Spring 2008

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Community-Based Income Generation: A Case Study of its Effects and Replicability in Urucureá, Santarém

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Abstract:

This study examines the method of income generation through handcraft production used by Projeto Saude e Alegria, or the Health and Happiness Project, in Urucureá, a small community in the region of Santarém, Pará, Brazil. Urucureá is a rural community of ribeirinhos (or caboclos), traditional populations living along the banks of the Amazon River and its tributaries. The project of organizing community-based handcraft production in the community began in 1995, and since then the TucumArte group has been quite successful in strengthening their production of woven basketry from the straw of *tucumã*, a locally abundant species of palm tree. This study compares the economic and social environments in Urucureá with those of Nova Sociedade, a neighboring community existing without the income stemming from the work of TucumArte and Projeto Saude e Alegria, in order to evaluate the differences between a community involved directly with a commercial market and one that lacks that link. Through this comparison, the researcher evaluates the effects experienced in Urucureá and the reliability of handcraft production as a mode of income generation on a regional scale. The study concludes that the effects resulting from the income generation are overwhelmingly positive in Urucureá, but that the reliability and replicability of this form of income generation is low, due to the dependence on high community motivation and organization, as well as sustained NGO commitment.
**Resumo:**

Esse estudo focaliza o método de geração da renda por meio de produção de artesanato usado no Projeto Saude e Alegria em Urucureá, uma comunidade pequena na região de Santarém, Pará, Brasil. Urucureá é uma comunidade rural de ribeirinhos (ou caboclos), populações tradicionais morando nas margens do Rio Amazonas e seus afluentes. A organização desse projeto começou em 1995, e desde aquele ano o grupo TucumArte conseguiu fortalecer a produção da cestaria da palmeira de *tucumã*. Esse estudo compara os ambientes econômicos e sociais de Urucureá com os ambientes da Nova Sociedade (uma comunidade vizinha que existe sem a renda que o grupo TucumArte e O Projeto Saude e Alegria organizam em Urucureá) para avaliar as diferenças entre uma comunidade envolvida diretamente num mercadão comercial e uma que não tem essa conexão. Por meio dessa comparação, os estudos foram avaliados nos efeitos dessa renda em Urucureá e na segurança da produção de artesanato para gerar renda em escala regional. A pesquisa chega à conclusão de que os efeitos da geração de renda em Urucureá são muito positivos, mas que a segurança e a facilidade de expansão desse tipo de geração de renda é baixa por causa da dependência em organização, motivação comunitária e do engajamento contínuo da ONG.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledgments go first and foremost to the people of Urucuréa and Nova Sociedade, who so graciously received me into their communities and were more than willing to respond to my questions and share their opinions. Secondly, I want to thank Andréa Colares of Projeto Saúde e Alegria for her patience and ready advice. Thanks also to Gustavo Negreiros and Gabi Fontoura for their help and guidance. Lastly, a deep thank you goes out to the group members of SIT Amazon Spring 2008, without whom I never would have had the courage to undertake this project.

AGRADECIMENTOS

Primeiro, eu gostaria agradecer muito aos moradores de Urucuréa e Nova Sociedade, que me receberem graciosamente nas suas comunidades e responderam as minhas perguntas e deram suas opiniões de bom grado. Em segundo lugar, queria agradecer a Andréa Colares do Projeto Saúde e Alegria pela sua paciência e pelos seus conselhos. Agradeço ao Gustavo Negreiros e Gabi Fontoura pela ajuda e orientação. Por fim, eu agradeço profundamente aos estudantes desse programa, sem vocês eu não teria tido a coragem de aprofundar meu conhecimento nesse projeto.
Introduction:

Around the world, many initiatives have been undertaken to bring income into communities of rural poor. This global issue of income generation has prompted initiatives by local and national governments, national and international agencies, as well as hundreds of nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs. For many of these communities, income generation projects mean a shift from a system of primary reliance on subsistence living to a system that is more commercial in nature, and more directly connected to the global web of economic transactions. These initiatives are often quite successful, bringing in significant amounts of money to communities where previously money held only an auxiliary role, perhaps present only due to government pensions or sporadic selling of excess subsistence products. The shift from a system of subsistence to one linked to the global commercial web is bound to be responsible for some changes in the community in question. Alain de Janvry mentions this propensity for community change in the face of development projects when he states that agricultural poverty is “a state of economic equilibrium reached by agriculture over a long period of time and characterized by constant traditional technology and unchanging farmer preferences and motives.” (Janvry 1975) As motivations change toward profit maximization with the arrival of commercialism, the economic equilibrium of which he speaks shifts as well.

Under the current understanding of the operating global model of development for traditional communities, the income that is brought in through these projects contributes to the opportunity and wellbeing of the community. Still, the income may change societal patterns while at the same time increasing the number of commercial opportunities to take part in the existing model of development. Income generation projects in rural communities have been questioned in the past with regards to their long-term effects, sustainability and general replicability on a larger regional scale for just these reasons. A shift in economic system may lead to unforeseen effects and obstacles in achieving long-term or large-scale sustainability.

In the Brazilian Amazon region, several projects based in nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have been established over the past several decades to bring modes of income generation to primarily subsistence-reliant rural communities. Examples include: Amazon Paper, a cooperative founded by the NGO Poverty and Environment in the Amazon (POEMA) that trains rural communities to produce paper by hand from curauá that can be marketed domestically in the north of Pará (www.ifc.org/gbi), a women’s handcraft
cooperative established in 1999 on the Rio Jauaperi (http://amazonia.org/SustainableDevelopment/Jauaperi), the Fibrarte Project sponsored by Fundação Vitória Amazônica (FVA) (www.fva.org.br), and the subject of this study, the TucumArte Project sponsored by Projeto Saude e Alegria (PSA) near Santarém, Pará. The number of these programs is growing, and these initiatives are rising in popularity.

Projeto Saude e Alegria (PSA), or the Health and Happiness Project, began work thirteen years ago in several small communities along the Rio Arapiuns near Santarém in Pará to use community organization projects to generate income. In the region, the organization oversees several income generation projects, involving currently around ten communities, with the hopes to expand the program. Some such projects include developing small-scale ecotourism, providing opportunities for micro-credit, and bringing agro-forestry education to the rural communities (www.saudeealegria.org.br), but the most developed method of income generation sponsored by PSA is the production of traditional handcrafts to be sold in national markets accessed with the help of the NGO.

Their most successful community in this realm of income generation and community-based handcraft production is a small ribeirinho community called Urucureá, on the banks of the Rio Arapiuns. It has, after more than ten years since the start of the program, been able to successfully involve itself directly with markets for their products outside their communities, with the essential help with market access from PSA. In Urucureá, the community cooperative of artisans creates baskets woven from tucumã, and as a result a significant amount of money has begun to steadily arrive in the community.

Woven from tucumã in Urucureá. Photo by Lucy Midelfort, 2008
Urucureá’s neighboring river communities still exist living similarly to the way Urucureá did before the advent of the TucumArte project run by the PSA, without any organized mode of income generation. These communities continue the primarily traditional subsistence existence that Urucureá did before PSA expanded its initial focus on rural public health to include rural economic development as well. One such close-by community, Nova Sociedade, has been visited recently by PSA and has received some limited public health materials such as water filters and sanitation plates but has no official affiliation with the TucumArte project that has grown into a community cooperative for income generation in Urucureá, or any other organized income generation project.

The juxtaposition of Urucureá, a community now living inextricably and commercially linked to the rest of the country and the world, against the community of Nova Sociedade which still lives largely in isolation provokes several questions regarding the results of this fundamental shift in economic system. What changes occurred in Urucureá with the advent of the TucumArte group? How much money has been brought into the community? What affects does this money have on the residents of Urucureá? What reactions do neighboring residents of Nova Sociedade have to the income that they see in Urucureá? Is a group like TucumArte possible in a community close-by like Nova Sociedade, or are the results difficult to replicate on a larger scale? This study attempts to answer these questions and use the results to evaluate the effects of NGO sponsored programs of handcraft production as a mode of income generation, as well as question the reliability of handcraft production as a mode of sustainable development on a regional scale.

**Justification:**

This study is an attempt to use an example of current rural income generation to discuss the issues present within the wider goal of discovering a good and reliable source of economic development for poor communities around the world. Within the current global understanding of development, money is crucial to advance. Without money, a community or society cannot actively participate in the current manifestation of globalization that encourages shifting further from traditional subsistence living toward commercial living, through which societies become linked through money and products to all areas of the globe. Under these assumed conditions and goals, money is necessary to participate, and those communities still primarily relying on the local environment for survival are currently left with no means to begin effectively participating in the commercial web of development.
Many different types of income generation projects exist, designed to bring rural communities to a point of self-sustained independence and development. These varying projects encounter along the way many obstacles in achieving their goals, however. The example of Urucureá and the project there, set up with the help of PSA, is just one of these projects. It is clear that the project has been successful, since it is bringing in much needed income for poor rural families and avoiding much environmental impact, but the further successes of achieving self-sustainability and replicable results are much more difficult to develop. This study, therefore, examines the obstacles present in finding a mode of rural development that is sustainable without constant aid from outside organizations and reliable enough to be used as a development strategy on a large scale. What sorts of income generation are the most replicable? On what can the growing world population rely as a reliable mode of income generation for the poor? These questions prompted the research in this study that uses one example of a local income generation project to demonstrate the difficulties and question the future of sustainable development on a large scale.

**Background Information:**

The ribeirinho (or caboclo) communities along the Amazon River and its tributaries are not currently recognized by the Brazilian government as communities of traditional peoples. For this reason, residents of communities such as Urucureá and Nova Sociedade do not legally hold rights to the land that they occupy. Additionally, government healthcare services are all but absent in the rural areas where these communities are settled. Some of the members of the communities receive small government pensions, however, and these pensions have traditionally accounted for the majority of the income present in the communities. For these reasons, the work of Projeto Saude e Alegria since its arrival has been responsible for much change in the communities it reaches, bringing rudimentary healthcare and aid in community organization to the area.

PSA is an organization that was founded in 1987 primarily to bring medical care to the rural ribeirinho communities where government-sponsored healthcare rarely reaches. Because of this, some of the profits from the sales of the handcrafts in Urucureá and other participating artisan groups go to community funds for the support of reproductive health. The NGO was founded over twenty years ago and seems to be flourishing, covering many of the areas of assistance that the rural communities require. The NGO has projects within the areas of community health, community organization and management, and education and
communication, aside from income generation initiatives along the Rios Tapajós, Arapiuns and Amazon.

The communities associated with PSA’s income generation projects produce several types of handcrafts using local materials managed in a sustainable manner, ranging from raw rubber which is used to make latex handbags and balls to the fruit of the *cuieira* tree which is used to make carvings, to the straw made from *tucumã*, a local palm tree specially suited to weaving baskets. The products originating from Urucureá are currently certified as environmentally sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), an international organization which verifies environmentally sustainable products all around the world and allows PSA to charge buyers higher prices for the products made from *tucumã*. All the products coming from around a total of ten communities each specializing in products from different natural materials of the forest come together to form the “Mercado Amazônia” which serves as the official link between the rural ribeirinho communities and the larger markets. This market is sponsored by PSA, and most of the products end up in the hands of buyers from outside of Amazônia, either from the south of Brazil or other countries. Since the demand for traditional Amazonian products is relatively low within the region itself, the PSA provides the link necessary to maintain the income generation and to make sure that money generated continues to reach the relatively isolated communities where the products are made. In order to do this, PSA regularly notifies communities of upcoming large artisan markets in Brazil and ensures the transportation of the goods and profits to and from the markets in question.

**Objectives:**

First and foremost, this study documents the differences in the economic and social environments between a traditional subsistence-reliant ribeirinho community and one that has over the past thirteen years begun producing commercial products and generating income, connecting it directly to a commercial market. The differences documented will be used as indicators of a certain level of change that has occurred in the community since it switched from a primary system of subsistence to a system more closely linked to the global economic network of commercial production and consumption. A further objective of this study is to examine the level of difficulty present in achieving self-sustainable income generation through community-based handcraft production and to use those results to propose possible future models for income generation projects.
Methods:

The data for this study were collected in two neighboring communities in the Santarém region along the Rio Arapiuns, Urucuréá and Nova Sociedade. Both communities are home to traditional ribeirinho families relying largely on manioc cultivation, fishing, and fruit gathering for survival. Since Nova Sociedade is a relatively well-preserved traditional community, it provides a good baseline for judging the changes that have occurred in Urucuréá, a community where income provides a variable that affects the economic and social climate.

In order to compare the two communities, several indicators of changes in economic and social factors were developed and used. Examples of such differences that were used as indicators of change include variation in general community structure, variation in the structures of production and consumption, difference in the natures of trading/sharing or reciprocity, disparity between the rates of and reasons for emigration from the communities to the city of Santarém or other commercial centers, variation in the general satisfaction with life, and dissimilarity in the attitudes toward the presence and abundance of money in the communities. Additionally, general attitudes from community members of Nova Sociedade toward the TucumArte group in Urucuréá and toward the prospect of developing a similar group in Nova Sociedade were used to assess the motivation existing in settlements near Urucuréá for expansion of the program sponsored by PSA to include more communities. General attitudes toward expansion of the program to include other communities were also assessed among members of the cooperative of artisans in Urucuréá. These general attitudes were used as indicators of the practical and future replicability of the results of the program in Urucuréá. In Urucuréá, special attention was paid to the actual amount of income received from work in the TucumArte group so as to more easily evaluate the extent to which income generation has altered the presence of money in the community.

In order to determine the general economic and social climates in the two communities using the indicators listed above, semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of both communities. A sample of interviewees was developed from many demographic groups (both genders, varying ages and household roles) excluding residents under the age of 18. The research within the communities took place over a period of ten days, and all other information, such as information given directly by PSA or found in existing literature, was collected outside this time period. The interviews took place in the
homes of interviewees or, in the case of some of the participating artisans of TucumArte, at the small store where the women gather daily to weave. All interviews were conducted in Portuguese. Below is a list of the interview questions used, translated into English. For the full list of interview questions used in Portuguese, see Appendix A.

Questions used in interviewing residents of Urucureá:

1. What is your relation with the head of your household?
2. What was the last year of school you completed?
3. What is your principal occupation? What are your other occupations?
4. What is your income? Do you receive a government pension?
5. Do you think you earn enough money?
6. Do you like your work?
7. How many people live in your household? How are they related to you?
8. Are you involved in the TucumArte group of artisans? If so, when did you begin working in the group, and why?
9. What do you think changed in your life when you or someone in your family began working in the group? Do you think your routine changed? How?
10. Do you think money is very important in your life? Was it very important before the TucumArte group was developed?
11. What would you do with more money?
12. Does everyone in your family live here? If not, where did they go? When did they leave? Why?
13. How often do you go to Santarém? What do you buy there? What do you sell there?
14. In the future, what would you like your children to do after they finish studying?
15. Are you a member of the community association in Urucureá? Are you a member of the rural workers union? Why? What do you think these organizations do for the community?

Questions used in interviewing residents of Nova Sociedade:

1. What is your relation with the head of your household?
2. What was the last year of school you completed?
3. What is your principal occupation? What are your other occupations?
4. What is your income? Do you receive a government pension?
5. Do you think you earn enough money?
6. Do you like your work?
7. How many people live in your household? How are they related to you?
8. What do you know about the TucumArte group in Urucuraé? What do you think of it?
9. Would you like a similar group here in Nova Sociedade? Why? How do you think your life would change?
10. Do you think money is very important in your life?
11. What would you do with more money?
12. Does everyone in your family live here? If not, where did they go? When did they leave? Why?
13. How often do you go to Santarém? What do you buy there? What do you sell there?
14. In the future, what would you like your children to do after they finish studying?
15. Are you a member of the community association in Nova Sociedade? Are you a member of the rural workers union? Why? What do you think these organizations do for the community?

In the interviews, further discussion that the questions prompted was permitted and encouraged. In addition, some information was collected through informal discussion in Santarém with Ândrea Colares, one of the organizers of the Projeto Saude e Alegria’s “Economy of the Forest” program. These discussions revolved around the history of the PSA’s income generation programs and their plans for future growth.

Using the interview as the fundamental data collection tool chosen for the study allowed current residents to give personal accounts of their experiences and opinions regarding the income generated by the artisans in the TucumArte group of Urucuraé. Interviews generally encourage more personal reflection than other personal data collection tools such as surveys, and since the population size of both communities in question is relatively small, smaller numbers of interviews (time-consuming data collection tools) were required to obtain a representative sample from each community.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen to be the integral part of the methods for collecting data because, of all types of interviews, the semi-structured interview is the most easily used in a variety of potential situations. The research questions are made clear through the structured questions involved but there is room for outside information to be brought into
the interview, which can highlight other significant data that was not directly sought in the questions. In this case, while discussing income generation and its effects on the community of Urucureá, this structure for data collection proved best because it allowed the possible effects to be examined and left room for additional data that interviewees brought into the discussions.

Results:

In total, 41 interviews took place in the two communities combined. Of these interviews, 17 were with female artisans participating in the TucumArte group in Urucureá, 5 were with female residents not participating in the group, and 5 were with male community members, all of whom were husbands of artisans participating in the group. In Nova Sociedade, 14 residents were interviewed, 7 of whom were female and 7 of whom were male. Ages of all interviewees ranged from 19 to 72. During the interviews, the aforementioned potential indicators of differences in societal and economic dynamics were questioned, and the responses that were given showed definite variation between the two communities.

The variation that existed in responses was exhibited strongly in the discussion of emigration to Santarém or other city centers. In Urucureá, about one third (1/3) of the interviewees reported having immediate family members living in Santarém or other cities like Belém and Manaus. Interviews in Nova Sociedade, on the other hand, revealed that about two thirds (2/3) of individuals interviewed had a close family member living outside the community in an urban setting. Upon answering when and why those family members left the respective community, all responses in Nova Sociedade expressed opinions that in a city one can create a better life by finding a job. Most responses from residents of Urucureá were similar, but three contradicting responses indicated that the informant’s family member(s) left the community under the impression that finding a job there would make life better. These three interviewees were quick to add that they are not in agreement with that impression. Additionally, two women who were interviewed in Urucureá had actually moved there from the city recently, hoping that life might be better or easier there than it was in Santarém.

These opinions regarding Santarém and other cities also became clear through the inquiries about future plans for the children of the interviewers. In Urucureá, 19 of the 27 responses expressed hope that children of the community would grow up and leave Urucureá to find a job in the city. Strong ideas were articulated that life now in Urucureá is good, but the city would be better for the children of the informants. In Nova Sociedade, on the other
hand, only 4 of the 14 responses indicated a strong hope that future generations would move to Santarém to find work. Instead, several responses showed indifference as to the future home of children. The importance of education for their children was stressed, but interviewers generally showed more flexibility in their ideas for the future of their children.

After discussing opinions about money and its presence in the lives of interviewees in both communities, it became clear that distinct variation between the two communities exists. The average amount of money received per individual family in the form of pensions from the government was similar in each community, but a higher percentage of those interviewed in Nova Sociedade were a part of households that received pensions than were of those interviewed in Urucureá. In both communities, a relatively low percentage of those interviewed expressed satisfaction with their level of income, with only 4% more interviewees reporting satisfaction in Urucureá than in Nova Sociedade. Upon being asked to describe the level of importance of money in the lives of the interviewees, responses from community members of Nova Sociedade showed that money is seen as far less important than was expressed by interviewees in Urucureá. For a graph of these reported societal differences, see Appendix B.

An analysis of the actual total income reported from the sales of TucumArte products by artisans in Urucureá showed that average monthly income has augmented total income by as much as 50%. The artisans interviewed reported an average monthly income of just under R$50 from sales of the basketry, and all artisans who were interviewed described the added income as contributing to family expenses. For a complete list of reported monthly incomes solely from handcraft sales through TucumArte, see Appendix C. This quantification of income augmentation was used to evaluate the specific financial effects of the artisan cooperative in Urucureá.

When responding to questions regarding what interviewees would do if they were to begin making more money, these responses too varied significantly between the two communities. In Urucureá, most responses involved answers such as “build a new house” or “help others in need.” In Nova Sociedade, the responses were generally much more desperate, referring to “buying more food” or “leaving to go live in Santarém.” These results show firm differences in living comfort levels between the two communities.

Interview questions discussing general life changes in families where a member participates actively in the production of baskets with TucumArte all received overwhelmingly positive responses, indicating that life had gotten easier for the family, even with the added daily work of weaving for the family artisan. Most artisans expressed that they
had become much more busy when they joined the group, but still seemed satisfied with the
time they have left to complete other household duties. In Nova Sociedade, when asked about
how life might change if a similar group were formed there, responses were positive but
communicated worries about the difficulty involved in organizing such a project.
Specifically, most interviewees in Nova Sociedade indicated that they thought that having a
group such as the TucumArte in Urucureá might make some difference in their lives, but that
the potential for improvement might not be enough to actually encourage community
members to put in the work to organize it. Several responses expressed worries about the
level of required community organization in order for a new group like the one in Urucureá to
become effective.

In Urucureá, similar questions regarding the expansion of the program to include
other communities were met with concerns about competition, and many interviewees
recognized that organizing such a group requires much effort and support. Artisans in the
group gave suggestions for communities thinking of attempting to develop a similar group,
advising them that they should differentiate their products from the ones made in Urucureá to
reduce the risk of competition and keep prices high, and also warning that a high level of
organization and commitment is required from participating members.

Developing highly organized communities is one of the stressed goals of PSA, one
that has been crucial in the organization of TucumArte for the artisans in Urucureá. Most
residents are both members of the rural worker’s union in the Santarém region, and within the
community of Urucureá several organizations have been formed to bring the community
together. Chief among these is the official community association, ASMOPREURA
(Associação de Moradores, Produtores Rurais e Extrativistas da Comunidade de Urucureá),
which was founded in 2000 to work together to bring community infrastructure such as a new
school, a local radio-station, and a public telephone. The association is officially supported by
PSA, but by a different department than the one overseeing the TucumArte project and other
income generation programs. Other smaller organizations include a youth group and women’s
association, both of which are lacking in less developed communities such as Nova
Sociedade.

Results of interviews broaching the subject of community organization in the
community received telling results. With the exception of one interview in Nova Sociedade
given by a leader of the community association there, all interviewees fustigated the inactivity
of the association. There, the community association is relatively new (two years old) and has
been met with little active participation and support. By contrast, in Urucureá, the community
association was described generally positively. Two exceptions to the positive responses were received. One interviewee explained his nonmember status by expressing distaste for the association, stating that it actually does very little for the community, and another interviewee and a member of the association described the current association as needing serious assistance due to a current lack of effective leadership. Most residents of both communities are members of both the workers union and their respective community association, however, despite criticism of the true effectiveness of the groups. Some positive responses in Urucureá about the association and other groups claimed that infrastructure development is and should be the primary function of the association, while others explained the need for collaboration in order to provide support for community projects. While participation in the association in Urucureá was found to be higher than in Nova Sociedade, many interviewees admitted that the group there does almost nothing for the community, citing causes for their dissatisfaction like a lack of ideas for projects and lack of leadership in the community association. Some responses even included assertions that the family of the interviewee continues to pay monthly for membership even though he/she sees little progress coming from the group.

Other general observations were gleaned from time spent in the communities, outside of formal interviews. An example of these observations was the presence of motorized transportation existing in Urucureá (mopeds, several larger motorized boats) which require gas and therefore even more closely link the communities to the commercial market and increase reliance on money, while at the same time requiring the use of more natural resources in the daily routine. Also, one large boat now departs from Urucureá for Santarém twice a week, furthering the connection the community has with the commercial center.

Additional general observations of differences include a reduced amount of litter in Urucureá and the presence of trash collection bins and the presence of two small shops in houses selling staple foods such as rice and beans, as well as some sweets and alcoholic beverages. No such store exists in Nova Sociedade. One last observation came to light after some informal discussion with members of the community, when it became clear that several families in Urucureá seem to have given up or abandoned the traditional patch of plantation used for cultivation of corn and manioc, and now choose to buy such staples as farinha from other families. This is a tangible example of the abandonment of traditional practices in favor of the modern system of commercial exchange. This abandonment has not occurred in Nova Sociedade, where every family keeps a small plot of land for personal cultivation and consumption.
**Analysis:**

The results found from interviewing members of Urucureá and Nova Sociedade bring up several interesting and recurring issues that arise when discussing development under the current world system. Money is necessary for poor communities to advance or develop in the manner that the world sees as vital. It cannot be ignored, however, that for many of the poor communities in the world such as Urucureá and Nova Sociedade, money is a very recent addition to their lives. What sorts of effects does the introduction of income have on a community? Are all the effects positive? Surely, many of them are. For example, almost every person interviewed in Urucureá spoke highly of the TucumArte group and thought that life had become easier in the years since they began participating in the production. Still, there have been several effects on the community of Urucureá that go beyond simply increasing the amount of currency that flows through the community. As can be seen from the results of the interviews conducted in this study, several other factors, such as attitudes and goals, changed. Many of these indirect effects are indeed positive, but some may not be so. By analyzing the responses found in the interviews and the general observation of differences between Urucureá and Nova Sociedade, one can see that the commercialization of a community is a more complicated process than might at first be expected.

For example, opinions regarding the city of Santarém varied between the two communities. Even though the percentage of families with members living in the city is higher in Nova Sociedade, a much higher percentage of families in Urucureá expressed hope that children and future generations would leave the community and settle in the city to find a job and ensure a better life. In other words, interviewees seemed to be more generally satisfied with life in Urucureá, but believed more strongly than residents of Nova Sociedade that leaving to live in the city would make life easier for the children of the community. What this data shows is that there is a stronger ideological link between Urucureá and the city of Santarém than there is in Nova Sociedade, and hence than there probably was in Urucureá before the advent of the income generation project which seems to have for the foreseeable future linked the people of Urucureá to the outside world. Analysis of this data shows that amid the positive change for families in Urucureá brought by the artisan’s cooperative and the money resulting from it, there has also been some sort of ideological shift that now more closely connects Urucureá to Santarém on a psychological level. In other words, residents of Urucureá are generally better off than those of Nova Sociedade, but they also dream more of leaving the community.
What does this response mean for the future of Urucureá? It is impossible to assume that the future generations of Urucureá will actually leave the community at a greater rate than the future generations of Nova Sociedade, but it is a distinct possibility only enhanced as the community gradually becomes more and more connected to Santarém. If the TucumArte group of artisans continues for decades into the future, it is difficult to say what will happen to Urucureá. Now, after 13 years of formal income generation, the community is thriving, but if opinions continue to be as they are now, it is quite possible that younger generations will end up leaving the community at a higher rate to find a better life further from home, which may eventually effect the future of Urucureá as a community. One cannot assume that these changes will occur, but they are possible results of the different mindsets that exist today between the two communities studied.

Another indication of change was found in the differing opinions about money and the role it plays in the lives of the residents of the two communities. Despite the fact that income from families where a member is an artisan participating in the TucumArte group is much higher (50% higher, on average) than families solely relying on government pensions, only 4% more of the interviewees in Urucureá felt satisfied with the amount of money they earned than interviewees in Nova Sociedade. What does this say about the program of income generation in Urucureá? It seems to suggest that though the income brought in by the project is a help to the community, it does not begin to reach the level necessary to truly bring community families to a level where reassurance about financial worries is possible. The project is effective, but maybe not effective enough to successfully pull the community out of the isolation of agricultural poverty and subsistence living. These results emphasize the fact that rural development projects are enormously difficult to organize to the extent where they can efficiently pull communities out of poverty. The TucumArte project and PSA have been hailed as leaders in the field of income generation projects, but according to the residents of the community in question, much more income would be necessary to ease financial worries. Is that sort of growth possible with this type of project? The work done by PSA is clearly bringing positive change to the participating families, but is there room for growth in this realm of handcraft production to allow the artisans to reach the point of earning “enough?”

Despite this, the living situations in the two communities do seem to suggest much improvement in Urucureá. The discussions had in Urucureá about what would be done with more money revealed wishes to help other families who are in need or to build larger, newer houses, neither of which is an response indicating much desperation. In Nova Sociedade, on the other hand, most responses revealed that extra money would be used either to buy
supplementary food or to move to Santarém. These responses indicate more financial desperation in Nova Sociedade, although the wishes to move to Santarém contradict the earlier responses directly concerning opinions of the city. This disparity might be explained by the presence of ideas or maybe misconceptions in Nova Sociedade that people living in the city are at financial ease. The community members seem to lack the actual desire to leave the rural life to live in the city, but believe that moving there might make life easier.

Because of the overwhelmingly positive responses with reference to the changes experienced in the lives of artisans and their families, it is fairly clear that a group such as TucumArte has been a tremendous success for Urucureá, at least during the current time frame. Unfortunately, the responses from artisans in Urucureá about nearby replication of the program were not encouraging. Though all artisans seemed to believe that other communities would wish for a similar program in their community, none of the women seemed to think it was very possible, for several reasons. Some artisans pointed out the necessary community organization that might be a hindering factor in replicating the project, while others simply expressed worry about the idea of replication, recognizing that replication might mean more competition for the TucumArte group and hence might mean lower sales prices for all.

Both of these objections are significant. If PSA were to take income generation to a higher priority level and begin to organize artisan cooperatives in a large number of communities (PSA currently does have a plan like this, but at this point it only incorporates an addition of five communities, and over a large area.) it is likely that it would run into both of these problems. Programs such as TucumArte require not only support from PSA or a similar organization, but also much support and initiative from the community itself in the form of community organization. Since the association is so new in Nova Sociedade, this organization is clearly lacking the required initiative to take on such a project, even if individual members of the community express interest in bringing something similar to the community. Additionally, the worry about competition is a large one, one that will be an issue with PSA even if only the projected five new communities are brought into the “Mercado Amazônia.” As more communities are brought in and produce similar woven objects using tucumã or similar fibers, competition will increase between the communities for the sales sponsored by PSA at the markets they help the communities access. Since the five new communities are all currently being designed to produce tucumã products and not products using other forest materials, it is very likely that such competition will increase. What effects will this competition have on Urucureá?
Additionally, how much community organization is really required to set up a cooperative of artisans? In the case of Urucureá, it seems that community organization is always cited as one of the factors determining the possibility of forming such a group, but many responses from community members stated that at least currently, the level of community organization is not very high and the existing community groups do little to actually help the community. Additionally, the TucumArte group was founded five years before the official community association, in 1995. From where did the community motivation come to organize the group? Surely, it is likely that Urucureá had several motivated families, but it is probable that much of the initial motivation actually came directly from PSA, whose previous work in the community had revolved solely around rural health issues. Women in the community who now work in the cooperative often describe the group as helping them get better prices for the goods they have been producing for generations, selling them locally and sometimes in Santarém for low prices. The crucial shift, then, came with the addition of PSA’s support, and not necessarily from the presence of a large previously existing level of community organization.

The issue of dependence is an enormous worry with reference to such NGO projects. Organizations such as Projeto Saude e Alegria develop projects to better the lives of isolated communities to the extent to which NGO resources can maintain the assistance. Often these projects change the overall nature of the community in some manner that would collapse if the NGO stopped being able to consistently lend its support. This is not to say that the work of PSA is not warranted, or does not achieve positive results like in the case of Urucureá, but other issues of sustainability exist. Even now, in Urucureá, this issue is becoming apparent. Currently, the products of the TucumArte cooperative are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as environmentally sustainable. This seal is especially useful in helping the community get better prices for their products, thus augmenting their income even more than it would otherwise. Unfortunately, the certification extremely expensive, and PSA is having difficulty funding the continuation of this certification.

This is only one example of the types of dependence that can develop in communities when NGOs bring projects with the means to make life better in the community. In the case of Urucureá, the artisans and their cooperative are entirely dependent on the continuous support from PSA for the administrative help, for maintenance of the sustainability seal, and for their continued and reliable involvement in the community. There is no reason to expect the involvement of PSA to wane any time in the near future, but it is a distinct possibility that some time in the future some sort of external condition will require PSA’s work to downsize
in some manner. If that occurs, the communities with whom the PSA has worked will be strongly and negatively affected by this decrease in involvement and assistance. This is not to discredit the work of PSA which has touched many hundreds of families in many different areas and has been responsible for much positive change through their public health initiatives and community organization and infrastructure support, as well as through their income generation projects. Their work certainly is a positive force in the region. Still, dependency has undoubtedly developed in every community with which the organization has worked. The change has been positive, but the communities are not equipped to maintain the positive change without the continued aid of the NGO. This is a recurring issue present in any discussion of the nature of aid. Aid in the form of large monetary gifts has long been fustigated as unsustainable, drawing recipients to rely on the system and then ceasing to continue, allowing recipients of the aid to fall back to the situation in which they existed before. NGO support demonstrates a less extreme case of this problem since it is designed to last for long periods of time, but it nonetheless fosters dependency. With that dependency comes the danger that the support will at some point falter, leaving communities sometimes in worse situations than they were in before the initial aid.

In the case of Urucureá, if PSA support were to falter and the community was once again left without access to markets where better prices can be found for their products, the community might find it difficult to readjust to life without the income that it has grown accustomed to. It is difficult to say specifically what the effects of this backward shift would be, hypothetically, but in many areas of the world this is a persistent concern existing about the effects of NGO support. In a way, the support that PSA has provided in helping organize and maintain the TucumArte cooperative has actually brought Urucureá to a heightened state of dependence. This community dependence does not only apply to the present support from PSA. It also applies to dependence on money in general. Of course, the government assistance in the form of pensions has also contributed to this dependence, but the community of Urucureá is, at present, very dependent on economic fluctuations such as the demand for their products, and the families that have chosen to give up plantations of manioc and corn are now much more dependent on their income from sales of handcrafts and hence more vulnerable when faced with fluctuations in income. In discussing the value of subsistence production, Michael Chibnik says, “When the effects of risk are considered, it seems that farmers should often value subsistence production higher than retail price.” (Chibnik 1978) If the families that have given up their subsistence options were to have their income falter at this point, they would be significantly worse off than they were before the arrival of their
income in the first place, for they would be without a backup plan to return to subsistence cultivation. In other words, the effects of the income generation project in Urucureá have been positive and have made a difficult, isolated life easier, but the income has also made the community more vulnerable to changes in support or changes in economic strength.

This possibility of overdependence, then, is a serious worry. It is possible, however, that effective community organization and social cohesion may be the answer to reducing some of this threat. According to David Korten of The Ford Foundation and The Asian Institute of Management, “Many observers have looked to effective community-controlled social organizations as important if not essential instruments if the rural poor are to give meaningful expression to their views, mobilize their own resources in self-help action, and enforce their demands on the broader national political and economic systems.” (Korten 1980) It seems that with the presence and maintenance of well-developed community organization, independence manifested in many forms may result. According to this view, community organization may in fact not be the determining factor in the possibility of developing community cooperatives supported by outside organizations, but it may end up being the determining factor in the extent to which a community becomes dependent on outside organization and support.

For this reason, it is crucial that the community organization grows to be strong and cohesive in Urucureá. Currently, the appraisals of the effects of the community association from residents are more critical than positive. In order to lessen the dependence of the community on the help they consistently receive from PSA, it is necessary for concentration to be placed on motivating the leaders of the association to develop community projects separate from the aid of PSA. Perhaps with the development of such social cohesion, the likelihood of long-term dependency will be reduced. Overall, community organization seems to be important at all stages of the income generation process, but in the case of Urucureá community organization was in reality relatively low before the arrival of PSA, and the artisan’s cooperative has been successful despite the initial lack of self-organization. This fact is encouraging for communities such as Nova Sociedade, where community organization is still lacking cohesion and motivation. For Urucureá, which has reached a point of development where a steady cooperative already exists, community organization may now be vital to maintain community independence and reduce future risk of income collapse.
Conclusions:

The sort of income generation sponsored by Projeto Saude e Alegría in Urucureá has been decidedly successful in its thirteen years of growth. By now, monthly incomes of participating artisans have increased as much as 50%, and comfort level in the community seems noticeably higher than in Nova Sociedade, just a few kilometers away. The cooperative has succeeded in developing a healthy and sustainable rate of extraction of *tucumã*, and has been certified by the seal of the FSC, which has been responsible for a recent increase in profits from the operation. Most families in Urucureá have a member of the household participating in the cooperative, and PSA has brought the woven products from Urucureá and the few other participating communities to markets in national centers such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The project in Urucureá has been tremendously well received by the press, and one artisan recently visited New York City to publicize the group.

Members of the community also seem enormously pleased with the results of the income generation project. This is perhaps the most important indicator of its success. All interviewees seemed enthusiastic about the program and its effects, and all residents interviewed in Nova Sociedade expressed some interest in replicating the project in a similar fashion there. Thus, the project is something that other nearby communities recognize as being responsible for the positive changes that have occurred in Urucureá. That being said, the project has many more sides than simply easing the stress of poverty for the residents of Urucureá. The future of the community is unsure, due to the demonstrated interest in directing future generations to leave the community and find a better life in a more urban setting. Also, attitudes toward money indicate possible negative effects in Urucureá, though on the surface the changes seem purely positive. The similar percentages of families in Urucureá and in Nova Sociedade that are satisfied with their level of income indicates that the introduction of an income source in the community has not increased overall satisfaction, but instead may have caused a trend toward viewing money in a different way. This shift may result in the growth of the view of money as an ultimate and necessary factor in life. In Nova Sociedade, by contrast, the results seem to indicate that money is not viewed as necessary for survival but more as a supplement to the traditional subsistence agriculture and fishing that has existed in the area for generations.

This change in outlook about necessities for survival is a serious change for the community. This is, perhaps, simply an unfortunate but inevitable result of such programs that attempt to involve traditional communities with world financial structure, only to
discover that the program has altered, maybe permanently, the traditional economic arrangement that has existed for centuries. This is not to contradict the fact that the change may be positive, but at the same time the change does fundamentally alter the subsistence system of traditional communities and involve them in a fight against poverty that was, perhaps recently, not even an issue before.

The question of community organization is a complicated one. It is clear that community organization greatly enhances the strength of a population, especially one like Urucureá and other rural, isolated communities in the Amazon region. But for what specifically is this community organization best suited? The PSA has provided much assistance in developing unified community groups in Urucureá and many other villages in the region. The results of this work may effectively lessen the potential dependence that naturally develops in situations where communities are regularly visited by an NGO such as PSA. It also may ease the process of developing new projects in the community to generate income. In order to reduce risk of further income collapse, for one reason or another, it would help to develop other groups in the community that generate income in different ways. This development would certainly benefit from occurring alongside established community organizations that are independent of the NGO in question, and the resulting income diversification would also reduce the vulnerability of a group such as TucumArte in Urucureá, which depends entirely on the support of the PSA for market access and administrative assistance.

The dependency of a program such as the one existing in Urucureá on the Projeto Saude e Alegria is a serious issue, and the case of Urucureá is only one of many projects dealing with such threat. These problems are global and exist in any place where aid is brought to a community with the intention of encouraging strengthening. How can groups like TucumArte over time develop the ability to maintain their income generation without the continued marketing assistance supplied by PSA? All over the world, experts are struggling with this issue. In a publication by the Australian government, income generation in rural communities “requires an enabling environment, including functional rural markets.” (AusAID 2000) This statement implies that development of this kind inherently depends on a type of reliable catalyst. According to this statement, without organizations such as PSA, it might be simply impossible for Urucureá to sustain their group in anything close to the form that exists today. In order for the group to be self-sustaining, rural markets would be necessary and unfortunately in the Amazon region there exists very little demand for local
forest products. The necessary rural markets for traditional handcrafts simply do not exist in the area.

Perhaps most importantly, how replicable is this scenario on any large scale? With this issue of dependency, the topic of overall project replicability surfaces. All in all, how replicable are the results in Urucureá? What would happen if PSA began to increase the size of its program to include, for instance, fifteen or twenty communities in the region (still excluding many)? Since programs like these can significantly improve a community’s economic situation, it is very likely that more and more of these programs will gradually develop in the region. In an article evaluating the existing sustainable development programs in the Brazilian Amazon, Drew Nelson cites this realistic if not wisely farsighted problem. Will not this growth in the number of programs increase the supply of the handcrafts being produced to the point that they are all devalued (Nelson 2004)? If many of the communities began producing merchandise from tucumã, competition would be extremely high between the communities and it is likely that prices would begin to slowly decrease. Solely for this reason, artisan cooperatives such as TucumArte are not reliable for large-scale development plans. Involving too many people floods the market for handcrafts, and reduces the positive effects for those who participate.

Some cite income diversification as the answer to this problem, and some researchers have begun to address the question. How much diversification, or specialization, is necessary to get to a reliable point where income is sustainable and guaranteed (Girón, Hernández, and Castañeda, 2004)? With effective income diversification within communities, risk of the results of demand fluctuations can be reduced. Between communities, such as the ones involved with PSA, income diversification could help avoid creating the competition in the first place. Still, it is difficult to manage tens of communities if each income generation project is different from the next. Naturally, PSA has plans to concentrate efforts to develop the most successful of their income generation efforts. Currently, their handcraft production projects are most successful and developed. The “Mercado Amazônia” organized by PSA does offer at least four different types of forest products, each relying on a different local medium. This is a step in the right direction, but in order to truly reduce competition while at the same time expanding the program to include many communities, it would be necessary to develop further other entirely different forms of income generation such as ecotourism and agro-forestry development. Projeto Saude e Alegria is currently involved with such programs, but they have not yet been developed to the extent to which the handcraft production has. Additionally, it is simply unreasonable to ask so much of a relatively small NGO which also
works in many other areas of the Santarém region where PSA is based. This is a complicated problem. Large-scale development projects are too much for a small NGO to take on and very difficult to administer in a sustainable and healthy manner. Government projects reach many more people, but are often poorly managed, with many more faults than a locally managed organization. Income generation projects may be ineffective when administered on a large scale even if they reach many people, but when they are administered on a small scale and are managed correctly and efficiently, it is impossible to reach the number of people who need the assistance.

The case of income generation in Urucureá is a complicated one. Many of the results are decidedly positive, bringing new opportunities to a community that previously lacked access to goods and services that much of the world enjoys. There are, however, many difficult issues present in and around this project. There is much demand in the Santarém region for assistance with income generation, but PSA is lacking the means to expand the program to the extent to which it would be necessary to include everyone. Additionally, even if the results could be replicated it is very possible that the system then would be less effective for each participating community. These are challenges that exist globally, in any region where people live in rural poverty. There are countless organizations attempting to better this situation, and there is certainly progress being made, but there are still kinks in the current methods that will need to be sorted out if the world’s rural poor are to be brought out of poverty. There are many questions still to be asked, and many answers still to be found.

This study only scratches the surface of issues that are present, but it brings light upon a type of development effort that is growing in popularity. Further research is necessary in this field to address issues such as how to develop the necessary level of established community organization in order for income generation to become risk-free and remain equal in the communities. Other questions prompt further research in this field. Such future valuable research would tackle issues such as difficulty in maintaining markets for the goods produced in income generation projects and the difficulty existing for community members to know how to respond to demand fluctuations outside the community without relying solely on support from an outside organization such as an NGO. Rural income generation as a mode of development is a growing field, one with many merits but also many imperfections. In order for this field to gradually obliterate these imperfections, more in-depth research is necessary.

Nonetheless, a successful mode of income generation for rural communities along tributaries of the Amazon River has been satisfactorily developed in Urucureá. This success
was brought about through essential and maintained assistance from an established nongovernmental organization committed to sustaining its involvement with the community. The comparison between Urucureá and Nova Sociedade provides a useful baseline for evaluating change that has occurred in Urucureá since the development of TucumArte, and facilitates assessment of the implications of those changes for the future of Urucureá.
Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions, Portuguese.

Used in interviewing residents of Urucureá:
1. Como é a sua relação com o chefe da casa?
2. Qual é o seu grau de escolaridade?
3. Qual a sua ocupação principal? Quais as outras?
4. Qual é a sua renda? Você recebe bolsa família?
5. Você acha que ganha suficiente?
6. Você gosta do seu trabalho?
7. Quantas pessoas moram na sua casa? Como é a sua relação com eles?
8. Você está envolvido(a) no grupo TucumArte? Quando você começou a trabalhar no grupo? Porque?
9. O que você acha que mudou na sua vida quando você ou alguém da sua família começou a trabalhar no grupo? Você acha que o seu cotidiano mudou? Como?
10. Você acha que o dinheiro, em geral, é muito importante na sua vida? O dinheiro era muito importante antes da chegada do grupo TucumArte?
11. Se tivesse mais dinheiro, o que você faria?
12. Todas as pessoas da sua família moram com você? Se não, para onde eles foram? Quando e porque decidiram sair?
13. Quantas vezes por mês você vai para Santarém? O que você compra por lá? O que você vende?
14. No futuro, o que você gostaria que os seus filhos fizessem após os estudos?
15. Você é sócio(a) da associação de Urucureá? Você é sócio(a) do sindicato? Porque? O que você acha que eles fazem na comunidade?

Questions used in interviewing residents of Nova Sociedade:
1. Como é a sua relação com o chefe da casa?
2. Qual é o seu grau de escolaridade?
3. Qual a sua ocupação principal? Quais as outras?
4. Qual é a sua renda? Você recebe bolsa família?
5. Você acha que ganha suficiente?
6. Você gosta do seu trabalho?
7. Quantas pessoas moram na sua casa? Qual é a sua relação com eles?
8. Você conhece o grupo TucumArte em Urucureá? O que você acha dele?
9. Você gostaria que houvesse algum grupo como o TucumArte na sua comunidade?
   Porque? Como a sua vida mudaria?
10. Você acha que o dinheiro, em geral, é muito importante na sua vida?
11. Se tivesse mais dinheiro, o que você faria?
12. Todas as pessoas da sua família moram com você? Se não, para onde eles foram?
    Quando e porque decidiram sair?
13. Quantas vezes por mês você vai para Santarém? O que você compra por lá? O que você vende?
14. No futuro, o que você gostaria que seus filhos fizessem após os estudos?
15. Você é sócio(a) da associação da Nova Sociedade? Você é sócio(a) do sindicato?
    Porque? O que você acha que eles fazem na comunidade?
Appendix B: Compared Education Levels and Financial Positions

Education Level and Financial Dynamics of Interviewees

A comparison of several community dynamics surveyed in both communities studied.
Appendix C: Reported Incomes from Sales of TucumArte Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artisan #</th>
<th>Reported Monthly Income (R$)</th>
<th>Reported Income Uses</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>School materials, clothes, food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Food, clothes</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Necessities, food, school materials</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>House necessities, food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Food, medicines</td>
</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Food, medicines</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Water, Union dues, food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Food, medicines</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Food, clothes, shoes, medicines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>School materials, food</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A complete list of average monthly incomes from sales of artisan-work in Urucureá, according to twenty individual artisans.
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9. [www.ifc.org/gbi](http://www.ifc.org/gbi)

10. [www.saudeealegria.org.br](http://www.saudeealegria.org.br)
Advice! For future students:

- If interested in working with PSA, or in fact with anything regarding income generation, Ândrea Colares is an absolute dear to work with. She’s accommodating, understanding, and helpful. andreacolares@saudealegria.org

- Be wary of trying to contact FVA about their income generation projects. I had a bit of a bad experience since I contacted them before I really knew specifically what I wanted to do. I think they feel too busy to really take on helping a clueless American student. Anyway, the responses I got were nowhere near as helpful as the ones from PSA, and their programs are really similar, so why not just go for PSA?

- Try not to stress out. I know, this is not possible, but try to keep it in mind, since you want to ENJOY your last month in Brasil and not let this thing effect you too much. Let’s face it. . . It’s just a paper! And most of you aren’t getting grades anyway at your schools.

- Don’t be scared of emailing in Portuguese! Your Portuguese WILL be good enough to get your point across, and if you get every email corrected before you send it by a native speaker, the person you are emailing will be misinformed about your real abilities in the language. As long as you get your point across, everything will be fine.

- The process of figuring out an ISP topic is really hard. You are expected to have ideas really early on in the program, usually before you have ANY idea of what is possible or what organizations exist that you might work with. So, if possible, take your first idea and immediately look on the SIT website for links to organizations that it recommends. Believe it or not, there is a list of links! Check out the websites, and trust your instincts.

- Try to get Gustavo to reveal his real opinions about organizations, or movements, or companies. This is hard sometimes, but is really useful and can make figuring out ISP questions much easier. Squeeze it out of him!

- If staying in Santarém, try Hotel Brasil. It’s cheaper than other places, and bearable, even though the owner is a slick businessman, trying to get you to stay three extra nights, no matter when you tell him your flight back to Belém is.
Synopsis:
Community-Based Income Generation: A Case Study of its Effects and Replicability in Urucureá, Santarém

Lucy Midelfort

Woven from tucumã in Urucureá. Photo by Lucy Midelfort, 2008

This study examines the method of income generation through handcraft production used by Projeto Saude e Alegria, or the Health and Happiness Project, in Urucureá, a small community in the region of Santarém, Pará, Brazil. Urucureá is a rural community of ribeirinhos (or caboclos), traditional populations living along the banks of the Amazon River and its tributaries. The project of organizing community-based handcraft production in the community began in 1995, and since then the TucumArte group has been successful in strengthening their production of woven basketry from the straw of tucumã, a locally abundant species of palm tree. This study compares the economic and social environments in Urucureá with those of Nova Sociedade, a neighboring community existing without the income organized by the TucumArte group and Projeto Saude e Alegria, in order to evaluate the differences between a community involved directly with a commercial market and one that lacks that link.

Through this comparison, the research evaluates the effects experienced in Urucureá and the reliability of handcraft production as a mode of income generation on a regional scale. The study looks for indicators of change in Urucureá such as different relationships
with Santarém (the nearest commercial center) and different views regarding the presence of and satisfaction with the amount of money existing in the community, and also surveys community ideas about developing similar income generation projects in other nearby communities. Additional analysis is concerned with community dependence on the high level of continuous support from PSA.

The study concludes that the effects resulting from the income generation are overwhelmingly positive in Urucureá, but that the reliability and replicability of this form of income generation is low due to the dependence on high community motivation and organization, as well as sustained NGO commitment. Since this type of income generation project (using cooperative traditional handcraft production) is growing in popularity and exists in the form of current projects in many areas of the world, the study emphasizes the importance of community organization independent of the NGO involved and income diversification within the community in question so as to reduce the risk of future overdependence on NGO support and vulnerability to exterior fluctuations in product demand.