

Relevance and Sustainability of “Project Pakigdait sa Sitio Kasagingan, Mananga” of the University of San Jose-Recoletos

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Abstract - This study sought to determine the program relevance and sustainability of the institutional community project called “Project Pakigdait sa Sitio Kasagingan, Mananga” of the University of San Jose-Recoletos as assessed by its department anchors, students and program beneficiaries. The respondents were the various stakeholders of the university who were involved in the implementation and supervision of the various programs coming from the different colleges and departments and some selected beneficiaries of the community extension program. The provisions of the program relevance for promoting community development among the community dwellers, promoting people empowerment among adopted community dwellers, and for the conduct of skills training among qualified community members were made to a very great extent. Likewise, the provisions for the sustainability of the project through capacity building were made to a very great extent; however, fund sourcing were made to a great extent.

Keywords – Program relevance, sustainability,
people empowerment

INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher learning today are not only focused on rendering quality education to its students, honing their skills and preparing them to enter the real business world, but also on promoting community building and change. The academe is no longer confined to providing curricular activities, but is more geared with instituting linkages with its external constituents. It directs its efforts to go beyond the narrow confines of its school premises to reach out its partner communities to improve the social climate, mitigate economic dislocation and become the catalyst for change in the country.

Schools of today take special cognizance in the community because of the awareness that someday, somehow, the graduates will assume their chosen roles in it and hopefully would apply what they have learned and experienced in school to a larger context. To ensure that there would be a continuity of their organized involvement in molding responsible future leaders and residents, schools undertake and spearhead community extension programs.

Through these activities, the goal of the academe to improve and create a positive change in the lives of the community members will be realized. Promoting community change can be manifested through development programs that are undertaken not only to equip the people with selected skills as technical or inter-personal, but ideally to develop them holistically to promote harmony and self-reliance among themselves so that they will become competent community builders and contributors.

To effect significant social transformation in terms of community building is a challenge for the different academic components of the University of San Jose-Recoletos. With a history of academic success to its credit, the institution focuses its efforts in achieving relevance in the community it serves by aiming for a sustainable outreach program. One of the activities initiated by the school to concretize this goal is the “Project Pakigdait sa Sitio Kasangan, Mananga”. This is spearheaded

by the university's Institute of Non-Formal Education and Community Outreach Program (INFECOP). Such scheme was designed to promote community oriented actions to alleviate the current economic and social conditions of the residents while at the same time seeking a relevant and sustainable cooperative life that serves the interests of people in Sitio Kasagingan, Mananga.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were as follows: (1) to determine the extent of the provisions for program relevance in the aspect of enhancing the qualities among the beneficiaries as community development, people empowerment and skills training; (2) to evaluate the extent of the provisions for program sustainability based on the following indicators: capacity building; and fund sources; and (3) to make a proposal for improvement of the project.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized the descriptive survey method of research. Researcher- made questionnaire was used as the main instrument of data collection. Unstructured interviews were also conducted to clarify the answers given by some of the respondents.

The validity of the instruments was assessed by the panel of experts during the proposal hearing. Two sets of surveys were accomplished by the department anchors, student leaders and program beneficiaries. The features of each questionnaire are described hereunder:

The researcher made instrument sought to determine the extent of relevance of the projects implemented in the aspects of promoting people involvement and empowerment, skills training and community development. It was accomplished by the identified respondents of the study. Each question is followed by a number of possible responses. Corresponding to the responses in each item are four numeric scales with the following qualitative equivalents: 4 - Very Great Extent (VGE) – means that provisions are made in all cases to extend community extension services deemed useful to the community; 3 - Great Extent (GE) – means that provisions are made in the majority of the cases

to extend community extension services deemed useful to the community; 2 - Less Extent (LE) – means that provisions are made in a few cases to extend community extension services deemed useful to the community; and 1 - Never (N) – means that provisions are not made to render community extension services deemed useful to the community. The respondents were instructed to encircle the numeral which best represents their answers to each item.

The questionnaire was designed to determine the extent to which the community extension services of USJ-R was characterized by continued feasibility after the school has disengaged from the adopted community: 4 - Very Great Extent (VGE) – means that provisions are made in all cases for the readiness of the beneficiaries to continue the project after the university has detached itself from the program; 3 - Great Extent (GE) – means that provisions are made in many cases for the readiness of the beneficiaries to continue the project after the university has detached itself from the program; 2 - Less Extent (LE) – means that provisions are made in a few cases for the readiness of the beneficiaries to continue the project after the university has detached itself from the program; and 1 - Never (N) – means that no provisions are made for the readiness of the beneficiaries to continue the project after the university has detached itself from the program. The respondents were instructed to encircle the numeral which best corresponds to their assessment.

In order to determine the functionality of the questionnaires as the main data collection technique, the proponent conducted a dry run among three (3) professors who used to serve as coordinators of the program, six (6) officers from the various student organizations in the College of Commerce who have been exposed to the university's community extension projects. The researcher met the dry run respondents and asked them to accomplish the instruments. However, they did not participate in the actual conduct of the study.

Once these were done, the instruments were collected and the responses tallied. An item analysis of the answers was made. The proponent noted the incidence of response and non-response. Since the dry-run respondents were able to answer the queries in each instrument with a reasonable range of variation, the questionnaires were then finalized for administration.

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the administration in coordination with the Research Office. Once approval to conduct the study was granted, the proponent secured the assistance of the INFECOP coordinator in distributing the instruments to the identified respondents including those of the adopted community.

The proponent also conducted unstructured interviews from the various respondents to support the data gathered from the administration of the questionnaires. The accomplished questionnaires were collected and the responses tallied and tabulated. The weight assigned to the scales in the instruments were noted, and weighted the mean of each item was determine.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 highlights the respondents of the study.

Table 1. Distribution of research respondents

Classification	F	%
Department Anchors	42	18.91
Students	145	65.32
Beneficiaries	35	15.77
TOTAL	222	100.00

Table 2 showed the data on the extent of provisions for promoting community development among the beneficiaries of Sitio Kasagingan, Mananga.

Table 2. Promoting community development

Dimensions	Department Anchors		Students		Beneficiaries		Item Average	
	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I
1. Encouraging the various sectors of the community to function as a whole through meetings, discussions and others.	3.00	GE	3.25	GE	3.80	VGE	3.35	VGE
2. Helping the young members of the community in planning community related development programs.	3.13	GE	3.14	GE	3.89	VGE	3.39	VGE
3. Establishing cooperatives among the community members.	3.25	GE	3.00	GE	3.63	VGE	3.29	VGE
4. Facilitating activities to meet the basic needs of the community such as housing, community centers, health clinic and others.	2.97	GE	3.14	GE	3.60	VGE	3.24	GE
5. Encouraging the community members to make decisions concerning linkages for community development.	3.22	GE	3.12	GE	3.60	VGE	3.31	VGE
6. Ensuring the continuity of community development projects by developing future trainers within the community.	3.38	VGE	3.16	GE	3.83	VGE	3.46	VGE
7. Turning over the community extension program to competent community members.	3.47	VGE	3.23	GE	3.71	VGE	3.47	VGE
Factor Average	3.20	GE	3.15	GE	3.72	VGE	3.36	VGE

Legend:	Range	Interpretation
	3.25 – 4.00	Very Great Extent (VGE)
	2.51 – 3.25	Great Extent (GE)
	1.76 – 2.50	Less Extent (LE)
	1.00 – 1.75	Not Applicable (NA)

As shown by the factor average of 3.36 based on the group average of 3.15 from the students, 3.20 from the department anchors and 3.72 from the beneficiaries, provisions for community development were made to a great extent in this institutional community project of the university.

Specifically, as revealed by the item average of 3.35, provisions were made to a very great extent to encourage the various sectors of Sitio Kasagingan, Mananga to function as a whole through meetings, discussions and others. From this finding, it could be inferred that in majority of cases, the community dwellers were encouraged to use dialogues and assemblies to enhance participation among them which is a necessary ingredient of development.

The item average of 3.39 revealed that to a very great extent, provisions were adopted to help the young members of the area to plan community related development programs. It can be discerned from this information that the project provided the vehicle to involve the youth in community planning and participating in the various activities for community development so that they would achieve self-sufficiency and efficacy.

In the area of establishing cooperatives among the community members, provisions to achieve this goal were deemed to be done to a very great extent ($\mu=3.29$). This means that the program was able to imbue among the residents the importance of setting up cooperatives to create a community of mutual benefits.

Provisions were made to a great extent ($\mu=3.24$) in terms of facilitating activities to meet the basic needs of the community such as housing, community center, health clinic and others. It can be construed from this finding that the project encouraged and supported capable community dwellers to initiate projects focusing on the essential needs of the place in terms of shelter, health, social and other primary indigence.

In terms of encouraging the community members to make decisions concerning linkages for community development, provisions for the realization of this goal were observed to a very great extent ($\mu=3.31$). This means that the project supported the community residents to forge tie-ups with other communities through linkages and share their resources for their mutual benefits.

Lastly, provisions were also conceived to a very great extent ($\mu=3.43$) to turn over the community extension program to competent community members. This indicated that the project created conditions to enable and prepare the community dwellers to be competent and take control of their lives once the program ended.

From the findings, it can be construed that in majority of the areas, efforts were exerted to promote among the residents of the adopted community to develop their capacity to manage community life and realize their expressed needs and aspirations.

Table 3 shows the data on the extent of provisions to promote people empowerment among the beneficiaries of USJ-R's project in Sitio Kasangan, Mananga.

Table 3. Promoting people empowerment

Dimensions	Department Anchors		Students		Beneficiaries		Item Average	
	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I
1. Improving conditions that will free the community dwellers from the clutches of poverty.	3.09	GE	3.21	GE	3.71	VGE	3.34	VGE
2. Helping the community members to feel capable and in control in improving the quality of their lives.	3.25	GE	3.04	GE	3.74	VGE	3.34	VGE
3. Enabling the community members to accept responsibility to improve their standard of living.	3.19	GE	3.28	GE	3.74	VGE	3.40	VGE
4. Assisting the community dwellers to identify blocks that hinder their growth and development.	3.19	GE	3.31	VGE	3.69	VGE	3.40	VGE
5. Initiate people's involvement in problem solving and decision making.	3.38	VGE	3.19	GE	3.80	VGE	3.46	VGE
6. Helping the program beneficiaries to become self motivated.	3.31	VGE	3.14	GE	3.74	VGE	3.40	VGE
7. Encouraging capable community dwellers to initiate projects for the good of the community.	3.38	VGE	3.33	VGE	3.83	VGE	3.51	VGE
Factor Average	3.26	GE	3.21	GE	3.75	VGE	3.41	VGE

As manifested by the factor average of 3.41 derived from the group average of 3.26 from the department anchors, 3.21 from the students and 3.75 from the beneficiaries, provisions for people empowerment were made to a very great extent in the institutional project of Sitio Kasagingan, Mananga.

Specifically, the item average of 3.34 showed that provisions were made to a very great extent for improving the conditions of the beneficiaries that would free them from the clutches of poverty. This finding indicated that the extension program promoted activities to help generate income among the dwellers for their daily subsistence.

As demonstrated by the item average 3.34, provision was made to a very great extent for helping community members to feel capable and in control in improving the quality of their lives. It can be deduced from this finding that the program initiated efforts to help the residents of the adopted community to become independent and self-reliant.

Provision was made to a very great extent ($\mu=3.40$) in enabling the community dwellers to accept responsibility to improve their standard of living. The project carried with it several activities to assist the residents to have better lives and become positive contributors to society

The item average of 3.40 revealed that to a very great extent, provisions were made to assist the community dwellers to identify the blocks that hinder their growth and development. This information reinforced the notion that the project provided strategies to help the community residents overcome the problems which may have hindered their growth and development. Sufficient assistance was given to them so that they can transform their community life positively.

The program provided to a very great extent ($\mu=3.46$) some actions designed to initiate problem solving and decision making. This was not new as the project included an activity designed to help the residents solve problems amicably and effectively as well as making decisions which could lead to a better living environment among themselves.

Provision was also made to a very great extent ($\mu=3.40$) in helping the program beneficiaries to become self motivated. It can be inferred from this finding that the program included several activities intended to broaden their horizons, and their way of doing things for the better.

Lastly, the program to a very great extent ($\mu=3.51$) designed various sessions to encourage the community dwellers to initiate projects for the good of their place. The finding denoted that the project paved the way to help residents undertake economic and social movement in the community leading towards self sufficiency and independence.

Table 4 contains data on the extent to which provisions for skills training were provided among the community beneficiaries as assessed by the three groups of respondents.

Table 4. Provisions for skills training

Dimensions	Department Anchors		Students		Beneficiaries		Item Average	
	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I
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1. Training capable community members to formulate action plans for community service.	3.38	VGE	3.28	VGE	3.80	VGE	3.49	VGE
2. Providing technical training to capable female community dwellers like cooking, manicure, pedicure and others.	3.41	VGE	3.35	VGE	3.94	VGE	3.57	VGE
3. Providing health, sanitation and nutrition trainings to the community dwellers.	3.53	VGE	3.27	VGE	3.91	VGE	3.57	VGE
4. Training capable community dwellers to manage conflict and disagreements effectively.	3.19	GE	3.37	VGE	3.69	VGE	3.42	VGE
5. Providing short-term trainings to capable male dwellers like carpentry, plumbing, haircutting, welding and others.	3.28	VGE	3.45	VGE	3.77	VGE	3.50	VGE
6. Training capable community dwellers on basic financial activities as record keeping, bookkeeping, cash management and others.	3.16	GE	3.33	VGE	3.57	VGE	3.35	VGE
7. Providing services on how to form a cooperative among interested community members.	3.31	VGE	3.34	VGE	3.91	VGE	3.52	VGE
Factor Average	3.32	VGE	3.34	VGE	3.80	VGE	3.49	VGE

The factor average of 3.49 indicated that provisions for conducting skills training among the community members were made to a very great extent. This can be gleaned from the group average of 3.32 from the department anchors, 3.34 from the students and 3.80 from the beneficiaries.

Specifically, the item average of 3.49 showed that provision for technical training was made to a very great extent ($\mu=3.57$). These trainings were specifically addressed to the female community members, which included cooking, baking, dressmaking, manicure and a lot more.

In terms of providing health, sanitation and nutrition trainings, the activity registered an item average of 3.57 which means it was conducted to a very great extent. The program calls for these types of training to augment the meager income of the women residents.

The respondents also indicated that provisions were made to a very great extent ($\mu=3.42$) to train capable community dwellers to manage conflicts and disagreements effectively. This way, petty misunderstandings can be resolved quickly without going into messy arguments.

Providing short term trainings ($\mu=4.00$) were made to a very great extent to capable male dwellers like carpentry, plumbing, hair cutting and welding. These skills based training were implemented to make them more productive and generate more income for their families.

Provisions were made to a very great extent ($\mu=3.35$) in training capable community members on basic financial activities such as record keeping, bookkeeping, cash management, and others. This was done to ensure that the members would learn to maintain sound financial records and decisions for their household and business operations.

Lastly, the factor average of 3.52 revealed that provisions were made to a very great extent in providing services on how to form a cooperative among interested community members. This was done to instill among the minds of the community dwellers the importance of having a cooperative way of doing things.

The summarized data regarding the extent of provisions made for program relevance regarding the university's institutional project is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Summarized data on the extent of provisions for program relevance

Dimensions	Department Anchors		Students		Beneficiaries		Item Average	
	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I
1. Community Development	3.20	GE	3.15	GE	3.72	VGE	3.36	VGE
2. People Empowerment	3.26	VGE	3.21	GE	3.75	VGE	3.41	VGE
3. Skills Training	3.32	VGE	3.34	VGE	3.80	VGE	3.49	VGE
General Average	3.26	VGE	3.23	GE	3.76	VGE	3.42	VGE

As shown by the general average of 3.42, provisions were made to a very great extent to ensure program relevance of USJ-R's institutional community outreach program in Sitio Kasagingan, Mananga. The group average of 3.26 from the department anchors and 3.76 from the beneficiaries indicated their concurrence that such provisions were manifested to a very great extent. On the other hand, the group general average of 3.23 from the students belied that from their end, it was observed to be done to a great extent.

Provisions for community development among the beneficiaries were made to a very great extent as shown by factor average of 3.36. This means that the project was able to stir the community dwellers to initiate projects and mobilize their members to introduce self-help activities in the community to ensure its steady growth and development.

Provisions for people empowerment among the beneficiaries were made to a very great extent as revealed by the factor average of 3.41. Specifically, activities were undertaken to assist community dwellers to organize themselves and work as a team to solve problems in their community. The feeling of confidence is nurtured among the members to enable them to manage their own projects through participatory and consensual decisions and sharing of resources.

The factor average of 3.49 showed that provisions were made in the project to a very great extent in conducting skills training among the beneficiaries. The project aimed to provide various skills building activities among the dwellers to enable them to perform significant economic and social activities to improve the quality of their lives.

Table 6 contains data on the extent of provisions for program sustainability through capacity building among community members.

The factor average of 3.33 indicated that provisions for program sustainability toward capacity building were made to a very great extent. This is evidenced by the group average of 3.05 from department anchors, 3.25 from the students and 3.70 from the program beneficiaries.

Specifically as revealed by the item average of 3.36, provision for enabling community members to have their own goals was made to a very great extent. This finding signified the fact that the project was able to encourage the community members to set their direction through the formulation of meaningful goals which they could perform by themselves.

Actualizing the transfer of knowledge to as many members of the community as possible was also provided by the project to a very great extent ($\mu=3.38$). This information indicated that the developmental activities initiated by the project were not only enjoyed by a selected few community members, but rather, a lot of them were benefited by it leading to the attainment of their own self sufficiency.

Table 6. Promoting for capacity building

Dimensions	Department Anchors		Students		Beneficiaries		Item Average	
	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I
1. Enabling community members to have their own goals.	3.03	GE	3.19	GE	3.86	VGE	3.36	VGE
2. Actualizing the transfer of knowledge to as many members of the community as possible.	3.03	GE	3.25	GE	3.86	VGE	3.38	VGE
3. Assisting the community members to choose partners or linkages for community outreach projects.	3.06	GE	3.22	GE	3.49	VGE	3.26	VGE
4. Encouraging the community members to formulate clear cut objectives, vision and mission for people's organization or cooperative.	3.09	GE	3.38	VGE	3.69	VGE	3.39	VGE
5. Enhancing the community members' capabilities to choose their own leaders.	3.06	GE	3.19	GE	3.74	VGE	3.33	VGE
6. Developing the community members' capabilities for interactive mechanism to strengthen their local organization.	3.00	GE	3.22	GE	3.49	VGE	3.24	GE
7. Developing the capacity of the local leaders to manage community life and self-reliant.	3.06	GE	3.32	VGE	3.80	VGE	3.39	VGE
Factor Average	3.05	GE	3.25	GE	3.70	VGE	3.33	VGE

The item average of 3.26 denoted the fact that provisions were made to a very great extent by the project to assist the community members in choosing partners or linkages for community outreach activities. It can be construed from this finding that the project helped developed the community members to make prudent decisions in selecting various agencies or organizations with whom linkages can be formed in its quest for community development.

Provision was also made to a very great extent ($\mu=3.39$) in encouraging the community members to formulate clear cut objectives, vision and mission for their people's organizations or cooperative. The finding signified that the residents were provided with adequate exposure in vision-mission statement formulation as well as goal setting practices as an essential part of the community organizing scheme espoused by the project.

The item average of 3.33 revealed that provision was made to a very great extent for enhancing the community members' capabilities to choose their own leaders. It can be inferred from the data that the project provided sufficient exposure among the residents in terms of scope and experience in choosing their own local leaders.

With regard to developing the community members' capabilities for interactive mechanism to strengthen their local organization, provision was made to a very great extent as shown by the item average of 3.24. This is one area where the project needs to reinforce this skill among the dwellers so that they will have the confidence to establish strategic alliances with other organizations for their mutual benefit.

Finally, the item average of 3.39 demonstrated that the project to a very great extent was able to develop the capacity of the local leaders to manage community life and be self-reliant. This information denotes the fact that the project made provisions to enhance the ability of the local community leaders to be capable in managing his/her constituents and improve their way of life.

Table 7 highlights the information on the extent of provision for program sustainability through fund sourcing as assessed by the department anchors, students and program beneficiaries.

Table 7. Provisions for fund sourcing

Dimensions	Department Anchors		Students		Beneficiaries		Item Average	
	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I	μ	I
1. Facilitating the formation of micro enterprise or entrepreneurial activities among qualified community members.	2.97	GE	3.39	VGE	3.80	VGE	3.39	VGE
2. Building connection or encouraging linkages with private or public agencies for possible funding sources.	2.97	GE	3.25	GE	3.14	GE	3.12	GE
3. Providing micro financing training among qualified community members.	3.00	GE	3.03	GE	3.46	VGE	3.16	GE
4. Encouraging the full use of indigenous resources for community development.	3.28	VGE	3.26	VGE	3.69	VGE	3.41	VGE
5. Providing access to markets for goods produced from the livelihood programs of the community members.	2.97	GE	3.12	GE	3.83	VGE	3.31	VGE
6. Facilitating the holding of bingos , raffles, benefit dances and others as alternative sources of funds.	3.16	GE	3.30	VGE	3.80	VGE	3.42	VGE
7. Creating agreements with financial institutions to provide special credit facilities to qualified community members.	2.19	LE	3.29	VGE	2.80	GE	2.76	GE
Factor Average	2.93	GE	3.23	GE	3.50	VGE	3.22	GE

The factor average of 3.22 taken from the group average of 2.93 from the department anchors, 3.23 from the students and 3.50 from the program beneficiaries indicated that provisions to sustain the program through fund sourcing were made to a great extent.

Specifically, the item average of 3.39 revealed that facilitating the formation of micro enterprises or entrepreneurial activities among qualified community members was provided to a very great extent. The finding unveils the fact that the project was able to generate useful information and practical guidelines to qualified members on the availability of micro and other entrepreneurial opportunities which can help improve their standard of living. As show by the item average of 3.12, provision for building connection or encouraging linkages with private or public agencies for possible funding sources was made to a great extent. This means that one of the notable goals of the project was

to give opportunities to the people to improve their quality of life by forging effective linkages with the various organizations and agencies to fund their projects.

Providing micro financing training among qualified community members was also done to a great extent as evidenced by the item average of 3.16. It can be construed from this information that the project included certain activities designed to enhance the skills of the dwellers to manage funds effectively and get themselves involved with micro or entrepreneurial endeavors.

Providing access to markets for goods produced from the livelihood programs of the community members were made to a very great extent ($u=3.31$). The project was able to broaden the market base of the products of the community by creating mechanisms for direct selling, thereby mitigating the interference of the middlemen.

The item average of 3.42 showed that provision was made to a very great extent in facilitating the holding of bingos, raffles, benefit dances and others as alternative sources of funds. The project was able to assist the community members in tapping external resources to finance the community's projects without involving financial public and private agencies.

Lastly, the project was able to provide to a great extent ($\mu=2.76$) the mechanism of creating agreements with financial institutions to provide special credit facilities to qualified community members. This means that the project aided those community members who were deemed competent to establish agreements with financial organizations in securing credit privileges to finance their economic activities.

As revealed by the general average of 3.28, provisions were made to a very great extent for the sustainability of the project initiated by the university in its adopted community in Mananga. The general average was obtained from the group average of 2.99 from the department anchors, 3.60 from the students and also from the beneficiaries.

The factor average of 3.33 denoted that provisions for program sustainability through capacity building among community members were made to a very great extent. In this factor, activities were provided in the various phases of the project to develop the dwellers' capacity to set their goals, make plans for community development, and establish

linkages with other public and private organizations to improve their way of life.

As shown by the factor average of 3.22, provisions were made to a great extent for program sustainability in terms of fund sourcing. The gathered data revealed that the project was able to assist the community members in identifying possible sources of funds both internal and external which were needed to undertake as well as finance community related programs. Forging linkages with external sources of funds were also provided to ensure the availability of resources when projects were initiated.

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the foregoing findings of the study, the researcher concludes that program relevance and sustainability have been attained by the "Project Pakigdait sa Sitio Kasagingan, Mananga." However, there is a need to broaden the provisions for fund sourcing to ensure the sustainability of the community's development programs.

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