TRIP REPORT
For
DR. JERRY L. WADE
16 February to 18 March, 2001

The purpose of the trip was to continue building the community development professional education capability in South Africa. I believe the purpose was achieved and the effort is now moving to the next phase.

The following activities were completed:
1. The fourth offering of Course 1, “Building Communities from the Grassroots.”
2. The first offering of Course 2, “Empowering Communities for the Future.” (The course roster and course evaluation for each course will be forwarded to you by Colin Stewart.)
3. Trip to Cape Town to build the basis for a CDA presence in the Western Cape based at the University of the Western Cape.
4. Seminar at the National Department of Agriculture to attempt to influence policy makers to create a more conducive environment for a new model of community development.
5. Continued building of the CDA network with connections around the country.
6. Organizational development with the CDA – South Africa team to build the organization for the next phase.

The course offerings were very successful. Course 1 have participants from every province representing a wide range of community workers from national and provincial departments and NGO’s. Most importantly, this year’s course had the kind and the mix of participants that has been the goal. It is evidence that phase 1 has been successful completed. Course 2 had an excellent mix of participants and was well received. Just as important, the participants provided the feedback that will allow the changes one always needs to make after the first “trying out” of an educational design. A preliminary decision has been made to offer Course 1 in October, 2001 and to develop a workshop offering in the Eastern Cape in November.

Early indications are that the trip to Cape Town did identify the people and started to build the commitment to create a CDA presence at UWC. Especially important was the emergence of Sharon Penderis with the Institute of Social Development, UWC, as the point person in providing leadership for CDA in the Western Cape.

It is not clear what the impact of the National Department of Agriculture seminar will be. Most of the people at the seminar were not managers/policy makers. However, there was one or two who were in policy positions and may be in a position to make some changes and support the CDA community development model.

In addition to the CDA advancement in the Western Cape, several additional connections were made that will result in an expansion of the CDA influence. A strong set of connections with a clear expression of interest in building community development education opportunities in the Eastern Cape resulted from the course. The connections in KwaZulu Natal built the last trip fell through as the people changed positions and lost interest in providing leadership for CDA in that province. However, a new base was established with people from the provincial Department of Tradition and Local Government. That connection will be followed up on and looks very good at this time. Another relationship developed was with the Peace Corp. There is a good likelihood that a training relationship will be developed. Basically, CDA – South Africa now has a strong network with people and organizations in both the public and NGO sectors. The key will be building on the relationships to evolve to the next level of activities and impacts.

Although the above activities were important, my primary focus this trip was organizational transformation for CDA – SA itself. This offering of Course 1 and 2 clearly indicated that the original purpose had been successfully accomplished. The legitimacy and appropriateness of the CDA community development model has been demonstrated. In fact, one of the continuing inputs from people is that the dominant model is not working well and that the CDA model is the first one that addresses the need to change from a set of relationships based on a dependency/experts model to a community based/community driven model. Secondly, there is clear identification that a quite large market exists that is very response to the educational opportunities offered by CDA. Finally, a basic curriculum design is in place and will require only continual upgrading and modification. The critical question therefore becomes, Now What?
It was clear to me last September that CDA – SA was at a critical juncture. The team needed to declare success and determine what its next phase was and restructure. The impact of the new capabilities in community development that each member now had was taking them in different directions. Everyone needs the opportunity to “move on.” Therefore, I had decided that my major emphasis this trip had to be organizational development and transformation with CDA – SA itself. That effort ended with a series of decisions by the team at its meeting on Saturday, 17 March 2001.

A new organizational structure will create three linked and closely interrelated components, with each operating independently but strongly supporting each other. CDA will become a education/training unit located in Medicos. It will aggressively develop training opportunities and contracts, maintaining its emphasis on community workers and community leaders. It will expand its training capability through the creation of a core network of linkages to organizations and people around the country interested in providing leadership for community development education/training. This unit will probably be managed by Colin Stewart.

A new experimental project will be created at Medicos with Peter Matsontso Matabula providing leadership. The purpose of this project will be to create a model of providing community support in the implementation of the CDA community development model. It has become clear that a community development outreach capability does not exist in any substantial way in South Africa. If the CDA education/training effort is to have long term impact, a new support model is necessary. The emphasis will be on developing an outreach support system, demonstrating its effectiveness, and then transferring the model to other organizational settings.

Finally, both the CDA and the community outreach/support project must be connected to a research capacity. A community development research program will be developed at the University of Pretoria under the co-leadership of Antoinette Lombard and Gerda Bender. This will then provide a growing intellectual foundation and body of research results to both inform the education and practice units and effect change in community development in South Africa.