

Grassroots Organization for Community Capacity Development: A case study of an agricultural cooperative in the rural community of San Pablo, Nicaragua

Ivone Waters Garth
Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies
Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

Outline

- Research Question & Objectives
- Introduction
- Nicaragua Government Rural Development Program
- Community Information
- Grassroots Organization: September 4th Cooperative
 - Marketing Distribution Channel
 - Collective activities
 - Organization Networks
- Community Capacity Development
- Community Social Changes
- Conclusion
- Annex

Research Questions

Research main Question:

In what way grassroots organization can contribute to community capacity development?

Sub-questions:

To what extent Nicaragua national rural development program enhance community capacity?

To what degree collective activities can empower grassroots organization?

How does a community capacity transform?

Research Objective

- To explore grassroots organization capacity
- To describe national rural development program model for community capacity development
- To clarify organization types of collective activities and social networks linkages.
- To describe community social changes

INTRODUCTION

- The recent evolution of grassroots organizations in rural communities has been increasing numerically and playing a key role in transforming community capacity.
- The nature and scope of informal group activities provides an alternative approach to reduce rural poverty and increase economic growth.
- This research studied the experience of a grassroots organization in transformation community capacity into a better well-being. The purpose of the research was to explore how endogenous initiatives can bring about practical and effective changes for rural people.
- This qualitative case study research was carried out in a rural community of the north autonomous region of Nicaragua. The study is comprised of primary and secondary data.

National Rural Development Program

Pro-Rural 2005-2009

- Increase farming production
- Promote sustainable uses of resources

Pro-rural Inclusive 2010-2014

- Build capacity to reduce poverty
- Increase economic growth and agricultural exports
- Gender inequality, social inclusion, agro-business development, solidarity etc.
- Materials, equipment and assistance

Community Information

Community: San Pablo

Type of Government: Traditional Government

Population: 493 inhabitants (INIDE 2005)

Main Economic activity: Agricultural and livestock farming

Before cooperative existence:

- High rate of poverty and malnutrition status
- Market limitation
- Basic farming knowledge
- No employment opportunities
- Rural migration

Grassroots Organization Focus Case Study

- September 4th Cooperative Organization
 - Established in 2008
 - 42 member's evolved to 92 member's
 - Farmer was already involved in farming activities
 - No external support
 - Willingness, similar needs, same historical background, identity, etc.

- Purpose for Organizing:
 - Enhance self-esteem and collective confidence
 - Market community farmers products
 - Increase Productions and Generate income
 - Access Government Microfinance Program
 - Access ONG's projects

Cooperative Potential Products

	Products	Market name	Days to harvest	Farming Period
Rice		Orizica Llanos 4	120 -135 days	Primera Season
Beans		Red	72 – 75 days	Primera Season
Beans		Black	75- 80 days	Postrera Season
Corn		Yellow	120 – 135 days	Primera Season

Source: Designed by the author with information provided by Calderon (in personal on communication September 5th, 2013)

TRADITIONAL METHODS

Soil preparation, harvest and draying process has been done manually

Horse, donkey, cows and children are part of the farming activities

It is the community custom to make boy child accompany their father in farming activities

No uses of technology



Drying and Storage Process

Once the crops is harvest it is exposes to sun and winds for drying.

This methods helps reduce risk of pest during the storage period

Seeds is adaptable to region climate

Once packaged it is trade as a certified seeds



Leadership Influences

- Challenges along development process is evident organizations its depends on its leader capability to identify, select and properly address the problem
- Influences other cooperatives to joint alliance and work collectively
- Influences UNDP and EU from whose he received finance to construct cooperative office
- UNAG from whom the cooperative receive technical assistance
- Central Government and Regional Government institutions
- Microfinance programs was made available for members

Types of Collective Activities

Focused mainly on collective marketing of farming products.

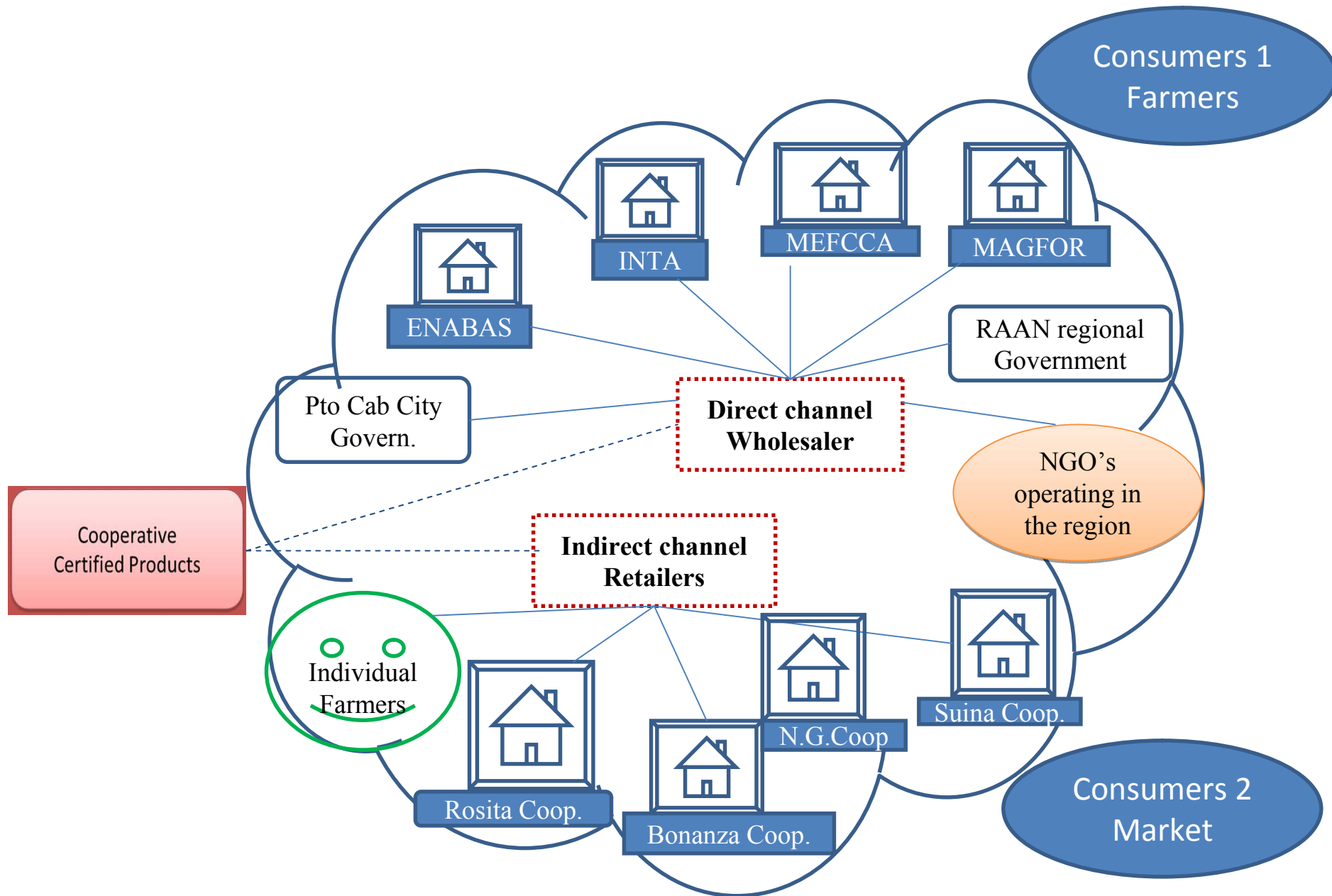
• Collective Marketing Strategy was set up internally and furthermore with twelve multi-sectorial cooperatives:

- Market farmers products
- Share market information
- Growing same products and improve quality
- Collective transportation of goods
- Knowledge and experience sharing

Collective Planning

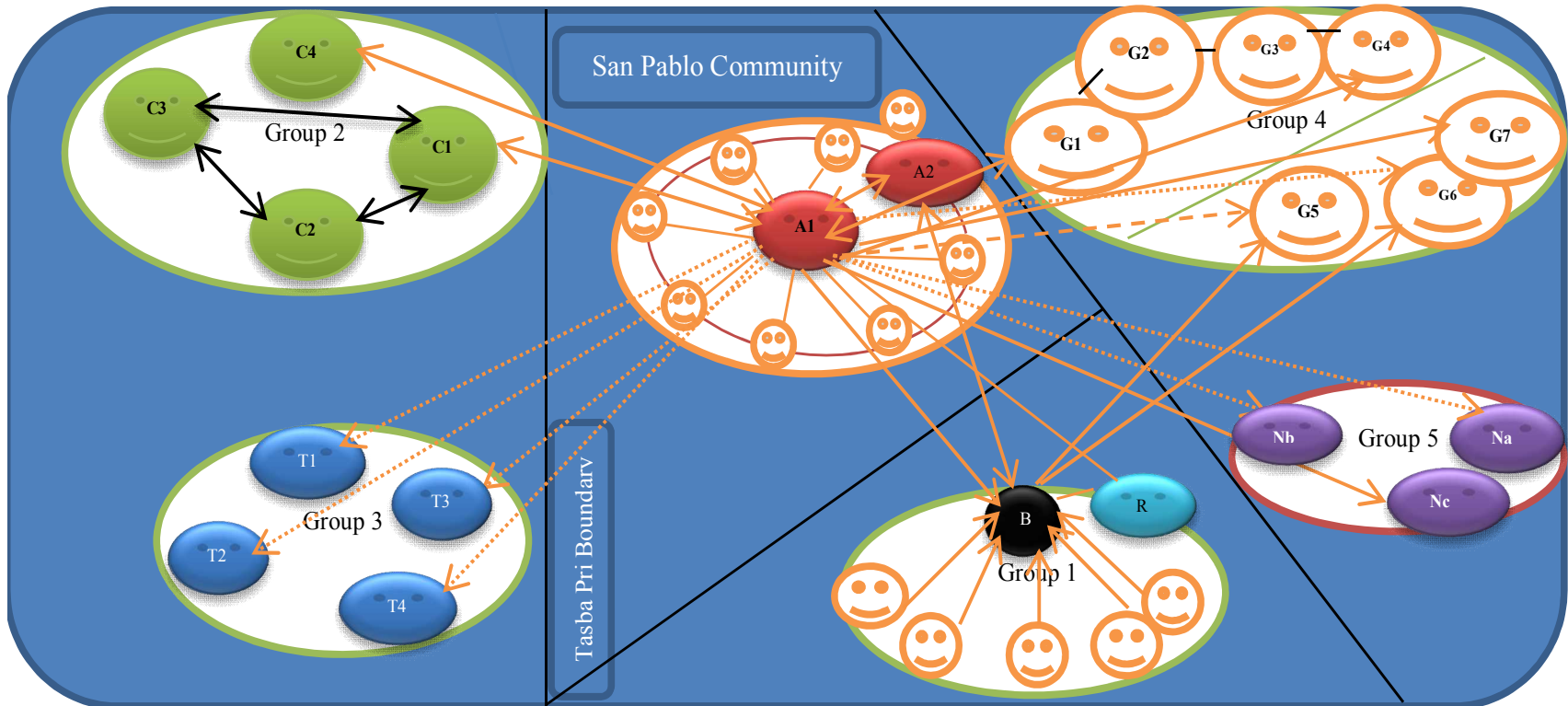


Product Marketing Channel



Organization Networks

Organization Networks with External stakeholders



Source: designed by the author based on interviews

COMMUNITY CAPACITY DEVELOPED

- With the establishment and operation of the Cooperative members were able to organize, set and achieve objectives, access internal and external resources.
- Organization strengthen disadvantage organizations, increase number of local initiatives, promoted community assets and rural migration reduced
- Organization become an important stakeholder in the community.
- The community becomes more resilient and its social, environmental, political and economic activities acquired a higher value.
- Hunger and malnutrition status reduced.

Community Social Changes

BEFORE	AFTER
Uses of candles	Community have electricity services
No TV or Radio station	TV and Radion Station services available
No land nor mobile phones	All farmer's have mobile phones
Houses was made of plastic, palm and timber	Infrastructure improved
Horse, donkey and bicycle was used as transportation	Rural people does not uses bicycle anymore it was replaced by motorcycle
No cars	Some farmers have cars
Only elementary school was available	Farmer's send their children to urban cities for higher education schooling
No microfinance	Microfinance organization was made available for community farmers
No market accessibility	Market distribution channel was opened
No employment opportunity	Permanent employment

Entrepreneur's emerged

With the existence of the cooperative community become more active, number of visitor increased, local shops sales increased, I was able to work in set up my own little cheese shop (narrated by Suazo, on September 4th 2013).



Ms. Suazo selling cheese

CONCLUSION

Community capacity is a key factor to achieve development. It is important to recognize, value and enhance existing capabilities.

It is evident that grassroots organization plays an important role in building capacity, unite citizen's, develop confidence, and boost endogenous initiatives which result to be more practical, manageable and sustainable for rural community.

Leadership, collective activities and social networks are an important element to develop knowledge, collective confidence, strengthen organization basis, and therefore upgrade community capacity.

Community economic, social and political activities acquired a higher value.

RICE FARM



CORN PLANTATION



