

Strengthening Gender Responsive Global Agricultural Education and Outreach in Higher Education: The Origins of a Community of Practice

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Introduction

- Growing consensus in the global development community underscores the central importance of gender equality and women's empowerment, not only as necessary social justice objectives, but also as being essential towards the achievement of broader development outcomes in agriculture, education, health, and economic **growth** (Johnson et al., 2020).
- **Development** programs in the past two decades increasingly emphasize women's empowerment in agriculture (World Bank, 2011).
- U.S. universities are among organizations **striving to better understand gendered aspects of agricultural research, extension, and education.**
- Universities contribute through:
 - Leading collaborative international research,
 - Providing direct technical assistance in communities, and
 - Critically preparing graduates to enter careers in development (Leal Filho, 2011; National Research Council, 2006).
- **Faculty must be prepared with tools, resources, and knowledge to integrate gender into their global development teaching, research, and outreach.**

Results to Date



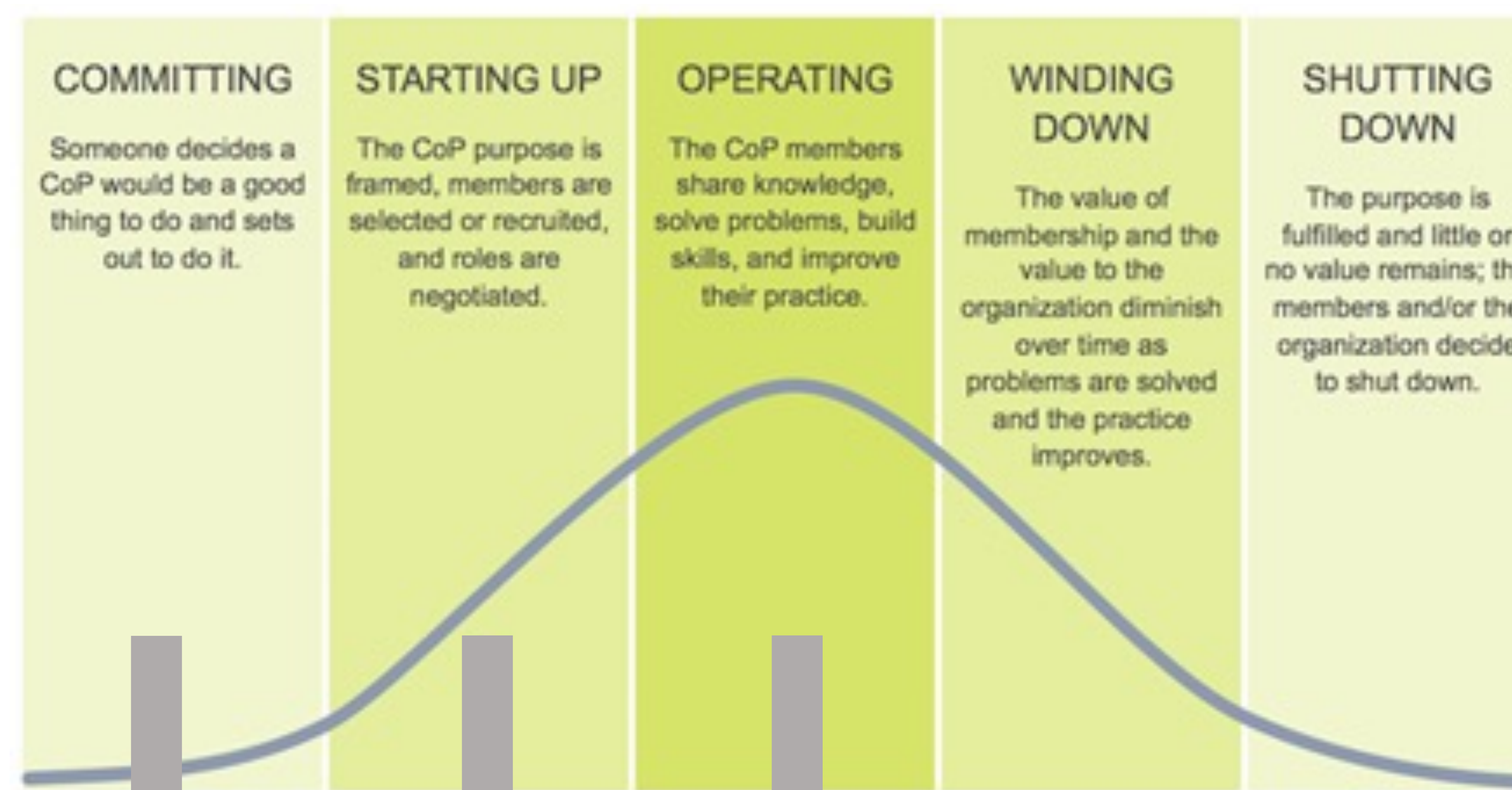
How it Works

Project Goal: Provide engaging, evidence-based, and practically-relevant curriculum that explores a broad range of development issues through a lens of gender equality and women's empowerment

Community of Practice (CoP) Defined:
"A group of people who share a common interest and interact often to learn from each other to advance their work" (USAID, 2013)

- We created the Gendered Lens Curriculum in International Development (GLCD) project from a collective realization of these identified needs.
- Team Members:
 - Texas A&M University faculty, graduate students, staff, and undergraduate students
 - Volunteer Advisory Board members from six universities/organizations
- Additional Result: a new Community of Practice (CoP). CoPs:
 - Focus on a specific topic or subject matter area
 - Openly engage community members from various stakeholder groups
 - Often host a repository of materials, evidence, and publications

Stages of Community of Practice Development



Our Project

- Need was recognized by individual faculty and students separately. Efforts made to bring together implementers around issues, but target community did not exist.
- Funding served as a catalyst for the coalescing stage of CoP beginning in 2020; The advisory board was formed and consultations with community to identify objectives and focus areas.
- Actively working together to conceptualize and develop a free, easily accessible curriculum; Members meet regularly to share lessons learned, present results, and brainstorm.

Resources Needed

The success of the CoP was largely a result of volunteer faculty and student time. However, it was catalyzed and is rooted in the tangible products produced through funding provided by the U.S Department of Agriculture and Texas A&M University through two projects with associated budgets.



~About **15 Student Worker Hours per Month** (event planning, website content development- excludes resources for module development)



~**5 hours/month per volunteer Advisory Team member; and 20 hours/month Project Director** time



<**\$1,000 per year** for website and learning management system hosting.

Future Plans

- Momentum and interest of the project in growing!
- Partner Universities are seeking funding to continue and formalize the CoP while also expanding and diversifying the project
- The CoP will also expand the community with broader participation from the NGO and donor community.
- Plans to launch many web-based events and continue to pursue collaborative research to inform gender responsive teaching, research and outreach

References

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