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RD 693
15 September 2003

Community Discovery in New Chaplino, Chukotka

This paper is meant to present information developed in our community-planning trip to the Russian Far East. It includes observations of important issues, descriptions of skills developed during the facilitation, a narrative of the process employed, some lessons learned and a copy of the introduction to the community discovery process that I presented.

Issues and Skills Developed During the Trip

I found three broad areas where I developed skills and furthered my experience in rural and community development. They were conducting facilitation of a program concept in the real world, working with fellow students toward a common goal and ensuring activities are sensitive to the culture being visited.

Conducted real world facilitation using the *Healthy Community* concepts.

Providing a Russian version of the *Healthy Communities Handbook*₁ showed that we were interested in community involvement and were willing to insure the process was an open one that everyone could examine. There were both benefits and shortcomings in the Rural Development (RD) course taught by Larry Dickerson on creating healthy communities. Based on our experience and the example provided by Galena, it was obvious the process produces great results, especially when there is a high level of community commitment to the process. Actually trying to facilitate the process in the real world was a completely different experience than what a student can learn in the classroom. The concepts of using community discovery are valid. We would have loved to have Larry Dickerson along with us as a coach.

There could be sections of the *Healthy Community Handbook* shortened, and procedures more streamlined. I believe the RD study group and the administration of the Providensky Borough would be willing to work on the project as part of effort to be conducted next year. The basic concepts are all in the manual, but it can be hard to move through it in a sequential manner.

We discussed this issue several times during the community discovery process and can truly say that we are better prepared to facilitate a dialog or program like this within another community. Working through the language problems and having a concern for a quality outcome was probably our greatest learning tool. This experience definitely raised everyone's confidence level in using the community discovery process.

Working with a group of unfamiliar people towards a successful outcome.

The RD program may wish to include basic team building and facilitation skills in its annual seminar or other courses. Distance delivery of coursework limits interaction between students. It was the first time I had ever met the people I have shared classes with during the last four years.

Melanie Edwards brought a book call *Winning Through Participation*₂ by Laura Spencer that had really useful information on how to debrief a meeting and provide valid feedback to its facilitators. The entire book is geared as a resource for facilitators. I could see the benefit of

teambuilding and critique skills being presented in Rural Development coursework. Most of the Rural Development program depends on people being able to communicate and interact with other people. It is also apparent these contacts are often going to be cross-cultural.

Cultural sensitivity in community based research.

My comments are derived from observations I made during the trip and are meant to be cautionary, and not necessarily critical of any one person. We observed behavior toward residents in New Chaplino by other outsiders that could be seen as offensive, even in our culture. Researchers and facilitators must be constantly reminded that they are guests and not necessarily a local community's means to an end. We heard comments from residents and even the Borough Mayor that the people were leery of more research, more projects. There have been numerous research projects conducted in the region, but their apparent benefit to the community has not been communicated to them very well. One person on the trip told us a joke that reflected this concern. What is the composition of an average family in Chukotka? The answer is two parents, two children and an anthropologist.

We were constantly concerned about our presence in the community. During the planning meetings leading to the study trip, Larry Dickerson pointed out that he had always tried to secure permission from the community prior to beginning a planning project. Our knowledge of the community was so limited, we couldn't even ask until we got there. We decided at one point to ask the community members if they wanted to participate in the project.

The most important thing we could do as outsiders to a community is to exercise respect. Respect for the community, its people and its values. Linda Tuhiwai Smith comments on respect in her book *Decolonizing Methodologies – Research and Indigenous Peoples*³ that:

“From indigenous perspectives ethical codes of conduct serve partly the same purpose as the protocols which govern our relationships with each other and the environment. The “term” respect is consistently used by indigenous peoples to underscore the significance of our relationships and humanity. Through respect the place of everyone and everything in the universe is kept in balance and harmony. Respect is a reciprocal, shared, constantly interchanging principle, which is expressed through all aspects of social conduct.”

Guests should be ever mindful of the needs of their hosts and remember that respect is some thing that is earned as well as given. I believe after spending this time in New Chaplino that we can learn as much from its people as we might also provide to them. I don't wish to see the relationship between our regions jeopardized by a lack of respect for people or community protocols.

Narrative of Community Planning Effort Held in New Chaplino, Chukotka

14 August 2003

Our group met at Signature Air Services in Anchorage at 1100. The flight was delayed and it gave everyone a chance to visit and speculate on what we were getting in to. The Great Circle King Air 350 finally departed at about 1330 and we were on the way. The flight was uneventful and after two hours we could see St. Lawrence Island and the coast of Russia. The runway at Provideniya is at the head of a large bay and has a gravel surface. Winds were strong and the pilot crabbed the plane into the runway, touched down and we had arrived to Russia. The pilot taxied quickly up a hill to the terminal building to meet the Border Guard. We unloaded the baggage and were escorted to customs for clearance. We filed our declarations and made it through in good shape.

The Rural Development group that had been in Lorino during the previous week was at the terminal to meet us. They were flying out on the plane that brought us in. The Lorino group was very excited and detailed how well things had gone for them there. It was good for me to finally meet so many people that are students in the Rural Development program. Our group's "bus" arrived at the terminal to take us into Provideniya and then later to New Chaplino. The bus looked like a cross between a school bus and a military cargo truck. It is definitely a heavy-duty vehicle. As we drove into Provideniya, it was amazing to see the destruction of buildings, and infrastructure that had occurred. There are row after row of abandoned concrete apartments and building ruins. The amount of rusty metal and broken concrete rubble is staggering.

We made it to Provideniya after about a half hour drive. The city is sited on the shore of a steep mountain and there are large concrete buildings everywhere. I couldn't help but to think of Whittier, Alaska, at least for a moment. The buildings are very close to each other, and the roads are made of gravel or tilted concrete slabs. We were told that the City previously had a population of 7,000 and now numbered 2,000 citizens. Our group stopped at the Café for lunch and its nicely finished interior didn't bely the worn exterior of the building. We had soup, coleslaw, bread and meat filled dumplings for lunch. After lunch, we stopped at one of the bigger stores in town and looked things over. Everything was behind a counter and was handled by a clerk. There was a large array of merchandise displayed from the floor to the ceiling.

We loaded up and started for our new home for the next ten days, New Chaplino. The trip didn't take very long; I thought the village was further away from Provideniya. There are old ruins of military buildings and rusted 55-gallon drums along the first half of the trip. The drums are everywhere you look. New Chaplino is on the coast and from a distance we had a great view of the area. The village turned out to be in the middle of a huge construction project that was replacing its housing. We were told the Chukotka Governor, Roman Abramovich, had purchased these new houses for the community. The contractor for the project is based in Turkey and the homes are based on designs you find in Southern Canada. We had questions, as a group, about how appropriate these houses would be for the climate. Many of the homes were already occupied, but still unfinished. A central coal-fired boiler provides heat for the houses, feeding an insulated piping system that snakes through the village. The homes are on gravel pads, with jack stands to allow leveling as the building settles.

Housing arrangements took a while to organize and we took up residence in one of the new homes for the duration. The family stayed with relatives and our rent was a good source of supplemental income for them. We had dinner at the old boarding school cafeteria, which was

being operated to feed the construction workers. The fare was beef, peas, bread and beets. We didn't need to eat again so soon, but that didn't stop us from trying. Our group visited the village store. It is about a year old and constructed of steel modules on concrete piers. It was one of the open alcohol sale days and business was brisk. We were told alcohol use was a problem in the village and I wondered if the large number of foreign construction workers made it even worse.

During the evening we celebrated Mike Davis's birthday. Mike is one of our Rural Development professors who lives in Dillingham, Alaska. The group talked about themselves a bit and we planned our strategy for meeting with key members of the community.

15 August 2003

I awoke at 0730 Alaska Time, which put me at 0430 in Chukotka. The time gave me a chance to walk down to the shore and look at the new construction. It looked like the contractor had a lot to complete before the season was over. The beach had the remains of an old boat resting on it and more rusted drums scattered about. The village stockpile of coal could be seen and it was apparent that it must have been delivered by barge. I walked towards the other side of town and saw a number of older, wooden timber buildings that had not yet been removed. I also came across the generation plant and it appeared to be diesel fired.

We had breakfast at the boarding school cafeteria and made plans for the day. The major task was to meet with local residents. The meeting was to be held in the school gym, with a chance for everyone interested in the project to introduce themselves and possibly enjoy some Eskimo dancing.

I took the time available prior to the meeting to explore New Chaplino some more. The remains of an old state run fox farm are on the hill above the village. It is long abandoned and it is hard to tell how long the structures have laid unused. There are remains of at least five different sets of pens. The two largest sites still standing are elevated on a wooden platform that is about twenty feet off the ground. A rough count showed about 450 cages on each of the platforms. Whale bones and cut steel drums littered the site. I walked down the hill and took photographs of most of the village.

The evening meeting didn't get started right away. Members of our group played volleyball until the village residents filtered in. A group of four people brought out some drums and started playing. They are called Solnyshko (Sunny) and were founded in 1962 to help preserve Siberian Yupik traditional culture. There are two main dialects in the Chukotka Siberian Yupik speakers, Chaplino and Naukan. Solnyshko played and danced for more than a hour and it was a good way to meet the people interested in our project. Everyone enjoyed the dancing and it was hard to stop for the evening.

Our group met at the community store and talked while we waited for it to open. The construction occurring in the village had cutoff the power and the store would not open until it was restored. I noticed signs of high alcohol use about and several dysfunctional residents were waiting for the store to reopen. Once the store opened there was a brisk trade in vodka while we were there. We headed up to the cafeteria for our meal and learned that we had been challenged to a volleyball game, Chaplino versus Alaska. It sounded like the village resident played a lot and we were likely to get beat.

Prior to the game, I had some time to talk to Liudmila Makotrik about some recent problems the community had experienced with their walrus hunts and the Border Guard. There had been a claim made that a resident had violated security rules and the village was being collectively prevented from any further walrus hunting. Chaplino has no nearby haulouts and must travel several hours to their hunting camping area to pursue walrus. The issue was one that would repeatedly come up throughout the rest of our visit. I asked if the Governor would be able to help. Liudmila thought it would not be a big enough problem to warrant his attention and the Governor has no control over the actions of the Border Guard.

The volleyball match was great fun. There were not enough people from Alaska to field a full team and we had several Chaplino people fill in on our team. It was a great way to interact and meet people. There ended up being six games played and we tied 3-3. I'll admit it was the most exercise I have had in a long while. Our group held a planning meeting after the game to line out the first formal meeting with the community.

16 August 2003

The first meeting planned with the community was set for 1900. We had not been able to meet with other important members of the community yet. We were told many people were out of town and the construction activity had been a major interruption to normal activities in Chaplino. Our group and some of the families decided to have lunch out on the tundra. Several teakettles and armloads of wood were carried out of town. There was a little bit of everything to eat. We ended up with Brea cheese, pilot bread, hard salami, gray whale muktuk, walrus black meat, berries, homemade bread, herring and of course tea. It was a great feast and the weather was beautiful, breaks in the overcast and lots of sunshine. The tundra was loaded with berries. We could see New Chaplino from where we ate and you could see it was in a very picturesque location. There is a large bay and a ready inlet to the ocean directly in front of town.

Evelyn Pensgard, Josh Weiser and I walked a couple miles out of town. We climbed a hill overlooking the village that had the remains of an old stone building on it. It took about an hour to reach the top and the structure looked like it must have been some sort of a lookout post. It was built of flat rocks that did not come from immediately around the site and there was an old telephone line and pole running down the hill from the building. The roof was gone and hundreds of old cans and bottles surrounded the building. You could see why the site was chosen. The view was a continuous panorama and another inlet was visible in the distance that you could not see from New Chaplino.

Our group met again one more time prior to the first formal community meeting. By 1900, there were ten adults and several children waiting for the meeting to start. Mike Davis started the meeting at about 1920. The Mayor of New Chaplino was introduced and Mike presented her with a book on Alaska. Mike gave a brief description of the Rural Development program and why the group was present in the community. He explained the concept of community discovery and the steps we hoped to carry out during our visit. All the RD students introduced themselves and showed people where they came from in Alaska. By this time there were more than 26 adults present for the meeting.

Roger and Alan were introduced and they explained the microfinance program they were pursuing. The initial introductions seemed to go well and the people were very focused through the whole time we spoke. The village residents introduced themselves as well. Professionals present for the meeting included a social worker, English teacher, traditional arts teacher,

students, traditional dance teacher, marine mammal hunter, college student, ivory carver, construction worker, international park employee, and carpenter. The translator had a very quiet voice and I worked hard to hear everything being said.

Many residents were expressing their problems and what we were going to do to solve them. One man there complained that everyone present from the community had a job and the people that really should be there were unable to attend. We made an effort to explain the *Healthy Community* process and further outlined the steps we intended to following the next few days. The introduction of the microfinance project really clouded our purpose. I was really disappointed with the outcome of our first meeting. Planning for the meeting was lacking and it showed. We weren't as ready as we thought we were. The translator was too quiet, the meeting space was cold and noisy, people were restless and the microfinance introduction sidetracked any further discussion of our project's goals. There was an obvious political split in the community and it reared its head at the meeting.

Our first reaction was to figure out how it could have been done differently. We started talking about the future of our next meeting and a better plan for its conduct. Suggestions included writing down ideas on improvements needed in the community and posting them on the wall, finding a public address system, finding a better meeting location, doing a better job of introducing the concepts of community discovery and how powerful it is. We knew we had to draw people out and get their ideas out in the open. In the end we decided we would describe the community discovery process and ask the people if they even wanted to continue with the project.

Olga Gogoleva, one of our translators, told us the meeting went better than we thought. Olga said that Russian people normally sit back and let decisions be made for them. She thought it was good to see people engaged in serious discussion, laughing and talking. This apparently was more than normally occurred in community meetings.

17 August 2003

The weather took a turn for the worse. Wind was blowing 30+ and heavy rain. Mike Davis and Galena scheduled an appointment with the Mayor after breakfast to arrange for the evening meeting facilities. We went to the Post Office to check on the procedures necessary to make an international telephone call. Our scheduled time in the community was in question due to conflict for the Governor's airplane caused by the President of Iceland. Apparently Iceland has experience in developing geothermal resources and Chukotka has a lot of them. There was a chance we would be leaving on Friday, instead of Monday.

Mike met with the Mayor. The meeting was set for the school library, so people should be able to hear well. We spent a lot time debating whether the *Healthy Community* process fit into the normal protocol found in the community and its decision making process. Chaplino's Mayor is appointed and not necessarily representative of the people. Decision-making apparently occurs in the home during informal gatherings. The *Healthy Community* could be seen as undercutting the authority and formal decision-making process in place in the community.

We planned all morning determined to prevent a second disaster. It looked like we were going to be a lot more organized for the second meeting and we were hoping for a more positive response from the community.

After lunch we jumped back into planning mode and developed an outline of our goals for the community discovery process we intended to employ. We were better able to define the process in a way we thought would work for us. I took on the overview portion and prepared remarks that would be used to open the meeting. I really wanted to get across what we were trying to accomplish. The text is attached to this report and it seemed to be a good foundation for the meeting development. We also decided to develop a *Lessons Learned* document based on our first experience with the facilitation process and the Russian Far East. We hope the next time someone tries this, they will have more resources.

The second meeting started just after 1915. The overview went well. Melanie Edwards was tasked with establishing the meeting ground rules and the concept of door prizes. We weren't sure if using door prizes would be acceptable, but we thought it might bring up interest in the meeting if it was accepted. There were about 25 adults in attendance. Melanie's introduction seemed to be well received by the audience and they said they would ask questions later if necessary. Andria Agli discussed a great opening quote from Sitting Bull that was intended to set a good tone for the meeting. Andria then gave some examples of successes found through community planning in Alaska. These included Egegik's training of residents well in advance of known infrastructure construction projects to improve odds of local hire, Igiagik's cleanup of their community and recycling of aluminum and plastic, Bethel's language immersion program, Stebbin's revival of traditional dance and Savoonga's ban on alcohol sales. Mike took over at this point and directly asked the audience if they would like to continue participating in the project during the rest of the week. The response was great; everyone present was interested and engaged in the process. It was a big break for us after the experience of the previous meeting.

Josh Weiser started the web exercise inside the library by explaining the community web concept. Our group performed the exercise and Josh did a good job of facilitating it. The exercise went well and we captured a lot of information on what the people thought of their community. The door prize idea worked well and it turned out to be a novelty to everyone. Everyone took a well-desired break and we provided tea and cookies to the participants. A second door prize was given after the break to get things moving again.

Evelyn Pensgard started the second activity, which was to identify the sacred values of the village. Evelyn explained the activity and broke the audience into five smaller groups. These groups were given slips of paper and asked to answer a series of questions derived from Larry Dickerson's book *Creating Healthy Communities*. The questions and answers were:

1. What is your favorite thing to do in the community?
 - a. Collect berries, plants and foods.
 - b. Traditional dancing.
 - c. Using native language and culture.
 - d. Conducting traditional occupations.
 - e. Raising, teaching and working with children.
2. Where is your favorite place to go in your community?
 - a. The hot springs.
 - b. The tundra.
 - c. Home.
 - d. Inakhpak, the hunting camp.
 - e. Gym/sporting grounds.
3. What is your favorite reason why you live in your community?
 - a. I was born and raised here.
 - b. This is my motherland.

4. What is the glue that holds the community together?
 - a. Traditions.
 - b. History.
 - c. Family.
 - d. Language.

Everyone did a great job of answering the questions, there was a lot of involvement from the group and we received more feedback than we could have hoped for. Each small group choose a spokesman and shared their responses with the greater group. We gathered the cards from each spokesman to consolidate the information developed. In closing this activity, everyone was asked to finish the sentence, “New Chaplino, my Native village is...”

- Made of many different ethnic groups.
- Full of interesting sights to visit.
- Is very quiet and peaceful.
- Has traditional land use.
- A place for our children to live.
- Rich with friendly people.
- Home to great tasting “qesni”.
- Home to the best marine hunters.

Our own group met after this second meeting to review the activities of the evening. Melanie brought a book call *Winning Through Participation* by Laura Spencer, which had a section on how to debrief a meeting. It asked four questions of the facilitators. The questions and answers were:

1. What was the most striking image that occurred during the meeting?
 - a. Smiling faces.
 - b. The final form of the web after the exercise was underway.
 - c. People working hard together to answer the questions.
2. What were the important things said?
 - a. Permission to from the community to proceed with the project.
 - b. The answer to why they live in the community – This is where I was born and raised, this is my motherland.
3. In general how do you think the meeting went?
 - a. It was a 180° reversal of how things went during the first meeting.
 - b. The people were engaged in the meeting, reading the Russian translation of the *Healthy Community Manual*, and fully participating in the activities.
4. What could be changed for the next meeting?
 - a. We thought it turned out pretty well, the sacred activity could have been simplified and fewer questions asked.

We had no complaints over the amount of information that was developed from the meeting. Considering the tenor of the first meeting, we could not have been happier about the entire evening. The Chaplino English teacher, Ankatagina Iya, volunteered to help in the community project. Mike had run into her at the Post Office and asked her to meet our group. Ankatagina was born and raised in Chaplino. She attended the university in Anadyr and returned to Chaplino to teach English. Ankatagina would be a good candidate for the second year of the grant program.

18 August 2003

After breakfast we had a meeting with the New Chaplino Mayor. Mike and Galena introduced our group and thanked the Mayor for allowing us to meet with members of the community. The Mayor introduced herself and gave us some basic information on Chaplino. There are 434 residents, 320 Yupik Eskimos, 100 Chukchi, and the rest Russian. Secondary students have a required course of study and also learn native language. Primary and secondary students go to school in the same school. Most of the teachers are from the community. There are 45 kindergarden students which starts at 2 years of age. Only one teacher is an outsider to the community. There is a utility enterprise in the village providing heating and power for the homes, a small first aid station and community store. Most of the employees are Native. The administration office has a Native representative and they plan to start an indigenous culture class in the next year. There are two brigades of marine mammal hunters that help provide meat for the community. In the past there were three brigades. Government reconstruction of the village began last year. During the last half of 2002, 56 new homes were built and they hope to have 40 more homes completed. The community store was built and opened last year. There are plans to build a new kindergarten/day care in the near future. There are 115 students in the New Chaplino School and the old boarding school has been closed for about five years. Police protection is from Provideniya and they are not needed in town very often. The Mayor stated that there was no trouble with domestic violence and little theft in the community. The last major problem with theft occurred two years ago.

Mike told the Mayor that the University had a program to try and place Native teachers into bush communities and asked if Chaplino always had Native teachers in their classrooms. The Mayor said that students are identified as candidates for teachers when they are 14 years of age and are channeled into that specialty through the rest of their school careers. The economic situation is difficult for students, but they can attend the universities in Anadyr or Magadon for free. Josh asked if the community had a voice in the selection process. The answer was that it was indirectly through the school's teachers who are also members of the community. Local citizens have input into additional material presented in the schools that are not part of the national curriculum.

Andria asked if there were any private enterprises within the community, the answer was no. The Mayor said the *Chukotka Trading Company* was providing the new housing. The village utility enterprise was providing the maintenance. Local residents pay for rent, water and power for the houses to the utility enterprise. There is no private ownership of the homes; they are assigned by the local administration.

The Mayor said she really liked the way we had conducted the meeting on the previous night. She said she had visited Gambell before and though they could learn from the people there as well. The Mayor told us that she had scheduled a meeting with the borough Mayor in Provideniya for Wednesday.

We started planning for the third meeting just before lunch. It was decided that Mike would start the meeting with an introduction to the planned activities and a recap of what was covered the night before. The first exercise is to identify changes that have occurred in the community. We decided to limit the number of questions. Josh was tasked with conducting an icebreaker and introducing the first exercise. My job was to explain the concept of community change and how the exercise would be conducted. Andria facilitated the exercise and asked the two questions. The answers were written on slips of paper and then posted on the wall. The answers were read to the audience and then Evelyn explained how change can be good or bad for a community. The break

was next and a door prize would follow it. Melanie introduced the next exercise to identify community visions and dreams. The topic question was “What future do you desire for the people of your community.” The exercise would be conducted like the first one of the evening. Josh planned to take the idea of the medicine wheel and adapt it to organize the answers from the exercise.

Mike did a good job of opening the meeting and outlining the program for the evening. Josh pantomimed some of the favorite activities brought up in the previous meeting and asked people to name them. After guessing the activities shown in the pantomime, the audience was broken into groups asked to pick a favorite activity and pantomime it for the whole audience. Everyone really jumped into the activity and it was well received. I talked to the group about change and brought up a few key points. They included:

- Every community undergoes changes. Some places have had little change, but it has been very rapid in others. Many towns and villages in Alaska have experienced uncontrolled change.
- Healthy communities need to understand the changes that have taken place in their villages to better cope with future changes. Understanding change allows you to take advantage of the new things that are compatible with your way of life and help manage those that can impact the good things in your community.
- Impacts of community change can disrupt a village with different values that can originate from decisions made by outsiders.

The next activity focused on the changes that people have experienced or seen in New Chaplino in their lifetime. Andria asked the audience “What changes have you seen in your lifetime?” Each person was given three pieces of paper and asked to write their answers on them. When they completed the task, the audience was broken into three groups and a spokesman from each group and Olga read the answers to everyone. The following summarizes the responses of the group:

- Foreign guests.
- There are many new houses and the village has a new look.
- There are less fish due to environmental changes.
- The cultural center (club) is gone and we still don’t have a new one.
- Life in the village has gotten better.
- There is more space in the community, but the population has declined.
- Life is better with the new governor.
- There is an opportunity to communicate with relatives in Alaska.
- The climate is getting warmer.
- Villagers have trouble adjusting to the market economy.
- There is more drinking.
- There has been economic decline and growth of unemployment.
- People speak the Native language less.
- There is regular delivery of food.
- There has been development of radio and telecommunications.
- There is less trash in the village.
- Perestroika—there has been a transition from socialism to the current period.
- There are fewer elders now.

Evelyn closed the activity with a discussion of change and what to consider when dealing with change. Evelyn drew a name for the door prize and called the break. Everyone visited while tea was served.

Melanie began the vision exercise with a recap of change and then described community vision and how it is important to provide direction in the face of change. Josh described the idea of the

medicine wheel as a drum cover to illustrate the areas community vision can focus on. Melanie introduced the exercise and asked the question “What future do you desire for the people of New Chaplino?” The same groups were used as before and each group was asked to consider where their answer might lie on the wheel. A picture of the wheel has place don the wall were everyone could see it. We had the people come up and read their answers to the group. It turned out to be a very emotional exercise for everyone present including us. The answers were posted on charts attached to the walls under the most appropriate categories. The answers and groupings were:

Cultural Values:

- Constructions of a new cultural center.
- Revitalization of Native language and culture.
- Preservation of traditional subsistence lifestyle.

Economy:

- More job opportunities and higher salaries.
- Reconstructions of the polar fox breeding farm.
- Ivory and sewing workshop.

Political:

- More active involvement from the people.
- More reasonable government representatives.

Family:

- Promote better parenting skills.

Physical:

- New gym.
- Swimming pool.

Intellectual:

- New school.
- More teachers.
- Conductive conditions provided for better Native language learning.
- Higher level of learning for students and teachers.

Spirituality:

- Promotion of spirituality depends on the preservation and development of the Native language, culture, and trades.

Emotional:

- Mutual understanding from everybody.
- No hate.
- No swearing.

We closed the exercise with some remarks on the meeting as a whole, how well it went and what we planned for tomorrow.

The closing activity was supposed to be another version of the web exercise. There was some confusion on what was to occur and Josh needed to improvise quickly to salvage it. It thankfully turned out well and we realized our little group still had a ways to go in learning to plan for this type of facilitation. The meeting was good and we decided to ask for some feedback from the participants at the beginning of the next meeting.

19 August 2003

The weather was exceptionally good again. We went to Provideniya for the day to explore and visit with the borough Mayor. Mr. Daniluk Eugeny is the Mayor of the Providensky Borough and

we met with him at his office. Mr. Eugeny introduced himself and stated he was very interested in our project. He then asked about setting the agenda for the meeting. Mike introduced himself to the Mayor and explained what we were up to. Mike described the DANRD program in Alaska and the structure of the Park Service grant. Mr. Eugeny had many questions to ask and wanted some concrete examples of Rural Development successes and the experience provided by the RD program. Mike told him that there were many examples of successes in Alaska and that the National Park Service and the University of Alaska – Fairbanks, supported the program.

The Mayor felt that there was a lot for the Native communities to learn, but they also had a lot of potential to solve their problems. The Mayor pointed out that laws are different in Russia, but there were new laws coming into effect that would shift more responsibility to the local communities. One example is that the villages will have their own budgets that will be controlled by local authorities. This means the local government will need to stay within the budget. A positive advantage is that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) will be contributing to the local budget process. This year the borough established an elder's council and charter that will establish local priorities in the community. This council will report to the Borough Mayor. The needs and wishes of the community will be related through this system. Right now there is little activity within local NGO's and local initiative has been very slow. Right now most planning direction is from the Borough. Even if a village has an idea, they are not able to formulate a business plan or write a grant request.

The Mayor asked if the *Healthy Community Manual* was available electronically. Internet access has been paid for in the communities and they would have in installed soon. Access to Alaska needs to be improved; human access to the region is very difficult and expensive. The laws for the border zone make it very difficult for people to visit the region. Federal ordinances limit the number of ports foreign flagged ship may call on. Cruise West attempted operate a tour of the region this year, but could only land at two approved ports. They are Provideniya and Anadyr. The Mayor stated that current governmental efforts were focused on support of the traditional subsistence lifestyle, encouraging traditional crafts and helping the destitute. The government has money to support development of small businesses that could provide traditional clothing for the reindeer herders. The Mayor said that he was going to schedule a meeting in New Chaplino for the local Mayor, our group and himself to further discuss the project.

Our meeting started late, there were fewer people present than the previous three meetings. This day turned out to be one of the days bus transportation was provided to Provideniya and was also an open alcohol sales day. Mike provided the opening remarks and Josh conducted an icebreaker to get things rolling on the issues that could be considered barriers to reaching the community's visions. The web exercise from the previous evening was used as an example. The twine got wrapped up in a huge twisted mess and everyone still worked through the problem to reach their goal. I took over and asked the audience to list three issues they thought could prevent them for reaching their goals. After they finished answering the questions, people came forward and shared their responses with the group. I restated each response to the group and asked if I understood completely what was being discussed. The following is a summary of the responses:

- No money to continue education.
- No curriculum and textbooks.
- Lack of self-confidence and experience.
- Alcoholism.
- Unemployment.
- Lack of equipment and tools.
- Dependency.

- Absence of funding and facilities.
- Bureaucracy.
- Low level of education.
- Lack of knowledge concerning personal rights.
- Parents do not teach children to work.
- Authorities are reluctant to support the population to overcome alcoholism dependency.

The discussion went very well and after it was concluded, I asked which three problems seemed to be worst for them. The first response was that they were all important; but after continued discussion, alcohol use and education were deemed to most important barrier issues. I briefed the group that our next meeting would concentrate on ways they could start dealing with these issues. We thought that this meeting had the potential to be the most divisive and we were all glad it turned out as well as it did.

After the break, Josh introduced the subject of identifying community assets and resources. Josh brought back the idea of the medicine wheel and gave examples of social, physical and spiritual resources that could be present in a community. He asked each person to write down some examples of skills, knowledge, abilities or resources present in Chaplino. When everyone was finished, they came up and shared their ideas with the group. The following is a summary of the responses:

- There are people who preserve their culture, language, and traditions.
- There are teachers who carry on traditional culture.
- There are people of different professions.
- There are people who speak the Native language.
- There are experienced marine mammal hunters.
- There are people who can prepare the blanket toss for festivals.
- There are young people who can prepare the blanket toss for festivals.
- There are young people engaged in dog sled breeding and hunting.
- There are new houses.
- There is a new diesel power plant.
- There are more people who go to the gym.
- There are many talented young people; we have dances, sportsmen, hunters, and mushers.
- There are people here who are ready to change.
- There are people who have quit drinking.
- There is an Elder's council.
- There is an alcohol program for people who want to quit drinking.
- There are polar fox breeders who know how to do this.
- There are good, enthusiastic teachers.

They were then asked to place the slips of paper into a glass jar, which was identified as representing the pooled strength of their community resources.

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I wrote up the front end of the community report that we intended to leave with the community. It covered everything that had been accomplished to date and was only missing the final effort to formulate the action plans. It was a good way to start gathering comments from the entire group and everyone was able to add to and edit it for accuracy. Liudmila Makotrik started working on a translated version immediately and planned to follow the final meeting carefully to help finish the report. We started working on the evening program. The Borough Mayor scheduled his meeting with local administration and our group at 1530.

The meeting with the Borough Mayor began on time and we each had a chance to introduce ourselves in better detail. Everyone commented on how well we had been received by the community and the outstanding support displayed by administration in carrying it out. The Borough Mayor talked about himself in greater detail. Mr. Daniluk Eugeny grew up in a small fishing village not totally unlike New Chaplino. Eugeny went to college and when he graduated, he started working as clerk for the government. He moved to New Chaplino and worked in the village for a while before being appointed to the more regional position he has now. Mr. Eugeny said that the old system of government did not recognize the problems faced by the Native community. They were trying to resolve this and he really liked the Russian translation of the *Healthy Community Manual*, especially the preventive measures section. Eugeny suggested a shortened, more streamlined draft of the handbook. Both of the two Mayors said they would be happy to assist in the editing process.

Evelyn said the last meeting with a recap of the visions, problems, barriers, resources and assets present in the community. Based on the responses we got from the previous meeting we thought that the top three concerns were eradication of alcohol abuse, better education for children and teachers, and preservation of traditional culture. The audience was asked if this seemed consistent with what they had thought of through the week. Everyone agreed to these topics. Evelyn asked the audience to break up into three groups. Each group was assigned a topic and asked, “What do you need to do in the next year to start making your visions for this topic a reality?” This formed the basis of the action plans that can be seen at the end of this report. There was little progress at first, but the people really worked on ideas to resolve the topics and once an answer was written down, they really took off. The plans were well reasoned and thought out. Each group appointed a spokesman who related their plan to the whole audience. Liudmila was busily typing up the action plans to help finish the community report. Josh talked to the audience about what they would need to do next to ensure the success of their planning.

Melanie held the closing section of the project. She asked a series of questions intended to reinforce the ideas presented during the week. Melanie asked four questions of the group:

1. What are some visual memories you have of this week?
 - a. There were many questions.
 - b. Dialogue.
 - c. Relaxedness.
 - d. Networking and the web.
 - e. Examples from New Zealand
 - f. Lottery (door prize) with the tea break.
 - g. New ideas.
2. How does this make you feel?
 - a. It is hard to leave.
 - b. I have much to learn.
 - c. I have learned to plan.
 - d. I have learned to believe in myself.

3. Why is this important to you?
 - a. To adopt experiences.
 - b. The people have the knowledge, but no good mechanism to develop an overall plan.
 - c. Sad I couldn't visit all of your sessions, came just on last day
 - d. Opportunity of dialogue, have learned something new.
4. Name one thing you will commit to doing in the next year to help with these plans.
 - a. I can help with creation of carving workshop
 - b. I can be a part of education project for students and teachers
 - c. Can help to work with traditional crafts and ivory carving
 - d. Mayor Ludmila Karpicheva said as part of her duties, "I'll be part of all the projects. I try to talk to my grandson in the Eskimo language."
 - e. The organization of family holidays
 - f. Traditions of hunting and national culture
 - g. One day per one week to speak in the Eskimo language with my family members
 - h. I will try to learn the Eskimo language
 - i. To help my husband to begin his own business
 - j. I will teach the Eskimo language
 - k. I will teach children the national dances
 - l. To find the person with organizing abilities, to train him to Shichko method, to help in realization of children's exchanges between Chukotka and Alaska

Mike made some closing remarks and presented gifts to the two elders who participated throughout the entire week. He presented gifts to the Mayor for use in the school library and thanked her for the generous support we were given for the project. The evening ended with traditional (and maybe a few that were not) dancing and a celebration of all the work and emotion invested in the week's efforts.

New Chaplino Community Action Plans

I. Eradication of alcoholic dependence

Group leader: Galina Polutornikova

1. Development of the program to propagate a healthy way of life and adult alcohol education in the village.
2. Train one villager in the Shichko technique (to work with alcohol dependent people and help them stop drinking) for a permanent job in the village.
3. To invite psychologists for work with those suffering alcoholic dependence and their families.
4. Creation of club of sobriety - have conversations on anti-alcoholic themes, collection of materials for a village museum, and organization of traditional holidays. The club will be open for visiting by all interested persons
5. Introduction of lessons in living in a healthy way at school and kindergarten.
6. Introduction of the laws regulating behavior in public places and conducting preventive work within the population.

II. Preservation of traditional knowledge

Group leader: Gleb Nakazik,

1. Teaching native children the Eskimo language.
2. Teaching adults the Eskimo language.
3. Tutorship of young people by elders (Elders Council).
4. Learning of Eskimo language in pairs: speaking person - not speaking.
5. Creation of a village museum.
6. Training children in ivory carving.
7. Dog breeding.
8. Conducting traditional dances and songs.

9. Teach people how to make traditional clothes and souvenirs.
10. Prepare traditional native food
11. Repeat oral traditions - myths, fairy tales and teach cultural traditions.
12. Revive traditional holidays.

III. Education for students and teachers

Group leader: Elena Kaminskaja.

1. Give apartments to teachers.
2. Increase salary.
3. Promote cultural and education exchange between Chukotka and Alaska.
4. Visiting Alaska by children to speak on Eskimo language.
5. Cooperation of school in New Chaplino and schools in Alaska.
6. Teach children at school the traditional national crafts.
7. Get parents be involved to school activities.
8. Organize cultural and sporting events between people of New Chaplino and Saint Lawrence Island.

Lessons Learned

1. Obtain a Russian phrase book.
2. Obtain a permit for the satellite phone prior to departing to Russia. Long distance telephone communications are difficult and more expensive than the service provided by a satphone.
3. Insure the study group has a dedicated translator not in conflict with the needs of others.
4. There needs to be better surveillance of the community. Now that we have contacts in the community it would be much easier to plan a visit. Examples include:
 - a. Timing of visit to fit into local calendar of activity.
 - b. Identification of formal and informal community power base.
 - c. Developing an accurate community profile.
 - d. Identify a logistics person for trip – preferably local talent.
5. Define a single purpose of visit. Do not commingle with other conflicting projects or objectives.
6. Conduct a pre-trip seminar with students and review group facilitation of the *Healthy Community Process*.
7. Spent more time developing the equipment/clothing/food list for participants.

Introduction/Overview to the Community Discovery Process

Alaska is a long distance from its national government in Washington, DC, just like New Chaplino is a long ways from Moscow. Alaska and the Chukotka region have been experienced the results of plans generated by those who do not understand the country.

The planning process that we have brought here to New Chaplino is a response to having outsiders make plans for our future. Every community should have the chance to manage its future and preserve its traditions.

During these meetings we are going to ask many questions. There are no wrong answers; each member of the community has important things to say about the future. Our job will be to see which of your ideas are shared and identify the common, core values of New Chaplino.

Alaska communities found themselves too reliant on the government to make planning decisions for them. This reliance prevents communities from doing for themselves. We are not here to solve your problems; we are here to show one of many ways you can consider solutions for your community's problems.

Planning. Why do we plan? When do we plan? You plan every day. You plan hunting trips. You plan for food gathering. You know your community better than anyone else. The process we are bringing from Alaska is new, even to us. It is a way for you to see a different vision for New Chaplino. Planning is a way you can start to manage change in your community.

As you listen to your friends and neighbors, you will hear different ideas and values being expressed. We are using a process that tries to identify common values in your community. You can then use these ideas to judge the effectiveness of future change and development.

This planning process involves several important steps. These are the reason we will ask so many questions. The steps will include asking:

- What has changed in your community?
- What challenges and barriers do you experience that make it hard to deal with change?
- What do you wish for your community, your family and friends? What are the goals of the community?
- What do you have already to deal with change? Why are you strong? What are your community resources?
- Finally, after all these questions are asked, what do you want to plan for your future?

These steps are important because before you decide your future, you need to know where have been and where you are today.

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