The Design of Integrated Community Development Model for Enhancing Service Delivery in Community Development Practices in Nigeria

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Doi:10.5901/jesr.2015.v5n2p41

Abstract

The practice of community development saw the emergence of different conceptual approaches employed as techniques in tackling the underdevelopment of rural communities. Although, the integrated community development approach appear to be the most acceptable due to its holistic and comprehensive framework. However, the approach lacks an acceptable model to integrate the various elements for effective operations. This paper examined the integrated community development (ICD) model as an innovative framework for the implementation of community development programmes and activities in the field of community development. The model adopted the interpretative framework methodology as an effective device in explaining the input, output and feedback mechanism of the systems approach. It recommended the use of the model in bringing to bear; a practical operations in the implementation of programmes and activities required to bring about development in the rural areas.

Keywords: Tools, Elements, System, Input, Output, Feedback, Community Development, Services, Approach, Model, Operations.

1. Introduction

The importance of community development to the overall development of a nation cannot be over-emphasized. Since the 1948 Cambridge conference on Africa administration organized by the British colonial office where the concept community development was first mentioned, the word has gained acceptance as a veritable tool for local, national, regional and global development.

However, the applicability of the concept has varied from time and space. Whereas several approaches such as electric (or NYSC), team or multiple, directive, integrated and non-directive among others are used. The integrated approach otherwise known as integrated community development (ICD) seems to be more effective and comprehensive-all things being equal. The approach emphasized the involvement of community members in participating in programmes and activities for the provision of human needs not only in physical infrastructures but also the emotional, socio-political, economic and technological enterprise of the people concerned, (Mabogunje 1989, Akinyemi 1997).

The essence of the integrated community development (ICD) as conceived by the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE, 2006) is to achieve development to engender the social, economic and political justice that will lead to the liberation of mankind through the eradication of scourges such as mass poverty, disease and illiteracy. It is for this reason that Imhabekhai (2009) concluded that integrated community development (ICD) is a potent tool for promoting equity, peace, justice and happiness which are necessary for the attainment of national development. Integrated community development (ICD) therefore is an important device needed to bring about changes in human capacity to generate increase activities and efficiency in human and materials wellbeing for societal growth and development.

However, despite the suitability of the integrated approach, the availability of models as workshops for effective integrated community development has been nearly elusive or rarely available. This article aims at designing a model to conceptualize the operations of the Integrated Community Development to fill the vacuum that has existed over time. The study tried to unravel the possibility of using the ICD model to interface the mobilization of stakeholders in participating in the process of development. It adopted the interpretative framework methodology as an effective device in determining the role of various actors in the model towards promoting the quality of life of people at the rural areas.
2. The Review of Tools for Effective Integration of Community Development

The integrated community development (ICD) model is a holistic system that is structured to link and synthesize all the various stakeholders of the community to harness their potentials. This is aimed at bringing the desired change in the social, economic, political and technological advancement of the people to improve the quality of life in the society.

In order to make this model operational, certain principles are required to effect the necessary changes. These are the tools which are used as input into the community to start the entire community development process. They are like catalyst which helps in accelerating community action. These are communication, seminar/workshop, in-service on the job training, sensitization, conscientization and research/documentation which are discussed as follows:

2.1 Communication

This is an important tool for integrated community development. Communication is the life blood of an organization and the lubricant that keeps the intricate machinery of organization going, James, Ode and Soola (2004). In other words, to communicate is to organize one's thought and without communication, human organization, institutions and associations cannot operate effectively.

Communication is the exchange of ideas, facts, feeling and opinion by two or more persons by the use of words, letters or symbols. It involves the interplay of the sender of the message, message itself, the channel, the receiver and feedback. Communication is very crucial in integrated community development processes because:

i. People need to be convinced of what is in their best interest to be involved in a given development programme or activity;

ii. People need to be adequately informed about the desired goals and objectives of a development process and as to what is required of them to achieve the goals and objectives of the project or programme;

iii. People need to be made aware, equipped, skilled, organized and utilized for effective involvements and participation in any programme;

iv. To build good interpersonal relations;

v. To obtain a favourable response, actualized through positive change of attitude to the community development programme;

2.2 Seminars and Workshops

These are essential tools which provide opportunities for training of community members. They are short term inputs which are used in providing new information or to heighten awareness on new innovations in the field of community development. They also provide community members with results of recent research findings in order to boost their knowledge of contemporary uses in community development. Seminars and workshop are very essential tools used in sensitizing and preparing community members for integrated community development.

2.3 Vocational Education

This is also an input or integrated community development tool. It includes skills acquisition, professional training, in-service/on the job training of a vocation given to someone to be more effective and efficient in that occupation, Ani (2003). This could be commercial, technical or professional in content and for the updating of knowledge. It involves the learning of a particular action or skill, knowledge and ideas designed to enable community members understand their work more effectively for greater advancement in life.

2.4 Sensitization

This is yet another element used as a tool for the integration of community development activities. Sensitization has to do with the creation of awareness on a particular issue or issues important to community development. Sensitization can be successful when community members are effectively mobilized. Sensitization can be used to change people’s perception on a particular issue and prepare them for community action.

When the people are sensitized on the benefits of a programme, they will be willing and ready to partake in that programme. The importance of sensitization is to raise awareness among people for joint action or an activity which is
considered an important aspect for an integrated community development programme.

2.5 Conscientization

The word conscientization was made popular by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educationist. According to Nzeneri (1996), conscientization is a process which enables individuals develop themselves through critical awareness of their problems and their environment. In his assertion, Osuala (1995) equally acknowledge Paulo Freire who asserted that adults are the subject and architect of their own development and conscientization provides the stimulus which energizes the marginalized adults to free themselves from oppression. It is a process by which people became aware of themselves and their innate potentialities in order to restructure an oppressive society. Conscientization is an effective integrated community development tool used in eliciting participation through awareness creation or consciousness arousal.

2.6 Research/Documentation

This is another integrated community development tool. The role of research in the development of any nation cannot be over-emphasized. According to Barikor (2005) research is a diligent search, study, inquiry, examination, investigation, or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts for the revision of accepted theories, laws or practice in the light of new findings. It is an intellectual function for personal and professional growth and efficiency in every field of human endeavour in a bid to understand and utilize the environment. According to him, research is a potent tool for personal growth and a means to bring about national development.

Research helps in the acquisition, transmission and the application of knowledge. Research also helps in stocking, validating and retrieving data for cultural, socio-economic, political, scientific and technology change required for integration in community development programme.

3. Integrated Elements/Scope of the Model

The concept of an element could be described as those typical or component parts of a system that forms a large constituent of the whole. Several elements are important to make the whole system of the community becomes functional. Hence, these elements are important to be incorporated into the model to produce the desired effect. The elements that are integrated in this model includes the following; education, health, nutrition, agriculture, housing, security, infrastructure, politics, culture/religion and recreation.

3.1 Education

Education is one of the index of development. Admittedly, no nation can attain development when its citizen are uneducated and illiterate. According to Kosomani (2002) education is a universal practice or phenomenon engaged in, by societies at all stages of development. Ezewu (1983) viewed education as:

a process which an individual born into human society is exposed to and learns the ways of life, which includes knowledge, skills and values of the given society consciously or unconsciously so that he can function efficiently in the given society.

Education prepares the young people for active participation in the maintenance and development of society. Education emancipates the human mind, develops the potentials and imparts useful and relevant skills to individuals, thereby enhancing the growth of the society. In other words, education prepares the human mind to enable people cope with future challenges in industry, science, technology and their advancement bound up with the progress of education.

The foregoing shows that education is an essential component of human development. Thus, no community can develop without the essential and requisite education for its populace. Hence, education is an important factor or element in integrated community development.

3.2 Health

The old adage that says health is wealth is a clear indication of the importance of health to the development of any nation. An integrated community development programme without health is like food without salt. Health which is the
state of mental and physical wellbeing is an essential component of integrated community development because it is only a healthy community that can embark on community development programmes. The knowledge about one's health is very pertinent as Ajala (2003) confirms that health education is important for people of all ages in the protection of life and for people to recover from illness. Thus, the promotion of health care will help the community to:

i. treating people who are sick and those who sustained injuries.
ii. enlighten community members on the use of drugs so as to avoid drug abuse.
iii. educate community members on how to use a first aid treatment in the absence of a doctor.
iv. lastly, enlighten community members about sanitation i.e. how to keep the environment clean and avoid infectious diseases.

On the whole, general cleanliness, both personal and communal, the disposal of waste and removal of causes of water pollution are all areas of health that are important and crucial in the life of a community.

3.3 Nutrition

Every man and woman needs food for its survival. The provision of a balanced diet is required to provide all the energy the body need for a healthy development. Community members should be encouraged to learn basic home economics. This will help them appreciate the value of taking a balanced diet. The food we take in helps to nourish the body with energy, build and renew tissues as well as regulate body processes that keep all parts of the body in good working condition.

The integration of nutrition, i.e. basic home economics in a community development programme will help community members especially women to know the basic classification of food that is; carbohydrates, protein, fats, minerals and vitamins, their sources and functions. This will help to keep a healthy society to avoid malnutrition, obesity and underweight of people. Basic home economics will also promote the improvement of ways in keeping a home, cooking good food, decorating the house, as well as raising children in the society.

3.4 Agriculture

Agriculture is the cultivation of crops and rearing of animals for man's use. It provides food, employment, income, raw materials for industries as well as clothing, shelter and foreign exchange earnings. Over 10% of the Nigerians population are involved in agriculture, especially at the subsistence level. The importance of agriculture to the economic wellbeing of any nation cannot be over-emphasized. According to Eganti (2005) the Nigerian government has launched various agricultural programmes such as National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), the Green Revolution Programme, Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) among others to bring about self-sufficiency and self-reliance in food production. This is also to encourage balanced nutritional feeding and to produce a healthy nation.

Therefore, the integration of agriculture in community development programme is an essential imperative which is aimed at providing improved crops production, crop diseases control mechanism, agricultural extension services as well as the provision of fertilizers for the achievement self-sufficient and reliable food production.

3.5 Housing

A house is a structure serving as a dwelling place for one or several families and a building which functions as a shelter for people. A house is that part of man's total environment in which the greatest time of family life is usually spent.

It is generally accepted that housing is second only to food, a basic need of man. In fact, it has been argued that no part of man's environment affects his health and wellbeing more directly than the house in which he seeks shelter, security, comfort and dignity.

The provision of adequate housing is an integral part of national development. A nation cannot be developed when its citizens lives in slumps and insecure homes. Therefore, any attempt to improve the living standard of the people must incorporate housing as an essential component of development index. Therefore, housing is an important element in integrated community development programme.
3.6 Security

According to Bola-Oni (1987) no physical and human development is possible in a state of insecurity, disorderliness and lawlessness. Keeping of peace and maintenance of law and order is therefore one of the social services a community must enjoy before it can pursue other things. Security is an essential component of development as Eselebor (2012) advocated that a secure society must work towards eliminating both physical and non-physical violence and protection against danger or loss. The provision of adequate security of lives and properties is very crucial to community development. Hence security is an essential element or component of the integrated community development programme.

3.7 Infrastructures

This has to do with the provision or roads, electricity, pipe-borne water etc. The construction of link roads within and between communities will not only facilitate or attract development but will help to reduce rural-urban migration. Similarly, the availability of electricity will assist in the development of small and medium scale industries which will in turn generate employment opportunities in the rural communities.

Furthermore, the availability of pipe-borne water or portable drinking water will also help in preventing the outbreak of water borne disease in the community. In a nutshell, infrastructural development is a cardinal focus of any development process. Therefore the provision of infrastructures will form a crucial component in the integration of community development programmes.

3.8 Politics

This has to do with the creation of awareness and awakening of civic consciousness among the community members. It has to do with the education of the populace about the electoral system, democracy and political participation. Since no community can live in isolation, the effective participation of community members in the political process is very important and crucial.

3.9 Culture

According to Ezewu (1983) culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities acquired by man as members of a society. This means that each society has a general culture created and developed by mankind as a whole. Culture is a social heredity of man. It is referred to as the totality of the ways of life of a society. It has to do with the customs of members of a society, traditions and beliefs, language, dress, their work, their behaviour and attitude to life. Culture serves as the identification mark of man, differentiating man from animals. The eradication of harmful traditional beliefs is an element of integrated community development. For communities to develop, certain culture that retard progress and development as well as oppress the people must be eliminated to liberate the people. Therefore, the propagation of advance culture is an important element in integrated community development programme.

3.10 Recreation

Recreation and the use of leisure is also an important component of integrated community development programme. With the increasing neglect of traditional forms of recreation, there is danger of community life becoming dull and increasing in social problems such as alcoholism, idle gossip, quarrel, litigation and waste of money. Therefore, team games and entertainment can be used to arouse community spirit. Hence recreation is a useful ingredient for integrated community development programme.

4. Stages in Integrated Community Development Process

The effective and successful integration of the various elements or components of integrated community development require a careful and stage by stage process of planning, organizing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In other words, for the Integrated Community Development (ICD) programme to be successful, the various stages in integrated
community development must be followed to the letter. The process shows a cycle of stages in which the process passes through. First, it is by planning to organizing, organizing to implementation and then to monitoring and from monitoring to evaluation and back to planning in a continuous manner as shown diagrammatically on figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Stages of an ICD Process

5. Planning for Integrated Community Development

According to Anjah-Oba (2001), the importance of planning in every enterprise has been duly recognized and accepted as the most effective and efficient way of achieving set objectives. Onyeozu (2007) maintains that planning is a purposeful attempt to determine in advance the most effective and judicious use of time, finance and resources in the process of executing a project so as to achieve desired result and avoid unwanted effects.

In planning for integrated community development, the following should be considered.

i) total appraisal of the existing situation on ground,
ii) isolating and examining what are the likely problems or obstacles toward effective integration for the success of programmes,
iii) setting out objectives and aims,
iv) how do you achieve the objectives and aims set out as well as a step by step arrangement of the execution process of the programme,
v) how much human, financial and material resources that would be required to attain the objectives as well as how they can be gotten,
vii) the time-frame for the project as well as utilization after completion.

For integrated community development to be successful the above stated items must be followed religiously.

6. Organizing for Integrated Community Development

After planning, the organization of the various items in the plan is the next stage in the integrated development programme. In organizing, the various item essential for integration are the human, financial and material resources. Osuji (2003) maintains that these variables are necessary for it to be well arranged sequentially and orderly for the purpose of achieving desired goals. According to Bankor (2005) the purpose of organizing is to provide direction for achieving strategic administrative and operational goals. Organizing of integrated elements as well as the resources will make implementation smooth and better in the integrated network.

7. Implementation of Integrated Community Development Programme

Implementation of the integrated community development plan is the stage whereby the plan is put into use by committing human, financial and material resources. Implementation involves:

i. review of the blue-print of the plan.
ii. following the established blue-print (plan) and performing the tasks laid down with the amount of resources
committed at the appropriate time.

iii. faithfully supervising to ensure conformity.

iv. procurement of materials, services, personnel at the right time and place.

v. recording and storage of relevant data as well as preparation and communication of periodical report to show performance.

vi. preparation of project account and report as well as project audit and financial statement.

The implementation stage is a very crucial stage in the project cycle. It requires among others as citizens commitment, participation, sacrifice and support. Also important is the creation of a conducive atmosphere devoid of rancor and acrimony to ensure timely completion of set objectives.

8. Monitoring in Integrated Community Development Programme

Monitoring is a continuous process or act of regularly and carefully checking, watching and addressing various activities in a project cycle. It involves the use of inputs in a project to ascertain the extent of execution in order to minimize waste, save time, improve efficiency and ensure successful completion of work. Monitoring process involves regular observation, discussion with stakeholders and writing of progress report. The essence of monitoring is to make sure likely problems are identified and solved. This stage is very crucial in integrated community development programme because with effective monitoring, resources and time will not be wasted, and project initiated are not likely to be abandoned.

9. Evaluation of Integrated Community Development

This is the fifth stage of the integrated community development process. It is the stage that brings the feedbacks and necessary information for decision making for future planning. Imhabekhai (1998). It is the act of assessing project effectiveness, efficiency, cost, relevance and impact based on specified objectives. This is to improve the effectiveness and impact of project with a view to laying a solid foundation for a better execution of similar project in the future.

The essence of evaluation is to improve both the ongoing project and the planning, programming and decision-making of predetermined goals. Evaluation in integrated community development is to enhance feedback required to improving current activities and learning for the future.

10. The Outcome or Product of the Integrated Community Development

The conceptual design in the planning of community development programmes is aimed at improving the living standard of community members. Therefore, the outcome in the implementation of integrated community development is expected to produce the following:

i. good, and accessible roads.

ii. regular and constant electricity and power supply.

iii. portable drinking water for the rural populace.

iv. access to education and better health care services.

v. employment opportunities.

vi. affordable and comfortable housing.

vii. advanced cultural beliefs.

viii. good governance and empowerment of community members.

ix. Improved environmental conditions.

x. Available and affordable food supply.

11. The General Operations and Application of the Model

The model recognizes the fact that communities exist with people (leadership and follower ship), women, youths, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who are the stakeholders or members of the community. The model is thus, designed in a cyclic form with input-output and feedbacks processes.

To kick start the programme, certain tools are employ to create the right atmosphere. These tools are also known as ‘inputs’ into the community. They are called integrated community development tools and which include
communication, seminars/workshops, in-service/on the job training, vocational/skills acquisition, sensitization, conscientization and research/documentation. These programmes are carried out in the community by experts who educate and prepare the minds of people for the integrated community development programme.

After this stage, the community begins to plan for integrated community by identifying the elements to be integrated through active participation by all and sundry in the community. They also plan for the resources-human, financial and material that will be needed for the entire process. After organizing, comes the implementation of the programme. The implementation is followed by monitoring and from monitoring to evaluation and then back to planning process. The successful completion of the integration is known as ‘output’ which is otherwise called outcomes or products. The outcomes or products are manifested in various forms of improve living conditions which are sent back to the community as feedbacks.

In a nutshell, integrated community development requires the active participation of all community members to be involved in a programme to be effectively planned, organized, implemented, monitored and evaluated. The success of the integration is the output otherwise referred to as outcome or products that impact on the lives of the community. They are the feedbacks into the community needed to improve the living standard of the people as shown on Figure 2 of the diagram below.

**Figure 2:** Diagram of the Systems ICD Model

12. Benefits of the ICD Model

The conceptual framework of the ICD model is designed as a system to address the issues of development at the community in a holistic perspective; economic, health, education, socio-cultural, infrastructure, housing and so on.

The importance attached to this model becomes very essential in trying to build a capacity of understanding among members of the community for the inclusion of specific policy plans to the benefit of the entire community. The aim is to strengthen and support the efforts of various institutional links responsible for addressing critical issues needed to improve the quality of life at the community level. For instance, Oduaran (1994) affirms that the advantage of the integrated approach of community development is to draw:

* A comprehensive programme which helps to achieve total communal development, directed in the operations of a number of programmes such as agricultural extension, public health and civic education for the grassroots. Government, education departments, formal school sector and non-formal educators may co-operate in such schemes. The main advantage here is a judicious integration of all aspects of development P. 48.
The entire framework of the ICD model is intended to link the various sectoral component of the rural economy into the national development agenda to meet the extension target of the Millennium Developments Goals (MDGs) beyond 2015. The model seeks to function as a network between the inputs of principal stakeholders (community members, women groups, youth groups, Community Development Committee (CDC), local authorities and government) involved in the process of development. This is to bring about a robust increase of operations in systems efficiency.

The recognition of the model is premised on the assumption that the developmental challenges at the community should not be treated in isolated cases. Instead, the model emphasized a holistic and a multi-component paradigm that should result to widespread involvement of the people in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes at the community level.

Consequently, the overall merits of the ICD model will be of tremendous benefit to the society in the following ways:

1. to institute a robust team building and team work that will result to best practices in community development activities.
2. to realize closer interpersonal/professional awareness and trust, developed through a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities and perspectives of others numbers of the society.
3. to improve awareness and recording of changes designed to improve the community’s wellbeing through a face-to-face dialogue and interaction between team and community members.
4. to provide regular and constructive feedback and adjustment where necessary to engender social cohesion among community members and governmental organs involved in planned community programmes.
5. to bring about development of inflexible role boundaries and the creation of the ability of individual community members who are willing to work differently to achieve the overall community development initiative.
6. to raise public awareness of services with improved signpost of information dissemination and quality advice leading to quicker access to service delivery.
7. Survey mechanism to indicate that the complexity of service delivery is made simplified and integrated into a single assessment process of programmes evaluation;
8. It will result to more economic and efficient procedure of service delivery through a unified management of resources and shared workload, for the avoidance of duplication of efforts in community development activities;
9. Integrating the various development efforts into a comprehensive system, guarantees maximum mobilization of domestic human and material resources for self-reliance
10. to produce food security and improved standard of living, Torutein (2011:26) and
11. Integrating the goals of development (e.g increase income, participation in governance and decision making, welfare and employment) to assumes that the component outcomes are not discrete and mutually exclusive. Ekong (2003:362).

13. Limitations of the ICD Model

The practicality framework of the ICD model notwithstanding, it is anticipated that its operation will be incapacitated by certain factors:

The practicability of the ICD model will certainly require huge-financial cost and as such, will be hindered by limited flow of financial resources. Funds are needed not only to finance the various components of the model but also to sustain the human and material resources involved. If the model is to produce the desired impact, all the sectoral components need to be adequately funded. This is very true as Yayasan (2002:1) rightly observes “funds are needed to complete a design of an integrated project for ongoing commercial and social success”. Unfortunately, successive Nigerian governments have not appreciated the need for adequate budgetary allocation for research and development. This scenario will adversely jeopardize the successful operations of the model.

The modus operandi of the model is likely to generate internal conflicts, strife and suspicion if the system is not symmetrically synthesized. In an heterogeneous and a multicultural society like Nigeria, the model is not unlikely to generate clash of cultural interest, conflicts and disaffection among the ranks. Such a scenario is bound to delay the outcome of meaningful development to the benefit of all segment of the general society. This limitation according to Oduaran (1994:48) implies that actions may slow down where jealousy or suspicion arises among the agencies and stakeholders involved.
The successful outcome of the ICD model will equally depend on the patience, commitment, determination and a good timeframe by the people. Regrettably, the Nigerian populace generally lack these long term virtues as their thinking and psyche has been dominated by the syndrome of quick results. Undoubtedly, this will be a cog in the wheel of the model’s progress in the operations necessary to transform the fortunes of rural communities. This quick result approach jettison sincerity of purpose as Barikor (2005:325,6) argued that the ultimate success of research in particular and development in general is very demanding, expensive and a painstaking work, requiring carefulness, sacrifice and commitment. He added that the real result or benefit of some research (as may be applicable to the ICD model) may sometimes not come in one's life time. He admonishes that Nigerians must therefore denounce their self-seeking, despotic and carefree attitude to work, change their ways and be more positive and constructive otherwise, people may do every other thing and still be disappointed. The same is applicable for the successful implementation of the ICD model or else, its operation in community development work will not be easily realized.

14. Recommendations

In order to enhance the implementation of community development activities through an integrated process, the following recommendations are made:

i. Practitioners should be encouraged to focus more attention on integrated community development because it is found to be a better option for community development programme.

ii. The various stages in the integrated community development process should be strictly adhered to ensure successful programming.

iii. Community members should be encouraged to be fully mobilized and to equally participate in the entire process to bring about improvement in the implementation of programme at the community level.

iv. There should be a coordinated mechanism of communication flow among the stakeholders in course of implementation of the model to avoid suspicion and friction that could lead to failure of systemic network.

v. There is the necessity for high level of probity and accountability to successfully allocate scarce resources needed to attain better results in community programmes.

vi. Community development agents have a great role to play in providing the right atmosphere in terms of awareness creation and commitment for the programme to succeed.

vii. The success of the approach also depends on adequate funding and financial flow from the relevant stakeholder to accomplish set goals.

viii. A good monitoring and evaluation mechanism is needed to supervise the implementation of various stages of the model to maximize compliance with set standards.

15. Conclusion

This paper examined an innovation by designing an appropriate model that could be used as template for the practice of integrated community development. The paper x-ray the tools used for effective integration as well as elements or scope of the model. It examined the various development indicators required to make the integration of the model functional. The general operation of the model was also highlighted as well as the benefits and limitations. It is therefore recommended that practitioners and non-practitioners of community development need to be aware of the innovation and adopt to the use of the framework due to its potency to bring about the transformation of society especially in the rural areas.

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