undertake self-help projects, and to link with other organizations for common efforts and resource sharing. Project structures in this work were simple, utilizing coordinators facilitators who allowed the peasants to form groups of teams and choose, even rotate, leaders from among themselves.

#### *Problems in Funding Development*

In the work of linking church or non-church groups with international funding agencies engaged in development, the problems pertained to the system of screening,

recommending, and approving project proposals. The sensitive question of criteria was essential to designing the kind of project that would merit approval of the funding agency. But while external financing was indispensable, caution was raised about fostering dependency instead of development and about creatively harnessing local resources.

### Summary and Conclusions

The Catholic Church and the NCCP-Protestant churches formulated their own development perspective in response to Philippine conditions and needs for development. This development perspective consist of stated goals and strategies for Philippine development. This may be appreciated in the context of indigenization of development, meaning the purposive selection of critical indicators on the basis of Filipino culture, tradition, and lessons from history for the interest of the Filipino people. In using religious belief systems as basis for their thinking and in mobilizing organization resources, this development perspective emphasized the continued role of church and religion in Philippine society.

The definition of and strategies for development were articulated as policies and implemented by the church as programs and projects. The range of experiences provide Philippine public administration with a viewpoint of development that may be compared with western development and administrative theories.

The churches stressed the centrality of man as the agent and the beneficiary of development, particularly the poor. It accepted the United Nations' notion of quality of life and basic services but added the element of social justice from the very nature of social structures. It checked modernization and economic models without social development, that is, sharing of goods reflected in improved conditions of life. Though the churches used Marxist class and social analysis, this was for the purpose of understanding objective social realities, but did not advocate violence in revolutionary change. Strains of Latin American influences are obvious in the discourses, but the churches' liberation view placed justice and people empowerment, peace and nonviolence in terms of the socioeconomic, sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions for Philippine development. The specific indicators for national development in contrast to perceived manifestations of underdevelopment were also stipulated.

The churches' organizational and administrative approaches for implementation provide an alternative to the public administrative system of the government. Traditional administrative-management values of efficiency, effectiveness and economy were retained. However, the churches emphasized values of responsiveness, representation, participation, integration, and decentralization by regionalization. The working relationships of structures in the organization and with other cooperating institutions observed the processes of participation, collegiality, consultation, and even of consensus.

The more successful implementing project structures were nonhierarchical and flexible thus allowing participation of staff and beneficiaries and responsiveness to the local conditions. At the same time, the projects utilized whenever possible the techniques and methodologies of the social sciences in social investigation and project management.

The evaluation results of projects on social welfare, community development, and liberation-development, showed that the churches are in touch with the needs of the poor. At the grassroots, there has not been adequate provision of essential services by the government. In this sense, the churches' self-help, community-based, education and organizing program-project orientations, contributed in some measure to material improvements and social value formation.

With respect to the government's development administration, the churches' thinking and practice initially cooperated, then challenged the directions of the Marcos regime. Under the Corazon Aquino administration, redemocratization and the call for active NGO participation gave importance to the work of the churches.

In conclusion, the Catholic Church and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, expressed their relevance to the continuing need and problem of progress and change. It is their attempt to look for answers and resources from the unique realities of Philippine society that make them significant nowadays.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>The listing of indicators in three dimensions of development in the Philippines was culled by the author from the CBCP pastoral letters from the period 1972 to 1989, the NCCP development documents and resource materials from the member-churches, the survey and content analysis of minutes of meetings and proceedings of conferences from 1972 to 1989.

<sup>2</sup>This was the document signed by some church leaders issued during the 12th NCCP General Convention held in November 1985 which served as the background document at the Consultation on the NCCP Image and Self-Understanding held on 8-10 October 1986.

<sup>3</sup>Based on the author's survey and content analysis of the minutes of meetings and conventions of the NCCP and its member-churches from 1972-1989.

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