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Republic of the Philippines
(Republic of the Philippines)
MINISTERIO NG EDUCASYON at KULTURA
(MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE)
Manila

August 9, 1978

MEMORANDUM
No. 224, s. 1978

MAKING THE SCHOOLS/COLLEGES EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENTS
FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL AREAS

To: Bureau Directors
Regional Directors
Chiefs of Services and Heads of Units
Coordinator, State Colleges and Universities
School Superintendents
Heads of Private Schools, Colleges
and Universities
Vocational Schools Superintendents/
Principals/Administrators

1. Inclosed is a letter from Dr. Marcos I. Umali, Regional Representative for Mindanao and the Far East of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations recommending and praising the Palawan National Agricultural College (PNAC) at Alerken, Palawan, under its President, Mr. Miguel Palao, for committing its resources to the welfare of the rural poor, thereby making the college an effective instrument for development in the rural areas.
2. The letter cites Mr. Palao for his support to the small farmer development projects in Palawan on which FAO and the government are collaborating; for his able leadership in organizing the highly successful Malinao Farmers' Cooperative in Narra and Saamahang Bayan in Caidoguan, Squezon; for bringing secondary education to the children of the farmers/fishermen and landless farm laborers in their respective communities; for helping talented children by operating an agricultural science high school where they enjoy full scholarships; and for undertaking the now nationally famous Bayanika School Program. These are among the many outreach programs of the College.
3. The success of the PNAC outreach programs is possible elsewhere. This is the challenge that other administrators of education in rural communities should take up.
4. It is known that many schools have their own outreach/extension programs. A little more imagination and a deeper commitment and dedication to the idea of relevance of education for countryside development are needed for these programs and projects to succeed.

5. It is suggested, therefore, that the leadership in the other schools, colleges and universities should study the Palawan experience with a view to using it as a pattern for similar programs in their respective geographical areas. The vocational schools and colleges, specifically, are encouraged to undertake innovations geared to countryside development.

6. This Memorandum and its inclosure should be brought to the attention of all concerned.

(SGD.) JUAN L. RAMOS
Minister of Education and Culture

Incl.:

as stated

Reference:

None

Allotment: 1-2-3-4 (D.O. 1-76)

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

✓ COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
✓ COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
✓ PROGRAM, SCHOOL

✓ SCHOOLS
✓ VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
✓ UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES

(Inclosure to MEC Memorandum No. 221, 1976)

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Regional Office for Asia and the Far East
Mahiwan Mansion, Phra Atit Road,
Bangkok 2, Thailand

Dear Secretary Manuel,

I would like to express through you as Chairman of the Board of Regents of the Palawan National Agricultural College (PNAC) our sincere appreciation for the splendid cooperation that we are receiving from that institution.

The College through its President, Mr. Miguel Falao, has given full support to the small farmers development projects in Palawan wherein FAO is collaborating with the Philippine Government. He is the moving spirit behind the Sub-project Implementation Committee which is responsible for the operational aspects of the project which has national and global implications. The small farmers/fishermen and landless agricultural labourers who are the direct beneficiaries of the project look to him for guidance and support.

It is seldom that we find an educational institution totally committed to the welfare of the rural poor. When I was in the University of the Philippines at Los Baños I always stressed how the university can be an effective instrument for development by making its resources available to the rural areas. It seems that the Palawan National Agricultural College responded and has shown the way.

Sometime in 1968, the College helped organize the Malinao Farmers' Cooperative in Marra. It started with a handful of farmers and now it had grown such that they now have their own warehouse and rice mill.

In 1972, PNAC helped organize the Samahang Nayon in Quinlogan, Quezon. This organization together with the Barangay Council withstood pressures from a big corporation in Manila who wanted to take over their area.

These two case studies were presented during a recent training/workshop on group farming in which FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) and ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) co-sponsored and our participants were quite impressed. They find that the success of these projects would not have been possible without the able leadership of President Falao. We are now in the process of identifying certain aspects of the programme in which FAO and ESCAP can be involved.

The outreach programs of PMAO is not only confined to adult training but also to the education of the sons and daughters of the small farmers/fishermen and landless agricultural laborers. These are the disadvantaged low income people who cannot afford to send their children to PMAO in Aborlan and much more so to Puerto Princesa and Manila. PMAO in its desire to help these people evolved an innovative idea of bringing secondary education to their villages.

The Bayaniban School Programme has proved itself to be a very effective programme since it was launched in academic year 1971-1972. I am impressed by its emphasis on self-reliance. The College pays the salaries of the technicians and the instructors but on the other hand the community provides the school buildings, chairs, blackboards and other classroom equipment needed by the students. The parents of the children set aside from 1/4 to as much as 3 hectares per student for them to work on. The instructors also act as extension agents and resource persons of the host community.

The recent convention of the Association of Colleges of Agriculture in the Philippines (ACAP) had a chance to study the programme and I understand that the delegates were quite impressed. There are plans in some of the member colleges to carry out a modified programme to suit conditions in their own localities.

I find that while PMAO is providing for general education for the rural poor in their respective communities, it has also a programme of helping talented children of these communities. It is presently operating an agricultural science high school wherein students are on full scholarships.

It is clear that PMAO has answered the call at national and international levels of making education relevant to the needs of the community. It has also become an instrument for development through its numerous outreach programmes of which I only mentioned a few. These are due mainly to the able leadership of President Palao and the support of the members of the Board of Regents.

We look forward to maintaining the close relationships with PMAO President Palao and his staff in helping improve the socio-economic conditions of the rural poor which is the focus of programmes not only in PMAO but other international organizations as well.

My warmest regards.

Yours sincerely,

(SGD.) D.L. UMALI
Regional Representative for
Asia and the Far East

~~A true copy~~

