BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND

EVALUATION: AN EMPERICAL ASSESSMENT

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Practicum Report: "Building Capacity through Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: An Empirical Assessment"

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Abstract

The twenty-first century has seen the words self-reliance, participation, accountability, capacity building and learning as common in development rhetoric as they are contravened in practice. This practicum report shows how participatory monitoring and evaluation has the potential to make the rhetoric real. It establishes participatory monitoring and evaluation as one of the great frontiers and challenges for development with implications for learning and change which are institutional, methodological and personal.

This practicum report describes the process of participatory monitoring and evaluation and capacity building through learning, utilization and self-evaluation. The outcomes of this process in terms of consequences of integrating different stakeholders, building capacity at individual and collective level and organizational changes are described.

Using theoretical literature on these themes, a holistic and transformative framework based on learning, capacity building and utilization is applied to participatory monitoring and evaluation. Steps to implementation are suggested fro evaluators and program implementers.

April, 2010

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this practicum report to all future evaluators, with hope for evaluation practices that build capacity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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CHAPTER I

Background and Rationale

<u>Introduction</u>

Participatory evaluation is a process of implementing an evaluation that is guided by certain beliefs, and theories. This process is collaborative and includes multiple realities and experiences. Like all forms of evaluation, participatory evaluation requires an evaluation design, clear questions, goals and objectives, data collection, analysis and reporting. The main difference between participatory evaluation and other forms of evaluation is that a variety of people affected by the program – stakeholders – not the professional evaluator alone, are responsible for designing those questions and goals and interpreting the data.

Evaluation is, at its root, about values and judging the worth of a program. Participatory evaluation addresses the place of values in evaluation by attempting to incorporate a wide variety of perspectives into the process so that the end result does not reflect a single stakeholder's bias or narrow interpretation. Although many other alternative evaluation methods exists, such as "Empowerment Evaluation" and "Collaborative Evaluation", the principles of participatory evaluation are flexible enough to be used for diverse development programs and can be implemented at several points in an evaluation which may be restricted by funding or criteria.

Although the phrase "participatory evaluation" may seem self-explanatory, it is widely agreed that there is no strict definition for it. As stated above it's a *process* which is collaborative, one that seeks out and includes multiple realities and experiences. As a result, the process can be a powerful agent for change for both stakeholders and

programs. Central to the theory behind PM&E is the belief that when those affected by a program hold leadership and decision-making roles in the evaluation, the process can have a profound and positive effect on the people involved, the evaluation, and the policy driving the program. A considerable number of researchers claim that the lack of strict definition is one of the strengths of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E). This freedom from textbook definition allows program stakeholders to define for themselves what the most important questions to ask and methods to use in an evaluation.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is often applied not in lieu of conventional methods, but as a way to enrich those methods. The main difference between PM&E and other forms of evaluation is that a variety of people affected by the program, not the professional evaluator alone, are responsible for designing those questions and goals and interpreting the data. In PM&E stakeholders are involved in constructing the evaluation framework, defining evaluation questions, deciding when to evaluate and who to involve, selecting methods, collecting and analyzing data, and consolidating and deciding on the utilization of findings. The difference between PM&E and other forms of evaluation come down to the fact that it is not the methods, but rather whose questions are addressed and which values are promoted.

The purposes of PM&E are: to improve program planning and functioning; to promote learning and to strengthen the capacities of both participants and organizations; to affect larger policy; and, to build upon existing community strengths (Estrella, 2000; UNDP, 1997). PM&E can take either a 'practical' or 'empowering' approach, representing both ends of the participation spectrum. Participatory approaches can either focus on participation as an objective in itself, or as an effective means to achieve an

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outside objective (Cummings, 1997). The 'practical' approach focuses on the usefulness and relevance of the evaluation outcomes to program participants. This type of Participatory Evaluation (PE) is based on the belief that the program participants hold an intimate understanding of the program that outsiders do not. When they are allowed to participate in the construction of an evaluation, the evaluation results will be heeded and more often than not applied.

This type of PM&E is in itself a form of community development as it intends to affect social change and redistribute decision-making powers. Decision-making powers are placed squarely in the hands of program beneficiaries thus; PM&E can be used to build beneficiary capacity. Participatory monitoring and evaluation as currently practiced is failing the needs of stakeholders in its principle of capacity-building through learning. Participatory forms of evaluation aims to produce a range of empowering outcomes and impacts, including increased community capacities in planning and conducting evaluations and broader stakeholder participation in decision making. Other outcomes include improved communication and trust among stakeholders and constant improvement of initiatives in ways the meet community priorities and stakeholder needs. In her extremely positive assessment of participatory evaluation, Diez (2001) suggest that this methodology can be a useful tool to 'mobilize communities for regional action, empower local agents and enhance learning capacity'.

In the field of development the term capacity building (or development) can be seen as an umbrella concept that links previously isolated approaches to a coherent strategy with a long-term perspective and vision of social change. In part, the theme of capacity building emerged in reaction to the lack of results produced by initiatives based

on technical cooperation. However, using capacity building as an umbrella concept is a two edge sword with both positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, many people see the idea as integrating force that brings together a large number of stakeholders who believe that capacity building is an important part of the overall development puzzle. On the negative side, capacity building has taken many meanings and has been used as a slogan rather than as a term for rigorous development work.

Like many development practitioners I believe intuitively that all development must involve some sort of capacity-building or development. Clearly, development is about people and their societies interfacing and developing within their environment. However, if capacity building is going to be useful it must be more specific in terms of; whose capacity are we focusing on? What type of development am I seeking?

In researching this practicum report I found out that capacity building like participatory monitoring and evaluation is an elusive term with a wide assortment of definitions and perspectives. After reviewing different definitions – and I do not claim the definition I will use is more definitive than the others – I decided to use the definition by CIDA (1996), "capacity building is a process by which individuals, groups, institutions, organizations and societies enhance their abilities to identify and meet development challenges in a sustainable manner".

I decided on this definition because of its implication to the fact that, capacity building needs to be understood as a means and an end, a process and a product. The aim of capacity building is not to improve the level and effectiveness of current operations, rather the aim is to ensure that institutions will be able to maintain this improved

performance in the future, in particular, when the external assistance is withdrawn. In other words, the process of development is as important as the product.

Capacity building is about people affected by development, their organizations and institutions, developing whatever tools are required to control their own development and creating societies that work for them. The ultimate goal of capacity building – and development – is for more people to gain greater control over their own destinies. To work towards building these capacities, people must have the tools required to control their destinies. For PM&E and capacity building to be congruent, beneficiaries cannot simply provide input or render opinion about programs or development interventions, they must be active participants who are embedded in the PM&E process.

The primary outcome is a community with developed skills and capabilities that they may or would not otherwise have gained. A community with a sense of self-worth and confidence in their ability to articulate their problems and the solutions they decide upon. Beneficiaries now have increased access to information and a deeper understanding of the program in question than they typically would in a conventional evaluation. The process of PM&E requires beneficiaries and stakeholders to come together and share information. This leads to enhanced sense of community, improved communication and negotiation skills with peers and program staff, and partnerships and networks that last beyond the life of the evaluation and the program. Stakeholders' developing this cohesion and the ability to work within a complex group is crucial; results in program improvements which stems from beneficiary initiative created in the PM&E process.

Therefore, building community capacities and fostering empowerment are one of the most effective ways of achieving sustainable community development rather than programs with success indicators imposed by outside experts. Outside development practitioners usually have limited knowledge and understanding of the particular context, needs and issues of a community. Local solutions to achieving sustainable community and economic development are important outcomes of a capacity-building approach to evaluation.

Purpose and Audience

The overarching purpose of this practicum report is to develop an alternative to the current practice of participatory monitoring and evaluation, one that makes capacity building a focus. This alternative framework is grounded in the theories of alternative development and monitoring and evaluation. More specifically, this practicum report aims to describe the ways in which reforming participatory monitoring and evaluation can impact local stakeholders; contribute to building local capacity; and make policy-level recommendations on strategies for improving development projects.

Further contribution of the practicum report stems from the alternative nature of the research. An academic contribution of this practicum report is that it address both theory and practical issues in an integrated approach that does not treat them as separate spheres, methodologically, this practicum report contributes to finding ways to implement participatory monitoring and evaluation for capacity building purposes. Finally the practicum report also aims to raise awareness of the important role that building the capacity of local stakeholders is central for self-reliant development.

The audience of this practicum report includes policy makers in development agencies particularly those dealing with development projects/programs implementation; local implementation agencies/groups; governmental and non-governmental agencies working in the areas of local development through development programs. My hope is that the questions this practicum report poses and the suggestions it makes will inspire changes in the process of participatory monitoring and evaluation that will ultimately benefit the ordinary stakeholders impacted by development programs.

The analysis in this practicum report is the first step in highlighting the fact that the process of evaluation has a life of its own, a life (not a result or outcome) that is far larger than the sum of its elements and actors. In any learning process we begin with what we know and then step into the unknown. The analysis of this practicum report will show that capacity building through PM&E can actually facilitate the kind of creative, diffuse thinking required for stakeholders to support their own questions, approaches and their bases for judgment. As social agents, stakeholders are knowledgeable and capable of transforming their new experiences and encounters based on their dynamic individual, cultural and organizational livelihood experiences, in which case the precise nature of the model of change, whatever language is give to it externally cannot be neither predetermined or imposed on stakeholders.

Research Methodology

Due to constraints of time, this practicum report relies heavily on secondary material. Researching the topic of participatory monitoring and evaluation has not been a straightforward task. There is insufficient research available on participatory monitoring and evaluation and what little material there is, is mostly old or it is about other forms of participatory evaluation. Recent materials focus heavily on empowerment and utilization evaluation which is generally written from a utopian perspective. This made gathering information in this area of practical realistic participatory monitoring and evaluation issues challenging.

In addition to using secondary materials obtained from libraries, I used primary materials in the form of international development agencies white papers, manuals and documents on monitoring and evaluation, participatory monitoring and evaluation and sustainable alternative development. The first principle of monitoring and evaluation research is that it be grounded in experience. In 2008 I spent six months in Ghana as a monitoring and evaluation officer for Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). I have grounded this practicum report in my experience there; my time in Ghana provided essential context for writing the practicum report.

Although not a source of "data", this experience gave me an understanding of reality of the impact of projects and monitoring and evaluation without effective participation. Monitoring and evaluation processes – be they participatory or not – that do not engage local stakeholders to the extent of real understanding of the process leaves local stakeholders confused and sometimes resenting the process and the practitioners. More importantly my experience gave life to concepts – participatory monitoring and

evaluation; capacity building; self-reliant development – which were otherwise abstract concepts about which I read and wrote about, but could not relate effectively to. Making the analysis in this practicum report relevant would have been different without relevant context.

Structure of Practicum Report

This practicum report has three equally important main themes, or strands: development projects/programs; participatory monitoring and evaluation and capacity building. These three concepts are interconnected on many levels, and are ideally all elements of monitoring and evaluation and self-reliant development or alternative development. Analytically it is sometimes more useful to separate them and sometimes to draw them together. This practicum report does both however, in the literature as in reality, their interrelated nature is not always recognized. The themes are initially dealt with as separate concepts and then brought together.

Chapter II journeys through the theoretical literature of alternative development; capacity building; and participatory monitoring and evaluation. It begins with alternative development specifically participation in development and development projects as the basis; capacity building through participatory monitoring and evaluation is presented as an alternative to orthodox efforts in self-reliant development. Capacity building with its learning and skills building connotation and participatory monitoring and evaluation with its participatory methodology will be address separately then as an interrelated concept. This Chapter takes a historical look at the history of thought in the area of alternative

development, capacity building and participatory monitoring and evaluation. The Chapter establishes the centrality of the themes for this thesis.

From the theoretical framework in Chapter II, I develop an empirical assessment of the fit between participatory monitoring and evaluation and capacity building in Chapter III.

Chapter IV presents an analysis of the empirical evidence with the three themes. The analysis will present a better understanding of participatory monitoring and evaluation and capacity building.

Chapter V summarize the themes and makes recommendations for changes in the implementation of participatory monitoring and evaluation process to ensure the promotion of capacity building.

CHAPTER II

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: A Developing Process

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is people-centered: projects stakeholders and beneficiaries are the key actors of the evaluation process and not the mere objects of the evaluation. Chapter two will demonstrate the legitimacy and viability of conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation and review recent and relevant literature concerning PM&E and alternative development practices.

Introduction

Participatory monitoring and evaluation as currently practiced is failing the needs of stakeholders in its principle of capacity-building through learning. Participatory forms of evaluation aim to produce a range of empowering outcomes and impacts, including increased community capacities in planning and conducting evaluations and broader stakeholder participation in decision making. Other outcomes include improved communication and trust among stakeholders, and constant improvement of initiatives that meet community or beneficiary needs. In her extremely positive assessment of participatory evaluation, Diez (2002, 2001) suggest that this methodology can be a useful tool to mobilize communities for regional action, empower local agents and enhance learning capacity.

Participatory evaluation emerged from the extension of participatory action research (PAR) and the growing interest in evaluation as an action learning and capacity-building process. For an evaluation to be considered participatory, Rebien (1996) suggest

that stakeholders must have an active role in the evaluation process with stakeholders participating in at least the following three phases of the evaluation process: designing terms of references, interpreting data, and using evaluation information.

The methods and ethos of participatory evaluation contrasts markedly from non-participatory monitoring and evaluation techniques. In non-participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches the key questions and methods to be used are decided by the evaluator or funding body with the evaluator expected to adopt an impartial and objective perspective with program activities reduced to measurable indicators. In contrast, participant-oriented forms of evaluation tend to use more 'pragmatic' methods that aim to reflect the complexities in providing service (Worthen et al. 1997). A more holistic approach that openly acknowledges and takes into account the diverse perspectives, agendas and values of participants, and evaluation consultants are used.

The inclusion of local population in the development process reflects an acknowledgement of the need to tap into the wealth of wisdom and experience of the recipients of development initiatives, and to work with them to move the development of their communities forward. Approaches such as rapid rural appraisal (RRA), participatory monitoring (PM), and participatory learning methods (PALM) have been developed for appraising local situations in a participatory manner. Appropriate techniques and methods of data collection – including village mapping, diagramming, ranking and group discussions – have evolved as useful tools for involving local people in developing strategies for learning about communities for planning and evaluating programs (Alkin and Taut, 2003; Jayakaran, 1996).

Proponents of participation argue that it is important to involve local people in development work and they be regarded as agents (rather than objects), who are capable of analyzing their own situations and designing their own solutions (Cornwall and Gaventa, 200; Conwall and Jewkes, 1995). In doing this, projects will benefit from local knowledge that best reflects local needs and demands, will promote a sense of project ownership and ultimately increase the chances of project success in meeting the needs of communities.

Further, proponents suggest, participation creates the space for empowerment by increasing people's understanding of self-worth, improving their skills, giving them a greater sense of their rights, as well as improving their knowledge and building capacity (Estrella, 2000). Participation in development projects is a question of degree, with local stakeholders always participating at some level along a continuum, ranging from tokenism to real empowerment (Rebien, 1996). Biggs (1980) suggests that there are four levels of participation ranging from: contractual, to consultative, to collaborative to collegiate. With increasingly deep participation (as in collegiate), there is a greater relinquishing of external control and evolution of ownership of the process to those whom it concerns (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995). The most common form of participatory development is consultative, where (some) stakeholders are asked for their opinion before interventions begin. Rarely, however, do development agencies engage in collaborative projects where program implementers and locals work together on project design and management nor do they often have collegiate relationships where local people actually have control over the process. An important aspect of participatory development is monitoring and evaluation, and techniques in the areas of rural development, such as

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PRA and RRA, focus on involving stakeholders in collecting and analyzing data for project development and analysis. The key reasons used when advocating for participatory monitoring and evaluation are to facilitate mutual learning (Rebien, 1996), to contribute to the building of local (as well as organizational) capacity for decision making and community-centered development and to help participants gain the ability to evaluate their own needs, analyze their own priorities and objectives, and undertake action-oriented planning to solve their own problems (Estrella, 2000; Kirkhart, 2000; Mark and Henry, 2004).

Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue that, involving stakeholders broaden the perspective of the monitoring and evaluation process and raises different questions and answers. Furthermore, they argue, to exclude stakeholders who, by definition, have something at stake in any monitoring and evaluation process is discriminatory. That being said, the key reason for including stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation process is to enhance learning and to utilize the findings from the evaluation process for change (Donaldson et al, 2008; Christie, 2003; Rebien, 1996; Lawrence, 1989). By training local population in evaluation techniques – such as; negotiating, defining and interpreting change – and by undertaking activities that are geared towards institutional and community capacity building, proponents argue that there will be a greater sense of empowerment and increased chance that the results will be utilized (Scriven, 2005; Kalyalya, 1988). Uphsur and Bareto-Cortez (1995) summarize the most useful participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches as those which seek to be practical, useful, formative and empowering. Practical in that they respond to the needs, interests and concerns of the primary users, useful because the findings are disseminated in ways

which primary users can use and formative because they seek to improve program outcomes.

As with other aspects of development projects, the degree to which stakeholders are involved in evaluation often varies, ranging from being involved in the early phases to collecting baseline data for project design. However, the local population is rarely involved in every process of on-going monitoring or final evaluation of the project (Abbot and Guijt, 1997; Estrella, 2000). The argument for this line of reasoning is based on two ideas: firstly, sustaining the involvement of local people is time-consuming and requires some external support for a period of time. Continued support is needed to encourage groups, particularly marginalized groups, to participate in a process that is new to them and to facilitate their access to resources. In traditionally hierarchical systems, constant encouragement is also needed to persuade key leaders to seek intentional change which may affect their status quo. Most donor agencies, however, do not provide funds for sustained involvement of local stakeholders. Secondly there is a constant 'tug-of-war' between 'being participatory' and 'doing rigorous monitoring' (Abbot and Guijt, 1997). Guba and Lincoln (1989) define four generations of evaluation with the older versions characterized as measurement-oriented, description-oriented and judgment-oriented adopted a scientific, technical and more managerial approach in order to be able to obtain objective data. In what they describe as fourth generation evaluation (responsive, constructivist evaluation), the role of stakeholders change so that they, participate in every stage of the monitoring and evaluation process and focus in findings for future action.

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Few monitoring and evaluation processes incorporate the full methodological principles of fourth generation evaluation. In an effort to ensure accountability and rigor in the evaluation process donors usually draw heavily on external evaluators. Project stakeholders who more often than not are affected by the findings of the evaluation process have little or no input in the process of defining indicators, analyzing data or articulating further strategies for development projects.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation can serve as a tool for self-assessment, however for this to happen, the process must strive to fulfill the principle of an internal learning process that enables people to reflect on past experiences, examine present realities, revisit objectives, and (re) define future strategies, by recognizing different needs of stakeholders and negotiating their diverse claims and interests. The participatory monitoring and evaluation process can be flexible and adaptive to local contexts and constantly changing circumstances and concerns of stakeholders. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is about promoting self-reliance in decision making and problem solving – thereby strengthening people's capacities to take action and promote intentional change.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation can build beneficiaries/stakeholders capacity to enable them transition from consumers of development initiatives to developers of development initiatives. Specifically, I suggest participatory evaluation should prioritize capacity-building and learning as its principal foci, basing the evaluation on a constructivist's paradigm. However, for purposes of accountability and evaluation rigor, programs also need to be evaluated from an organizational perspective, using program guidelines as their nucleus. Where these two approaches intersect is a space for

stakeholder learning and capacity-building that leads to intentional change. The rest of the Chapter will review the current debate on participation, monitoring, evaluation and participatory monitoring and evaluation and role in development.

The Evolution of Development

Development has come a long way in the past six decades. Development became important in the period immediately following World War II when the western world confronted the new challenges of rebuilding countries that were facing special challenges. In those days, development was considered largely synonymous with industrialization. Its ultimate goal was fairly clear: to realize incomes and in the process give poor people access to the range of goods and services available in developed societies. In short, development was about getting richer or more prosperous; and prosperity was measured in dollar figures. Moreover, given the state of the industrial countries at that time, and the lessons their experience had taught, industrialization and in particular, the creation of a country's capacity to manufacture finished goods – was seen as essential.

Another reality that led force to this push to industrialize was the coming of independence of former colonial empires of Europe, a process that picked up speed in the wake of the war. By large, Asian and African countries came into independence poor, and were eager to speed up their development for two reasons one was the fact that they sought to provide better lives for their citizens and the second reason was the obvious need to consolidate their independence, to convert newly won nominal political equality with the rich countries into an economic equality that would earn them the respect and sense of self-dignity that had been denied them under colonialism.

The scholarly literature at the time only reinforced this push: development was about using the state to spearhead the process of modernizing society and raising its incomes. The literature favored using the state as an agent for social transformation. The state, it was held, could both develop economies and alter societies in such a way as to make them suit human needs. Underlying this was the belief that the state could embody collective will more effectively than the market, which favored privileged interest (Carmen, 1996).

However, by the early postwar period, development thought had coalesced around certain core assumptions. The main thrust was that economies needed more state-intervention than they had been given in the past. This assumption influenced both third-world academics and foreign advisers to newly independent countries, whose confidence in the state was further reinforced by the emergence of structuralist economics (ibid). Aware of the imperfections in the market and the world economy, and confident that the state could overcome them, development theorists proposed models that assigned the state a leading role in the economy. Many developing country governments – some of which had just won their independence – adopted these models, for they seemed to promise a rapid journey into the industrial age.

At first the models seemed to deliver what they proposed. With the postwar world economy booming, demand for periphery products rose. This provided governments of developing countries with the capital they needed to develop their industry and infrastructure. However, as time went by, problems with these strategies came to light. It became increasingly clear that many developing economies were growing more slowly

than required to continue improving the standards of living of the world's poorest citizens. The industrial development that took place consumed more resources than it generated, a waste exacerbated by inefficient states. When the postwar boom came to an end in the 1970s, the shortcomings of state-led development became plain. Alternative development strategies emerged around this period.

The evolution of development strategies towards participatory regime was the movement of men and women from the periphery to the center. Evolution of development theory and practice, during the last couple of decades, has been visualized often as a movement from holistic theorization towards more empirically informed and inductive approaches (Mohan and Stokke, 2002).

The main stream strategies had mainly focused on economic growth and top-down diffusion of development impulses. It has been assumed that growth is the function of investment, and the benefits of development were expected to trickle down to the neediest sectors of society. Popular participation was confined to the ratification meetings in which outside experts used to brief the local people. By the end of the 1960s, it was identified that growth was not necessarily correlated with other development objectives such as rapid employment creation, reduction of poverty and inequality and provision of basic human needs.

The experiences of the 1960s upwards had demonstrated that mere growth was quite insufficient to induce broad based development and more than a decade of rapid development in underdeveloped countries has been of little or no benefit to perhaps a third of their population (Chenery et al, 1974). Economic growth had simply failed to

filter down and the argument that top down development as well as trickle down strategies will alleviate widespread impoverishment was found baseless.

This led to the wide consensus on the fact that new development approaches should be oriented towards the satisfaction of basic human needs and desires particularly at the local community level. ul Haq (1995) observed that development should be built around people rather than make people roam around development. Despite the fact that a few isolated but halted attempts to introduce the alternative development strategies can be traced even before the 1950s, the movement gathered momentum only after the international aid agencies began to intervene (Bernstein and Campbell, 1985; Moser and Sollis, 1991). A range of alternative development frame-works emerged and emphasis got shifted to projects that directly targeted the poor, particularly the rural poor. Despite the theoretical rhetoric placed on community participation, a top down social engineering approach continued to characterize development projects.

The current discourse on participation begun with an apparent paradox. It commenced in a time of de-politicization in international development policy, where the idea of democratizing developing countries had been mostly abandoned in favor of considerations of stability and growth with partly devastating results. With the gradual evolving of self-reliance and basic needs strategies, there merged a conceptual and strategic shift from political (if only formal) participation at national and sub-national levels to participation in areas that were directly connected to the living and working conditions of the people concerned. Participation was downsized to the concrete levels of projects and programs, outside the state and public sphere.

Regardless of the participation buzzword, those projects and programs – temporary, regionally, technically and sectorally definable investments – mainly remained as they had always been. On one side were development agencies designing, planning, implementing and evaluating development projects. On the other side there were target groups or beneficiaries – largely undifferentiated groups of recipient of goods and services, who were considered to be passive. The latter participated at most through their labour, but for the most part solely partook of the projects' output whose appropriateness was hardly ever questioned and accordingly not systematically related to the real life of the people concerned. For this reason, projects and programs mainly responded to bureaucratic requirements concerning the implementation and completion of interventions, instead of focusing on the population's needs. Ultimately such projects tended to incapacitate people, to undermine the belief in their own strength and to consolidate an attitude of being depositories or receivers of outside support (Friedmann, 1992).

Beyond the development 'establishment', particularly actors from the South took a firm stance from the beginning of the 1970s against their ascribed role as recipients. The Latin-American Action Research School, associated in particular with Paulo Freire, emphasized their active, deliberate, and crucial role in social and political life and thus in any form of development (Freire, 1972). The concept of self-reliance formed by Julius Nyerere (1978) at approximately the same time underscored the impossibility of an externally induced development and necessary confidence in one's own strength:

> People cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible to build a man's house, an outsider cannot give the man pride and self-confidence in himself as a human being. Those things a man has to create himself by his own actions. He develops

himself by making his own decisions, by increasing his understanding of what he is doing, and why; by increasing his own knowledge and ability and by his own full participation – as an equal – in the life of the community he lives in (p 60).

This accentuation of self-determined and self-governed development necessarily goes hand-in-hand with an eminently political comprehension of participation, understood as co-determination by the population in all political decisions at different levels and based on its own situation and world view.

In the early 1980s these ideas received further impetus and entered the development policy mainstream particularly through two influential publications. In *Whose Reality Counts: Putting the Last First*, Robert Chambers (1997) uncovers the arrogance and ignorance that from his point of view underlined many rural development projects, eventually causing their failure. His arguments displayed a critical attitude especially towards a technocratic leadership of development projects, and voice the author's anger over the poverty which is still unabated despite all efforts. Chambers attacks the degradation of people to mere objects by 'know-it-all' development experts, underscores the knowledge and competencies of the population as central elements in the development process and demands a de-professionalization of the experts in order for them to be able to listen to the disadvantaged and to give space to their expertise, their wishes and needs. In practical terms, this implies an inversion in the design of development activities from a top-down to a bottom-up approach, which (at least conceptually) leaves the control over the intervention to the people concerned or return it to them. In consequence, this means a change of role for the experts from operators to facilitators of development processes, which is expressed by the phrase 'handing over the stick' (Chambers 1994a). Thus, the process itself becomes a mutual learning experience.

In his book *Putting People First: Sociological Variables in Rural Development*, Micheal Cernea (1985), critiques for his part the disregard of sociological and anthropological perspectives compared to technical and financial aspects in rural development projects, whiles – similar to Chambers – pointing out the far too great number of failures. Cernea even questions the general adequateness of projects as central instruments to overcome poverty. Despite their different orientation, both publications alike appealed to the development of community and stimulated considerations and discussions on the participation of those that are actually supposed to benefit from the development. Doubtless the ideas of Cerneas and Chambers were not altogether new. As early as the 1970s and partly even before, participation in terms of involving the population groups concerned in decisions affecting them indeed had a secure position among the principles of development policy. The same applies to terms such as empowerment or ownership that are also part of the mainstream and always accompany participation in one way or another.

Without claiming to be exhaustive, at least four interrelated factors or changes can be found that provided a framework for the participation discourse and at the same time stimulated it (Nelson and Wright, 1995). Firstly, in the course of the 1980s the disappointment at thirty unsuccessful years of conventional and technocratic development aid channeled through bilateral and multilateral organizations in the North with blue prints for development initiatives already agreed upon. This approach was often connected to the failure of meeting the actual needs of the alleged beneficiaries and accordingly led to demands to include these beneficiaries. In the second place, the faith in

governmentally-led development programs decreased within the post-colonial states in the South. The –from the critics' perspective – paternalistic connotation of development was challenged by an understanding of development as the liberation of people from repression by the rich and powerful, which would only be possible without capitalism and representative democracy. Thirdly, international non-governmental organizations in the South and the North alike simultaneously started to turn away from welfare approach and towards subsistence and independence. Participation was translated as subsistence and self–help beyond or even against governmental intervention. Bottom-up development became a pragmatic formula, with the empowerment of people as the guiding principle. Finally, subsistence and personal responsibility were also part of the Structural Adjustment Programs imposed on developing countries by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a reaction to the former's excessive indebtedness. Cynically, participation became the transfer of functions and services which were formally governmental obligations to the people themselves. Participation thus concentrated on project work, based on the idea that "people's participation in planning development projects is desirable because it makes projects more efficient, effective and sustainable" (McGee, 2002:95).

Against this background, and accompanied by practice-oriented research, an institutionalization of project-oriented participation took place in multi-and bilateral development organizations in the 1990s. Based on the perception that the disadvantaged and powerless can escape neither state nor market, NGOs followed a reform-oriented course of integration into the capitalistic system in order to offer at least a betterment for the people concerned. The cross-organizational Participation Learning Group, created

upon pressure by the World Bank's NGO working group, played a significant part in this development. The group commenced with the aim of documenting experiences with participation in project, inducing and escorting a learning process within the institutions, and eventually developing suggestions for improvement that among others were focused on the World Bank's work itself. In its final *Report* from 1994 the Group adhered to the focus on projects by defining participation as a process in which the participants influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them (p10).

Furthermore, the report states that participation in terms of information and consultation of stakeholders has significantly increased in World Bank activities since 1990. It is, however much harder to detect empowerment process or joint decision-making, let alone beneficiaries' control of the intervention (World Bank 1994). On the other hand, the report for the first time transcends the referential framework of the 'project' and underscores the necessity to cooperate with governments in order to strengthen participation in terms of analyzing, developing and implementing policy programs, and also the possible role of participation in increasing the responsiveness and accountability of the state.

The initial positive expectations associated with participation were supported by some empirical comparative studies. Finsterbusch and Van Wicklin (1989) concluded from the comparison of fifty two USAID projects – especially construction projects in several sectors – that participation of target groups or beneficiaries generally increases the effectiveness of projects. Although they qualify this finding by stating that the correlation between participation and project effectiveness is rather weak and

participation is not always necessary or helpful, they regard the results of their study as sufficient to recommend participation as a general standard in all development activities. A clearly more positive result concerning the benefits of participation for the effectiveness and the success for projects is offered by a World Bank study, systematically comparing one hundred and twenty one water supply improvement activities and concluding that beneficiary participation in decision making was the single most important contribution to overall quality of implementation (Narayan, 1995).

Skepticism about participation emerged, based mainly on feedback from practice but also on a critical academic discussion about participation. Even among supporters opinions diverge (and still differ) concerning the adequacy and expedience of participation, including the question of who participates or should participate and in what way, as well as the possible political motivation for participation. Against the background of these questions and for the further operationalization of participation, different typologies are offered. What is particularly prevalent is the distinction between participation as a means and participation as an end which will be addressed later.

In the early days of development, donor agencies, both bilateral and multilateral, were organized and shaped by the understanding that their mission was to deliver development to developing countries. These agencies were expected to improve economic performance of developing countries, build roads, schools and hospitals, and provide expertise which would improve areas such as health and education (Hughes, 2005).

Development, however, has proven to be a more complex enterprise with successive development approaches carried out through public multilateral and bilateral

organizations having included an early emphasis on economic growth and infrastructural development. Development professionals, particularly in donor organizations and government implementing agencies, have struggled to find models and formulae to unleash the potential of developing countries to improve their economic and social conditions. Although there are many reasons for the difficulties in reducing poverty in countries around the world, one obvious problem lies in the limitations on the involvement of the people who know most about what is wrong and how to right it.

In the early 1970s, the work of participation pioneers such as Paulo Freire became known around the world. Freire, who wrote *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, had worked with impoverished people in his homeland, and after being expelled from Brazil, developed a theory for the education of illiterates, particularly adults. His theory was based on the conviction that every human being, no matter how 'ignorant' or submerged in the 'culture of silence', is capable of looking critically at the world, and that provided with the proper tools, he can gradually perceive his personal and social reality and deal critically with it (Freire, 1972).

According to Freire, those who, in learning to read and write, come to a new awareness of selfhood and begin to look critically at the social situation in which they find themselves, often take the initiative in acting to transform the society that has been denied them this opportunity of participation. Freire's work and that of others engaged in empowering the marginalized to change their condition and shape their own lives, began to be shared by others and contributed to the early body of knowledge about popular participation and 'self-reliant' development among development agencies.

The World Bank, the leading multilateral development agency, begins its mission statement with a dedication to helping people help themselves. The idea of 'helping people help themselves' has been with us throughout the postwar period of official development assistance. The ancient Chinese saying that if you give people fish, you feed them for a day, but if you teach them how to fish – or rather, if you enable them to learn how to fish – then they can feed themselves for a life (Ellerman, 2005) explains best the idea of helping people help themselves. There is a broad agreement – at least as a statement of high purpose – that helping people help themselves is the best methodology for development assistance for developing countries.

However, the paradox of supplying help to self-help, "assisted self-reliance" (Ellerman, 2005) or assisted autonomy is the fundamental conundrum of development assistance. David Korten (1983) terms it the central paradox of social development: which is the need to exert influence over people for the purpose of building their capacity to control their own lives. This brings me to my previous point about the goal of "development". Increase in wealth is not the goal; the goal is development as freedom or autonomy in the sense of the capabilities approach (Sen 1999; Alkire 2002) of having the capability and know-how to satisfy one's own needs. Development agencies do not do development; at best they do development assistance. There are many strategies for development assistance that may supply 'help' in some form but actually do not help people help themselves (Ellerman, 2005) in other words the forms of help that override or undercut people's capacity to help themselves is not help at all.

A prominent development strategy which has been unhelpful or that undercut people's capacity is in the form of social engineering. The structural adjustment programs – addressed above – particularly in Africa were the most notorious examples of attempted social engineering. The social engineering vision is that development can be done through a series of projects and programs incentivized by development aid and executed according to the technical assistance provided by visiting experts. The point I want to emphasis is that, donor agencies present a blueprint of social engineering to communities, which are always defended on the grounds that the beneficiaries should follow specific steps. However there seems to be little or no real recognition that if the beneficiaries follow these steps only to satisfy conditionalities and thus receive aid, then the motive will falsify the action, the reforms will not be well implemented, and the social changes will not be sustained. To paraphrase Kierkegarrd (1992), it's not so much the 'what' of reform that counts, but the 'how' if reform is to take root and be sustainable. Thus, aid being defended as doing good in the sense of delivering resources to the poor without any real recognition as to the how undercuts the incentive for developing self-reliance becomes an unhelpful form of help that in the longer term undercuts capacity building and autonomous development.

The participation of marginalized people in development initiatives was intended to benefit them and this has been acknowledged as important in achieving sustainable development. The main reason for placing the people front and center is because they understand their economic and social conditions and the problems they face and have insights that can help shape the initiatives intended to benefit them. These efforts at understanding and incorporating participation of the poor into donor operations have

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benefited from – and in many ways have been accelerated by – advocacy and monitoring efforts carried out by NGOs around the world. It must also be noted that there were many forces promoting participation in donor agencies in addition to NGOs.

In light of the poor performance of state-centered development models there was an increasing effort to implement programs which offered some prospect of success. The main measure of success was whether support measures mange to reach poor sections of the population, to strengthen their capacity to help themselves and hence to improve their living conditions not just sporadically but on a sustained basis. The neo-liberal approach which is now in ascendency assumes that development can only be self-sustaining if it comes from below, the grassroots of society itself.

There will not be a definite definition for non-governmental organization or precise delimitation for other organizational forms. The category will include anything from grass-roots initiatives with just a few members via self-help promotion organizations, farmer's associations, cooperatives, civil rights movements, civil societies, think-tanks all the way across the spectrum to donor organizations from industrial countries which may have budgets running into hundreds of millions of dollars.

NGOs operating in the development field do nonetheless have one common denominator; their chief purpose consists of enabling poor population groups meet their basic needs plus their politico-cultural basic human needs. Indeed, all of these organizations mediate in a number of different ways, acting as a bridge between donors and the ultimate target groups of development aid. The aim should be that marginalized population groups could in the long term position themselves to become the central vehicle for processes of social change.

Projects Model Development

The 'project model' which dominated development thinking and practice until the late 1990s provided the context for theories and methods for development evaluation (World Bank, 2007; Burrall et al., 2006). Aid was generally delivered in the form of projects, a tightly bounded set of activities that typically took 3-5years to complete (Hughes, 2005). The stress in these projects was on project staff producing 'deliverables'. How these deliverables were to be delivered was set out in a 'logical framework' which defined the presumed links between the inputs, outputs and overall outcomes, as well as the assumptions underlying these links. Monitoring and evaluation tended to focus on whether or not these 'deliverables' had been delivered and whether the assumptions had held. There was relatively little attention given to the impact of these projects on beneficiaries outside the tightly defined objectives of the projects.

This project model of development assistance was associated with an institutional context where donor interest had primacy. Donor agencies owned the projects rather than developing countries and the communities where the projects where located. Donors provided project funds to resolve a particular constraint on development within this framework, donor priorities shifted from large infrastructure projects to rural development projects as international theories of development changed. Institutions in developing countries were considered weak so donors provided technical assistance, usually experts from the donor country. These experts undertook most of the project management; separate project management units were common. These management units often had their own monitoring and evaluation sections which concentrated on

monitoring inputs and outputs, with less attention being paid to the overall outcome. These arrangements were understandable for a donor-owned time-bound project, after which donors could hand over responsibility for ongoing activities to the developing country government. At best, donor projects were islands of excellence demonstrating what might be achieved; at worst, they were unsustainable and undermined local systems.

Since the 1990s there has been a major shift in the delivery of aid assistance away from donor designed and managed projects. There has been a rise in 'management for results'. Traditionally, much of development assistance took the form of project assistance where the primary stress was laid upon outputs. However with this shift, there has been an increasing stress not on outputs but rather on impact and the effect of development assistance. As far as 'management for results' is concerned, monitoring and evaluation has moved far beyond considering whether or not the 'deliverables' have been achieved to considering whether or not 'deliverables' have had the impact that was hoped for.

Multilateral and bilateral donor's early attempts on the development stage were almost exclusively guided by modernization theory. The theory attributed Third World poverty to a lack of institutions and values found in the richer countries, and advocated a series of predominantly economic measures which would enable the developing nations to catch up. Projects were regarded as the primary means by which this was to be achieved. These projects were generally seen as activities of relatively short and fixed duration, which were designed to achieve clearly defined objectives, within a predetermined budget. This paradigm emphasized the importance of technology transfer for development along similar trajectory as the developed world. Associated with the

modernization development paradigm was a technocratic 'blueprint approach' to planning and evaluation, which donor agencies applied to discrete projects in a standardized project cycle. By this approach, the project environment was conceived as controllable, with the required inputs, a linear sequence of causes and effects were set in motion which would lead to intended impacts. Costs and benefits would be analyzed within this controlled framework. The 'target group' would play a largely passive role, and if external evaluation saw failure to achieve objectives, management would be held responsible (Howes, 1992).

During the 1970s and 1980s the 'trickle down' assumptions underlying modernization theory was steadily eroded. With a growing concern for the welfare of the poorest of the poor who had been marginalized by development efforts so far, the 'Basic Needs' orientation in programming became the new wave of institutionalized development. In due course this created pressure for greater participation of beneficiaries in project planning and evaluation, but this was still in its limited extent.

Howes (1992) identified the adoption of the Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) technique – originally discovered by the Pentagon – as the major innovation of this period. He outlines how it was pioneered by USAID in the 1979s as a tool for designing, planning and evaluating programs, and was subsequently adopted by several aid agencies, including NGOs. The LFA is addressed to some length below because it continues to influence project management and evaluation practice, and its reappearances in refined form in results-oriented planning and evaluation procedures. LFA serves as the poster case of traditional evaluation where in theory it continuously checks program assumptions, and invites beneficiary participation, but in practice tends to neglect any

information or alternative perspectives that do not fit anticipated outcomes or cannot be objectively verified. LFA highlights some of the dangers associated with the extreme results-oriented approaches to evaluation that donor communities favor.

Briefly stated, LFA encourages the conceptualization of projects as a logical sequence of planned events in the framework, inputs, outputs, purposes and goals are specified in a matrix of project activities, with assumptions affecting these linkages clearly articulated. Howes (1992) argues that because framework allowed for external influences outside the control of project management to be taken into consideration, it was an advance on earlier management techniques.

Table 1

Project Structure	Indicators of Achievement	How indicators can be quantified or assessed	Important Assumptions
Wider (i.e. sector or national objectives) Wider problems which project will help resolve	Quantitative measures, or qualitative ways of judging, if wider objectives achieved.	Information sources which exist or can be provided cost-effectively.	External conditions necessary for immediate objectives to contribute to wider objectives. Risks considered. Conditions attached to aid to improve prospects.
Immediate objectives: projects purpose Intended immediate effects on project areas or	Quantitative measures (including internal rate of return), or qualitative evidence, of	Information, existing or obtainable cost-effectively. Specific provision for	Factors outside control of project on which progress on which progress from Outputs

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target group. Expected benefits (or disbenefits), and beneficiaries. Changes project will bring about.	achievement and distribution of effects and benefits.	collection under inputs-output?	to achievements of Immediate Objectives depends. Risks. Conditions attached to aid
Outputs Outputs (kind, quantity and by when) to be produced by project to achieve Immediate Objectives	For example, miles of road built; persons trained	Information sources, e.g. project records, reports.	External factors critical to obtaining outputs on schedule. Risks. Conditions attached to aid.
Inputs Materials/equipment, service (Personnel, training etc) to be provided by ODA Other donors Recipient	For example, expenditure profiles, training programs.	Information sources, e.g. financial statistics	Decisions or actions outside ODA control but necessary for inception of project. Risks. Conditions attached to aid.

In theory, LFA can be used for flexible and interactive planning than the blue-print approach, and beneficiaries could participate in devising program plans and developing indicators against which to evaluate the program. Crittendon and Lea (1992) question the emphasis on quantifiable indicators of project progress, arguing that LFA encourages manipulation and massaging of data to fit false assumption masquerading as

technical sophistication. In addition, not only is there a structurally induced tendency not to divert from the predetermined path (Howes, 1992), but the LFA also casts a superficial logic on the project, excluding other ways of seeing and understanding the project, especially by the people for whom the project is designed.

In retrospect, the period from 1960s to the early 1980s may therefore be seen as one of evolutionary progression in donor perceptions of development and practice. All this was to change with the progressive incursion of neo-liberal ideas through the 1980s and early 1990s. It led to the partial withdrawal of the large donors from direct involvement at the project level, as increasing attention has been devoted to macro-policy reform and program support. The second outcome was a corresponding reduction in overall levels of official aid, partially offset by the channeling of more resources through the NGO sector.

NGOs appeared on the development scene rather later than the big agencies. Until the end of the 1960s NGOs were mainly preoccupied with disaster relief; although religious agencies continued their traditional support for institution such as schools, hospitals and orphanages. The early development work undertaken by the NGOs from the late 1960s onwards, grew from a sense of growing dissatisfaction with simple relief and rehabilitation. The early NGO work contrasted, in significant respects, with what was going on in the large agencies at the same time. It was nearly always conducted on a more modest scale, which in principle at least, made it easier to fit in with local conditions. There was a greater initial focus upon the social as opposed to the directly productive sectors, and greater headway was probably made in actually implementing the basic needs and poverty alleviation agendas of the 1970s.

NGO interventions still held much in common with those of the bigger agencies, most of the early, and much of the continuing, development work which they have undertaken, maybe located firmly within the modernization tradition. Priorities were generally determined by the agencies, rather than the intended beneficiaries, and there was a heavy emphasis upon the 'knowledge banking' or 'technology transfers' approach which assumed that relevant expertise resided primarily in the hands of outsiders.

Although NGO work has been conducted broadly along modernization lines, the 1970s also saw the beginnings of a new distinctive participation (and by extension sustainability) school. By contrast with its predecessor, which was more clearly associated from the outset with a particular body of theoretical work, this grew initially out of asset of practices which only began to assume the characteristics of a clearly defined paradigm over a more extended period of time (Howes, 1992). Over the past decade the sustainability of development activities has assumed considerable importance to donors and development theorists. Under mounting pressure from domestic constituencies to drastically reduce or possibly halt foreign aid programs altogether donor agencies are understandably concerned about enduring benefits.

My advocacy for capacity-building and learning through participatory evaluation can be viewed as a campaign for sustainability of development programs. This perception will be partially right. When the development funds run out or donor agencies/NGOs pull out of a community there must be enduring benefits which must go beyond the traditional indicators for sustainability. A differentiation must be made between the different views of sustainability and the view I am espousing in this practicum report.

The idea that sustainability entails continued benefits flows after the investment phase of donor support is well-accepted among donors. USAID, for example, defines sustainability in terms of the ability of a project to deliver services or sustain benefits after the investment phase (LaFond, 1995). The OECD, in its *Sustainability in Development Programs: A Compendium of Evaluation Experience*(1989), defines sustainability as 'survival of projects and program after an initial period of investment'. A development activity is considered sustainable according to OECD (1989) when it is able to deliver an appropriate level of benefits for an extended period after major financial, managerial and technical assistance from an external donor is withdrawn.

One major difficulty with the idea of using continued benefit flow as an indicator of sustainability is that, conceptually, there is a logical inconsistency between project funding, on the one hand, and sustainability on the other. Depending on the specific activity, it may well be meaningless to speak of project sustainability at all projects such as those generally aimed at the provision of a particular good/service or a package of goods/services. Once these goods/services have been provided and the project ends, there can be no question of sustainability or continued benefit flow. For the purposes of illustration, take for example a housing project, the purpose of which is to construct a specific number of housing units within a given time frame and budget. At the end of the project period, it success or failure will (and can only) be judged on the basis of the number and quality of the housing units constructed.

Despite long-standing critiques of the 'project cycle' model of development assistance, it is still the dominant paradigm among donors. The 'blueprint' approach, as it has come to be called is characterized by an obsessive concern with the 'fit' between the master plan and what comes out in the wash, but does little to develop institutional capacity among aid recipients. While donors fund projects, it is more often the case that recipient institutions in developing countries are implementing programs. Unlike projects, programs are 'long-term, multi-activity endeavors implemented by networks of country institutions. They are linked to existing organizations though the establishment of special, program-specific organizations is not uncommon.

To some, the view is that longevity or survival is considered a sign of sustainability. However, longevity or survival says nothing about capacity or performance. Is it enough simply to survive, or must there be some minimum performance criteria for an institution to be considered sustainable. The developing world is overflowing with examples of organizations that have survived well after they have outlived their usefulness. Survival on its own is therefore a questionable indicator of sustainability. As Brinkerhoff (1992) notes:

> Sustainability is not simply survival. There are plenty of moribund entities in developing countries that limp along with just enough resources to pay their staff but provide no services or serve no useful function beyond employment for the few (p13).

It is also worth noting that in the case of continued benefit flows, there are formidable methodological challenges posed for evaluation. Longevity or survival calls for long-term evaluation, and donors are unlikely to want to return to projects which were funded many years earlier. There are also inherent difficulties in demarcating a period beyond which it would be reasonable to describe a project, program or organization as

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sustainable. Meeting recurrent costs after donor funding is exhausted particularly, where this means self-financing, is most often equated with sustainability. This stems from the perception that to be sustainable means being able to pay one's way in the world or, to put it differently, to stand on one's own feet.

The first recourse for recipient institutions to meet the sustainability test – short of finding another donor to step in and take over – is usually to find a way to generate revenues, whether or not the program has an intrinsic capacity to do so. The introduction of cost recovery charges and user fees is the standard response in cases where this is possible. However in situation where the program does not have revenue-generating capacity, a common response has been to develop some other activity as a sort of ancillary or adjunct to the main, 'proper' program which does have income-earning potential.

Micro-credit programs for example are one activity where sustainability is commonly treated as a financial issue as it has an intrinsic revenue-generating capacity. A credit program can be managed in such a way that it yields profit which makes it attractive to NGOs in particular. Thus, NGOs which are not involved in credit gravitates towards it as they perceive that operating a small-scale credit program can allow them to raise sufficient resources to subside their core.

In any event both options are fraught with pitfalls. Introducing cost recovery charges and user fees can lead to a form of price discrimination that serves to exclude the intended beneficiaries and threaten the development objectives of reaching the very poorest. For example, a credit program (like the Grameen Bank) which seeks to cover its costs, minimize risk and make a profit by increasing its interest rates and retaining

successful borrowers in its portfolio makes them no different from the banks whose failings they are set up to redress.

While these sustainable indicators are not unimportant, they tend to cloud more significant issues by making the measurement of output – and by extension monitoring and evaluation – into trite number games. While development assistance is about creating the capacity of self-reliance, to restrict this to self-reliance should include not only financial self-reliance, but also self-reliance in decision making, resources management and policy choice. These all point to sustainability as primarily a capacity issue not a purely financial one. Indeed sustainability is about the capacity of all institution to generate a minimum level and quality of valued outputs over the long term (Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith, 1990). It's about continued effectiveness, about creating and maintaining an acceptable level of capacity, and then about converting that capacity into actual performance that will bring about intentional change.

Learning is essential to capacity-building. By learning I refer to organizations and stakeholders capacity for accumulating knowledge from their own experiences, disseminating that knowledge to members throughout the organization (and not to a single individual or group within it), reflecting on it and using it as a basis on which to build planning and programming activities, to adapt and to cope with change. Learning is far more than the collection and collation of data and the prepartion of reports. It is a process of collective (and collaborative) cogitation and reflection on experiences, and requires the inculcation of positive attitudes to learning and development of analytical and cognitive capabilities of organizations and stakeholders. Learning is a social process and it must permit not simply piecemeal adjustment in the way things are done. It must

allow for a complete rethinking of what is being done. This means questioning assumptions which were formerly taken for granted and heeding lessons which conflict with deeply-held views about what the organization is doing (Edwards, 1997).

Learning the key lessons of past experience is the key benefit of evaluation, due to the fact that evaluation has been largely donor-driven it has tended to be used as a control and justification mechanism rather than a learning and capacity-building tool. Most implementing agencies in developing countries seldom evaluate performance for reasons of costs. In the situation where donors conceive and carry out monitoring and evaluation it fails to inculcate the correct attitudes to evaluation, capacity-building and learning and may even be inimical to sustainable development (Uphoff, 1995). What is potentially a powerful tool for facilitating capacity-building and learning is reduced to a method of accounting and control from which recipients maybe alienated. Thus, the learning and capacity-building aspect of evaluation is lost on recipient organizations and stakeholders.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation can be used as the tool to build capacity and create a culture of learning within organizations and stakeholders. This will ensure that the enduring benefits of development programs will be stakeholders who are empowered as individuals and as a group to collect the information they need in order to achieve their aspirations, solve at least some of their problems and ultimately to increase bottom-up accountability of their development process. As a means of sustainability, the primary focus of participatory monitoring and evaluation should be to build stakeholder capacity at individual, group and community levels through learning.

However, the aim of learning through participatory learning and evaluation is not only to produce information, but for the learning process itself to build local institutions and networks for participatory decision-making and collective action. Capacity-building should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a means for improving program interventions, increasing accountability of local governance and development agencies, but ultimately macro-level economic and social policies that will ensure intentional change on community levels.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation within the view of development projects/programs, was seen as a means of control, focusing on predetermined aims in as objective a way as possible. This monitoring and evaluation approach relies heavily on the measurement of quantitative data with only minimal allowance for qualitative aspects. The above statement is not to undermine the benefits and importance of the role rigorous monitoring plays in development. The aim of this practicum report is not to espouse the importance of rigorous monitoring and evaluation there are diverse literature that address the topic. However, the aim is to focus attention on the role that PM&E can play in building-capacity that will assist in community development.

There is a difference between traditional monitoring and evaluation and participatory monitoring and evaluation which is laid out in the table below. For in depth analyses on the differences between participatory monitoring and evaluation and traditional monitoring and evaluation please see Cousins (2003).

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Table 2

	Traditional Monitoring and Evaluation	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
Who	External experts	Community members, project staff, facilitators
What	Predetermined indicators of success, principally cost and production output	People identify their own indicators of success, which may include production outputs
How	Focus on 'scientific objectivity'; distancing of evaluators from participants; uniform, complex procedures; delayed, limited access to results	Self evaluation; simple methods adapted to local culture; pen, immediate sharing of results through local involvement in evaluation process
When	Usually upon completion of project/program; sometimes mid-term	More frequent, small-scale evaluation
Why	Accountability; usually summative to determine if funding continues	To empower local people to initiate, control and take corrective action

While evaluation is essentially a tool to help in development, it can be a highly charged process because, of the relations of power and control that exist between funder and funded, between implementing agency and targeted population to mention a few. In this context, traditional evaluations were often viewed as an outside interrogation by

funders, and have been of limited use (Estrella 2000; Patton, 1997; Abbot and Guijt, 1998).

In response to the above differences and criticism of conventional monitoring and evaluation, alternative ways of monitoring and evaluating development interventions have evolved. These innovative approaches aim to make monitoring and evaluation more participatory and effective by including a wider range of stakeholders at every stage of the process. Emphasis has shifted away from externally controlled data-seeking evaluations towards recognition of locally relevant or stakeholder-based processes for gathering, analyzing, and using information (Cousins, 2003; Abbot and Guijt, 1998).

Participatory monitoring and evaluation according to proponents can serve as a tool for self-assessment. It strives to be an internal learning process that enables project beneficiaries and stakeholders to reflect on past experience, examine present realities, revisit objectives, and define future strategies, by recognizing different needs of stakeholders and negotiating their diverse claims and interests. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is also flexible and adaptive to local context and constantly changing circumstances and concerns of stakeholders. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is about promoting self-reliance in decision making and problem solving-thereby strengthening people's capacities to take action and promote change.

To meaningfully make the distinction between participation as a means and participation as an end (which was mentioned previously) will require going through typologies of participation. Typologies usually carry with them implicit normative assumptions which place these forms of participation along an axis of 'good' to 'bad'.

Many of the typologies of participation that have been produced focused on the internationality, and associated approaches, of those who initiate participation.

Arnstein's Ladder of Participation shows that each group of steps corresponds to changes in degrees of citizen engagement ranging from non-involvement through tokenism to citizen power. As Arnstein herself recognized, the ladder is based on a conceptualization that 'participation is a categorical term for power' (Arnstein, 1971 :216). The ladder depicts participation as essentially a power struggle between citizens trying to move up the ladder and controlling organizations and institutions (intentionally or otherwise) limiting their ascent to the 'top' and barring citizen's ability to claim control or power for themselves. Arnstein's (1971) ladder retains considerable contemporary relevance. "Citizen control" appears at the top of the ladder, with a category of 'non-participation' at the bottom, in which therapy and manipulation are placed. Arnstein's point of departure is the citizen on the receiving end of projects or programs. She draws a distinction between 'citizen power', which includes citizen control, delegated power and partnership, and 'tokenism', play in the effort – and indeed the definitions – of development organizations claiming to promote participation. The World Bank (1996), for example, includes both giving information and consultations as forms of participation, and goes on to equate the provision of information with 'empowerment'. Consultation is widely used as a means of legitimating already-taken decisions, providing a thin veneer of participation to lend the process moral authority.

Table 3

8 - Citizen control	
7 - Delegated power	{**Degrees of citizen power**
6 – Partnership	
————————	
5 - Placation	
4 - Consultation	{**Degrees of tokenism**
3 – Informing	
————————	
2 – Therapy	{**Non Participation**
1 – Manipulation	

While Arnstein's ladder looks at participation from the perspective of those on the receiving end, Jules Pretty's (1995) typology of participation speaks more to the user of participatory approaches. His typology is equally normative; going from 'bad' forms of participation-the inclusion of token representatives with no real power, which he characterize as manipulative participation, and passive participation subsequent to decisions that have already been taken –to 'better' forms, such as participation by consultation and for material incentives. 'Functional participation' captures the form of participation that is most often associated with efficiency arguments: people participate to meet project objectives more effectively and to reduce costs, after the main decisions have been made by external agents. This is perhaps the most frequently found type of

participation in development (Rudqvist and Woodford-Berger, 1996). Pretty's last two categories evoke some of the professed goals of those who promote and use participatory approaches in community development. 'Interactive participation' is described as a 'learning process' through which local groups take control over decisions, thereby gaining a stake in maintaining structures and resources. The last category is of 'self-mobilization', where people take the initiative independently of external organizations, developing contacts for resources and technical assistance, but retaining control over these resources. Self-mobilization was, and to some extent remains, very much the nirvana of participation in the 1980s and 2000s

Table 4

Typology	Characteristics of Each Type
1. Passive Participation	People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without listening to people's responses. The information being shared belongs only to external professionals
2. Participation in Information Giving	People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.
3. Participation by Consultation	People participate by being consulted, and external people listen to views. These external professionals define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.
4. Participation for Material Incentives	People participate by providing resources, for example labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Much on-farm research falls into this category, as farmers provide the fields but are not involved in the experimentation of the process of learning. It is very common to see this called participation; people have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.
5.Functional Participation	People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organization. Such involvement does not tend to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators, but may become self-dependent.
6. Interactive	People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and formation of new

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Participation	local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes. These groups take control over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
7.Self-Mobilisation	People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Such self-initiated mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distribution of wealth and power.

Both Arnstein's and Pretty's typologies describe a spectrum defined by a shift from control by the people or citizens. Yet, the end-points are rather different, citizen control goes much further than self-mobilization. As Pretty notes, 'self-initiated mobilization may or may not challenge existing distributions of wealth and power'. Indeed, local self-mobilization maybe actively promoted by the state and international agencies as part of efficiency goals. What Pretty's typology helps make clear is that the motivations of those who adopt and practices participatory approaches is an important factor – if by no means the only one – in shaping interventions.

Another typology put forward by Sarah White (1996) offers some insights into the different interests at stake in various forms of participation. Used as a way of working out how people make use of participation, it can be a useful tool to identify conflicting ideas about why or how participation is being used at any particular stage in a process. Typologies such as those mentioned here can be read as implicitly normative, suggesting a progression towards more 'genuine' forms of participation.

Table 5

Form	Top-Down	Bottom-Up	Function
Nominal	Legitimation	Inclusion	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency	Cost	Means
Representative	Sustainability	Leverage	Voice
Transformative	Empowerment	Empowerment	Means/end

Sarah White's typology aims to move beyond the mechanisms of participation by drawing out the diversity of form, function and interests within the catch –all phrase 'participation'. Her typology distinguishes four major types of participation, and the characteristics of each. She deals with the forms of participation; the interests in participation from the 'top-down' (that is, the interest that those who design and implement development programs have in the participation of others); the perspective from the 'bottom-up' (how the participants themselves see their participation, and what they expect to get out if it) and finally characterizes the overall function of each type of participation. Sarah White addresses nominal participation, instrumental participation, representative participation and transformative participation.

The distinction the different typologies present as clear and unambiguous emerge as rather more indistinct. Indeed, the blurring of boundaries is in itself a product of the engagement of a variety of different actors in participatory processes, each of whom might have a rather different perception of what 'participation' means. As a result, matters are more complex than would seem to be the case from the often-used distinction

between participation as a means, often equated with 'instrumental' participation, and participation as an end in itself, what has come to be regarded as 'transformative' participation.

The ambiguity at the heart of the concept of participation has a clear potential to manifest itself in a contradictory light. Participation as a means has quite a different implications from participation as an end. To the extent that participation is a means, this is indicative that power relations between those at the grassroots, or the target community and the aid/governmental agencies, will be left largely untouched. Project design (including definition of project goals and targets) and management will be left largely in the hands of the traditional authorities, while the role of those mobilized to participate will simply be to rally around to work for the predetermined goals of the project. Power relations between aid donors and recipients remain essentially the same as in traditional top-down, models of development. However, the view of participation as an end suggest a transformation in power relations between donor and recipient, with the latter empowered and liberated from a clientelist relation with the former. Whereas participation as a means is politically neutral insofar as it does not address such power differentials, participation as an end has emancipatory politically radical components in that it seeks to redress unequal power relations. Oakley (1991) points out that in cases where participation is used as a means it is 'essentially a short-term exercise; the local population is mobilized, there is direct involvement in the task at hand but the participation evaporates once the task is complete' (p17-18). Chambers' (1997) strong advocacy from an empowerment-based approach (participation as an end) is conducive to accurately identifying those who need to be empowered.

Thus, the concept of participation defies universal interpretation. Oakley and Marsden (1984) reviewed a whole range of interpretations of participation in development projects and presented them as a continuum to illustrate the direct relationship between interpretation and development analysis. In a more limited but relevant way the following statements reflect interpretations on a development continuum:

o Paul (1987) posits that community participation (is) an active process by which beneficiary or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish.

o According to Cohen and Uphoff (1979), with regards to rural development participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, in implementing programs, their sharing in the benefits of development programs and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programs.

o Subsequently, Pearse and Stiefel (1980) state that, participation is concerned with … the organized efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control.

Collectively the above statements encapsulate the breadth of the participation debate. Statement (1) is essentially an understanding of participation in terms of economic incentives to participate and be rewarded by some tangible economic benefit. Participation in this sense often occurs in the form of some kind of input or contribution into a project in order to enhance its chances of successes and, correspondingly, personal

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economic benefit. Statement (2) has been widely influential particularly among government and international agency supported development projects. It helped launch a whole form of analysis which took decision-making, implementation, benefits and evaluation as the key elements in the process of participation. Statement (3) address non-governmental organizations whose approach to participation has been less tied to the notion of immediate economic benefit. Whilst it would be wrong to argue that the above statements are mutually exclusive and that all participatory projects would be located within one statement or the other, the main thrust of participatory projects would tend to emphasize one or the other of the above statements.

As addressed participation as a means implies the use of participation to achieve some predetermined goal or objective. In other words, participation is a way of harnessing the existing physical, economic and social resources of marginalized people in order to achieve the objectives of development programs and projects. This kind of participation stresses the results of participation in that the achieving of predetermined targets is more important than the process of participation. Often government and development agencies see participation as the means to improving the delivery systems of the projects they seek to implement. In these cases the participation is essentially a short-term exercise; the local population in the community is mobilized, there is direct involvement in the task at hand but the participation evaporates once the task is completed. In many ways it can be argued that participation as a means is a passive form.

Participation as an end is an entirely different concept. Here we see participation essentially as a process which unfolds over time and whose purpose is to develop and strengthen the capabilities of marginalized people to intervene more directly in

development initiatives. Such a process may not have predetermined measureable objectives or even direction. As an end in itself participation should be a permanent feature of any development project, an intrinsic part which grows and strengthens as the project develops. This type of participation as an end is an active and dynamic form which enables people to play an increasing role in development activities.

Oakley (1987) address three broad and different rationales for the practice of participation: contribution, organization and empowering:

o Participation as contribution – the dominant relevance of participation in development projects is voluntary or some other form of contribution by communities to predetermined programs and projects.

o Participation as organization – the distinction lies between the origins of the organizational form which will serve as the vehicle for participation: either such organizations are externally conceived and introduced or else they emerge and take structure themselves as a result of the process of participation. The norm has been for development workers to suggest and structure appropriate organizations for developing communities however the better alternatives recognizes the importance of organization but seeks to encourage marginalized people to determine the nature and structure of the organization.

o Participation as empowering – empowering or empowerment has been seen as the development of skills and abilities to enable rural people to manage better, have a say in, or negotiate with existing development delivery systems. Others see it as more fundamental and essentially concerned with enabling developing

communities to decide upon and to take the actions they believe are essential to their development.

I have to address the difference between participatory evaluation empowering stakeholders and empowerment evaluation as a practice. In his conceptualization of empowerment evaluation, Fetterman (2005,1997a,1997b) articulated a form of evaluation practice in which evaluators bring the voice of disempowered citizens to those who have power and facilitate citizens' control over their affairs. Fetterman and his colleagues (2005) have framed empowerment evaluation as a process that facilitates the development of local stakeholders in the perceived and actual control over the fate of their community joined by their relationship to a social program. In other words empowerment evaluation focuses more on collaboration on the fact that external evaluators cannot do it by themselves.

By extension, Fetterman suggests that empowerment evaluation, if properly carried out, should result in actual shifts in power as symbolized by individuals' engagement and participation in making decisions in which they previously were minimally involved or uninvolved and in an organizations' ability to garner resources and influence relevant policy concerning issues related to a program. Thus, in an empowerment evaluation model, the relationship between the evaluator and the valuation consumers is characterized as a collaborative partnership. In this partnership, the evaluator seeks to involve project stakeholders in the evaluation process in meaningful ways. Collaboration refers to a relationship between the evaluator and the evaluation consumers in which the latter group is not only involved in the process but control it.

Participatory evaluation and empowerment evaluation share some common characteristics; both place emphasis on stakeholder involvement, collaboration is also shared by the two methodologies and utilization of evaluation results is also shared. However, there is a fundamental difference between the two practices. The difference is in the emphasis placed on stakeholder takeover of evaluation functions overtime with empowerment evaluation. Of course all participatory evaluation approaches attempts to strengthen stakeholders' ability to sustain evaluation functions over time. However, empowerment evaluation makes stakeholders self-determination a more specific focus of the evaluation effort. With participatory monitoring and evaluation stakeholder takeover is not the eventual outcome sought rather, it seeks to equip stakeholders participating in the process with the ability to rethink and reassess future development options; mobilize around a development initiative; or reassess the impact of development programs of social change.

The strength of participatory monitoring and evaluation is its capacity to improve program orientation, its use in advocacy and policy efforts, its ability to strengthen stakeholder relationships and its potential to improve participants understanding and analysis of skills leading to the enhancement of empowerment outcomes. These empowerment outcomes equip stakeholders to better understand their changing situation and alter their own individual and group plans or behavior, demand services, negotiate with implementing intermediaries, and challenge inequitable structures and practice.

Thus, participatory evaluation implies that, when doing evaluation, researchers, facilitators, or professional evaluators collaborate in some way with individuals, groups, or communities who have a decided stake in the program, development project, or other

entity being evaluated. Lennie (2005) acknowledges that most applications of participatory evaluation combine rationales and attempt to integrate multiple purposes in a single evaluation project. Pursley (1996) makes similar arguments. Both authors subscribe to the view that one form of participatory evaluation is practical and supports program or organizational decision making and problem solving. Cousin's and Whitmore (1998) term this approach practical participatory evaluation. A second rationale has as its foundation principles of emancipation and social justice and it seeks to empower members of community groups who are less powerful than or are otherwise oppressed by dominating groups. This approach is termed transformative participatory evaluation. Both rationales will be addressed below.

The core premise of practical participatory evaluation is that stakeholder participation in evaluation will enhance evaluation relevance, ownership, and thus utilization. The utilization construct has been traditionally conceptualized in terms of three types of effects or uses of evaluation findings: instrumental, the provision of support for discrete decisions; conceptual, as in an educative or learning function; and symbolic, the persuasive or political use of evaluation to reaffirm decisions already made or to further a particular agenda (Leviton and Hughes, 1981; King, 1988; Weiss, 1979). Conceptions of utilization and evaluation impact are being extended beyond the particular program or target for evaluation to include organizational learning and change (Cousins and Earl 1995).

This approach invokes participatory principles and actions in order to democratize social change. Several conceptions underpin Transformative Participatory Monitoring (T-PE) and evaluation. Most fundamental is the issue of who creates and controls the

production of knowledge. One important aim of transformative participatory evaluation is to empower people through participation in the process of constructing and respecting their own knowledge (based on Freire's notion of "conscientization") and through their understanding of the connection among knowledge, power and control (Fals-Borda and Anisur-Rahman, 1991). A second key concept relates to process. How is the evaluation conducted? The distance between researcher and researched is broken down; all participants are contributors working collectively. Initiating and sustaining genuine dialogue among actors leads to a deep level of understanding and mutual respect (Gaventa, 1993; Whitmore, 1994). The third concept, critical reflection, requires participants to question, to doubt and to consider a broad range of social factors, including their own biases and assumptions (Comstock and Fox, 1993).

Participatory research has been described as a three-pronged activity involving investigation, education, and action (Hall, 1992, 1981). Likewise, T-PE, by helping create conditions where participants can empower themselves, focus not only on data collection, analysis and dissemination but also on learning inherent in the process and on any actions that may result. T-PE has as its primary function the empowerment of individuals or groups. In this approach, evaluation processes and products are used to transform power relations and to promote social action and change. Brunner and Gusman (1989) characterized T-PE as a form of evaluation that takes the interests, preoccupations, aspirations, and priorities of the target population and their facilitators into account. In other words, the social groups, together with their facilitators, decide when an evaluation should take place, what should be evaluated, how the evaluation should be carried out and what should be done with the results. In this sense, T-PE is an educational process

through which social groups produce action-oriented knowledge about their reality, clarify and articulate their norms and values, and reach consensus about further action (Brunner and Gusman, 1989).

Development changes both landscapes and livelihoods, often for the better, but sometimes for the worse as history will attest. Monitoring allows people to gain access to the information they need to understand the positive and negative impacts of development initiatives. Traditionally most monitoring efforts are top-down, with beneficiaries receiving information that have been collected, analyzed and reported upon by experts chosen by the project sponsor and presented in a way that beneficiaries may not understand. In some instances, the information may not even address the real concerns of the community. Project beneficiaries want to participate in decisions that matter to them participatory monitoring seeks to collaboratively identify and solve problems through the process of data collection, analysis, and communication. It does not seek to verify a predetermined view of an issue.

Reconciling Participation and Monitoring and Evaluation: PM&E

Monitoring is the systematic, regular collection and occasional analysis of information to identify and possibly measure changes over a period of time. Evaluation is the analysis of the effectiveness and direction of an activity or research project which involves making a judgment about progress and impact (Patton; 2010, 1997). The main difference between monitoring and evaluation are the timing and frequency of observations and the type of question asked. However, when both are integrated into a

development strategy as a project-management tool, the line between the two becomes rather blurred.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation emerged partly in response to perceived limitations of conventional monitoring and evaluation practices. Conventional monitoring and evaluation activities are normally carried out by outside experts, which sometimes results with a gap between the experts' perception of the project and its results and that of the people who are directly involved. Also, conventional monitoring and evaluation is usually done towards the end of a program or project, allowing little opportunity for improvement during early and mid-term implementation. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is most valuable as an integral component of a project and closely woven into the whole cycle.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation emphasizes participation of the stakeholder in deciding how project progress should be measured and the actions that should be taken based on the results (Guijt and Gaventa, 1998). Broadening the involvement of the various stakeholders in indentifying and analyzing change can create a better picture of what is really happening on the ground according to the perspectives of women, men, and various groups defined by age, class and ethnicity. It allows people to share successes and learn from each other. At the same time, PM&E is potentially empowering, because it puts local people in charge, helps to develop their evaluative skills, shows that their views count, and provide an opportunity for joint learning. As such, participatory monitoring and evaluation process can increase accountability and build the capacities of all the people involved.

There is no single definition for participatory monitoring and evaluation. The difficulty in establishing a common definition for PM&E highlights the diverse range of experiences in this field, and also underscores the difficulty of clarifying concepts of 'monitoring', 'evaluation' and 'participation'. The problem with clarifying definitions for PM&E stems partly from the discourse which surrounds the use of these terms. Given that the approaches to PM&E are extremely diverse, it is perhaps more useful to group the range of purposes for which PM&E is being used, and in what context. I will briefly discuss the differing purposes of PM&E and how these relate to each other. While there is nothing new about monitoring and evaluating change, the critical feature in a PM&E approach is its emphasis on who measures change and who benefits from learning about these changes:

o   Similar to conventional approaches, PM&E is generally used to measure changes resulting from specific interventions. The main difference is that in a participatory approach, stakeholders who are directly or indirectly involved in a program take part in selecting the indicators to measure changes, in collecting information and evaluating findings. Measuring change can include tracking inputs, outputs, processes, and/or outcomes (impacts). This demonstrates what has been achieved, whether the needs of intended beneficiaries are bring met over time, and whether the best strategies have been pursued.

o   One common function of PM&E is to evaluate the impact of a given program and the changes that have occurred as a result of the initiative. The emphasis is on the comparison between program objective and actual achievement. Assessing project impacts can help distinguish whether or not: project interventions are in fact

achieving their identified objectives; or if program objectives have remained relevant over time, and the best action strategies have been pursued. In participatory impact assessment, community representatives participate in the definition of impact indicators, the collection of data, the analysis of data, the communication of assessment findings, and, especially in post-assessment actions designed to improve the impact of development interventions within a locality (Jackson 1995).

o   Another purpose of PM&E is to gain in timely and effective way information which can be used to improve project planning and implementation. As a project management tool, PM&E provides stakeholders and project managers with information to assess whether project objectives have been met and how resources have been used (Campos and Coupal, 1996). This helps in making critical decisions about project implementation and in planning future activities

o   PM&E is increasingly being applied for the purpose of institutional learning. In this context, self-evaluation is undertaken by organization stuff members to evaluate the objectives of the project they are implementing and assess their own organizational capacities. Questions such as: were objectives too limited (or overly ambitious); did they reflect the felt needs (or real needs) of members in the community must be answered. The purpose for this approach is to enhance the sustainability, replicability, and effectiveness of development efforts through the strengthening of the organization's capacities in terms of resources. It aims to enable implementing organizations keep track of their progress, by identifying and solving problems themselves and by building on and expanding areas of

activity where success is recognized. Institutional learning plays a role in strengthen institutional accountability. In this context, PM&E is regarded less as a means of reporting and auditing, and more as a means of demanding greater social responsiveness and ethical responsibility. Rather than being used solely for findings and by donor agencies as a way of holding beneficiaries and other project participants accountable, PM&E enables local stakeholders to measure the performance of these institutions and hold them responsible for their actions and interventions. It is envisioned that if beneficiaries are able to better articulate and advocate their needs and expectations, this will help ensure that their service delivery demands will be met.

o   Another area of work in PM&E emphasizes its potential role in helping to inform policy. In Colombia indigenous communities select their own development indicators (Estrells, 2000) and as a result, indigenous communities are better able to communicate local needs and compare these against the development priorities of local government officials. The effort to strengthen local capacities for ensuring public accountability in turn becomes a means for people to influence policy-making decisions. Skills gained through capacity building will enable local stakeholders/ beneficiaries to play a larger role in defining local development and the allocation of resources.

o   In order to identify what is to be monitored and evaluated and for what purpose(s), PM&E uses a process that tries to offer different stakeholders the platform to articulate their needs and make collaborative decisions. PM&E enables people to understand the views and values they share, work through their

differences with others, develop longer-term strategies and take carefully researched and planned actions which fit their context, priorities, and styles of operating (Parachini and Mott, 1997). PM&E requires learning about stakeholders concerns, and how different stakeholders look at (and hence, measure) project results, outcomes and impacts, how these differing (and often competing) beneficiary claims and perspectives are negotiated and resolved, especially when particular groups and/or individuals are powerless vis-à-vis others, remain a critical question in building a PM&E process.

Andrea Cornwall (2002) reminds us that spaces for participation are not neutral, but are themselves shaped by power relations that both surround and enter them. Power relations help to shape the boundaries of participatory spaces, what is possible within them, and who may enter, with which identities, discourses and interests. Hayward (1998) suggests power can be understood 'as the network of social boundaries that delimit fields of possible action' (p.2). Viewing participation as a spatial practice helps draw attention to the productive possibilities of power as well as the negative effects. Spaces come to be defined by those who are invited into them, as well as those doing the inviting. People move between domains of association in everyday life in which ways they come to be seen by others, and see themselves, may be strikingly different, with implications for the extent to which they are able to influence and indeed act as agents in particular spaces (Lefebvre, 1991). Thus, the mutual impingement of relations of power and differences within and across different arenas conditions possibilities for agency and voice.

<u>Participation and Citizenship</u>

The defining feature of participatory monitoring and evaluation is the active engagement of multiple stakeholders and beneficiaries. Their various interests and needs generate the content and form of the evaluation process. That stakeholders and beneficiaries share influence – over what is to be evaluated, how, and in whose interests – signals the departure of participatory monitoring and evaluation from the exclusive domain of scientific management or traditional evaluation. Intended as a transformative tool, the potential of participatory monitoring and evaluation stems from its democratic base; it requires a sharing of power, and stimulates a strengthening of the analytical capacities of all participating stakeholders. It encourages mutual understanding and appreciation of different perspectives, and that in turn can be the precursor for both intellectual transformation and social action.

For participatory monitoring and evaluation to be meaningful and transformative it must be grounded in a concept of rights which, in a development context strengthens the status of citizens from that of consumers of development initiatives to their rightful and legitimate status of initiators of development (Cornwall 2002a). The 2000 United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) strategy paper on *Realizing Human Rights for Poor People*, for instance, argues that rights will become real as citizens are engaged in the decisions and processes which affect their lives. While such arguments are increasingly linked under the label of a 'rights based approach to development', discourse on rights have a long history in the field of development. In 1986, a United Nations Declaration affirmed the 'right to development', which it defined

as a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting from the process. The Declaration does not only link the idea of development to the concept of rights, but also names the rights to meaningful participation and social justice as its inherent components.

The concept of rights raises the question of the nature and meaning of citizenship. While declaration of rights and citizenship are increasingly abundant, the gap between the rhetoric and reality remains large. Little is yet known of how rights and citizenship are understood by poor people themselves, how they are realized in practice across different conditions and contexts and with what impact. Literature around citizen participation simply uses 'citizenship' to mean the act of any person taking part in public affairs (Hickey and Mohan, 2005) while this kind of 'participation' is promoted as a right, there is little conceptualization of what this in turn implies – individual rights, collective rights, rights to participate on the basis of particular identities or interest, rights to difference or dissent. Many of these questions have been theoretically explored within academic literature on citizenship, which often distinguishes between the liberal, communitarian and civic republican traditions.

Liberal theories promote the idea that citizenship is a status which entitles individuals to a specific set of universal rights granted by the state. Central to liberal thought is the notion that individual citizens act 'rationally' to advance their own interests, and that the role of the state is to protect citizens in the exercise of their rights (Oldfield, 1990). The actual exercise of rights is seen as the choice of citizens, on the

assumption that they have the resources and opportunities to do so (Isin and Wood, 1999). While the rights to participate have long been central to liberal thought, these are largely seen as rights to political and civic participation – such as the right to vote.

The concept of the 'self-interested', 'independent' citizen which some liberal thinkers construct has been critiqued by communitarians, who argue that an individual's sense of identity is produced only though relations with others in the community of which she or he is a part. As this implies, communitarian thought centers on the notion of the socially-embedded citizen and on community belonging (Smith, 1987), in contrast to much liberal thought. Civic republican thinking, on the other hand, places more emphasis on people's political identities as active citizens, apart from their identities in localized communities. While, it also emphasizes what binds citizens together in a common identity, this is under pinned by a concern with individual obligations to participate in communal affairs (Oldfield 1990).

More recent work in contemporary citizenship attempts to find ways of uniting the liberal emphasis on individual rights, equality and due process of law, with the communitarian focus on belonging and the civic republican focus on processes of deliberation, collective action and responsibility. In doing so it aims to recast citizenship as a practice rather than a given. As Lister (1997) argues, to be a citizen in the legal and sociological sense means to enjoy the rights of citizenship necessary for agency, social and political participation; and to act as a citizen involves fulfilling the potential of that status. Placing an emphasis on inclusive participation as the very foundation of participatory evaluation practices, these approaches suggest a more action notion of citizenship – one which recognizes the agency of citizens as 'makers and shapers' rather

than as 'users and choosers' of interventions or services designed by others (Cornwall and Gaventa 2000).

In her work on *Users as Citizens*, Barnes (1999) distinguishes between a form of collective action based in common experiences of oppression, disadvantage or social exclusion from an assertive consumerism which seeks to maximize individual self-interest. She argues that collective action provides a means through which citizenship can be addressed in the social policy arena in three broad ways: as a social right; as a form of agency and practice; and as relationship of accountability between public service providers and their users.

Conceptualizing participation as a right, Lister (1998) argues that,

> Extending the notion of citizenship also implies that the right to participation itself should be seen as a fundamental citizenship right, which helps to protect and guarantee all others. Lister suggests, the right of participation in decision-making in social, economic, cultural and political life should be included in the nexus of basic human rights…Citizenship as participation can be seen as representing an expression of human agency in the political arena, broadly defined; citizenship as rights enable people to act as agents (p50).

Through an emphasis on enabling people to act as agents, Lister's definition offers the scope for addressing – and redressing – the involvement of citizens in decisions that affect their lives. Linking this work to the engagement of user groups in the disability rights field, Barnes (1999) argues that direct involvement of users in processes of decision-making over public service provision demonstrates their capability to be active agents 'making and creating' the service they receive, rather than simply 'consuming' them. Through creating their own models and approaches of self-organization and provisioning users also develop their own identities as actors on their own affairs, rather

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than as mere passive beneficiaries of abstract rights granted by the broader society. In this sense, particular groups are able to make strategic use of identities that they themselves play a part in defining, in order to gain or improve access to the service they need.

For local communities to act as active citizens there must be a focus on their capabilities thus, encouraging a proactive role for them as citizens replacing the passive, dependent role of clients in the welfare service delivery model of development practices. The active citizen mobilizes (or is mobilized) at the associational level. As associational life gains momentum, it builds up the capacity over to leverage external resources, and to claim rights and access to services to which community members are entitled by virtue of state or global citizenship.

Fourth-generation evaluation helps explain the theory of situating citizenship within participation and thereby PM&E. Fourth-generation evaluation is defined as an interpretive approach to evaluation which is based on – and guided by issues – identified by stakeholders (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). Reality is understood as a social construct. The evaluator and the evaluated are inter-locked, and influence each other in ways which imply that they act together to construct and create evaluation findings. This means that the monitoring and evaluation process is a continuous, dialectic chain of questioning, answering, analyzing and requisitioning, ultimately leading to the emergence of a common construct of reality among observer and observed.

Social change is seen to take place when beneficiaries become citizens of the development project and they themselves create their own solutions based on their understanding of a given problem. Stakeholders of the project are, in general, political and administrative decision-makers, management of the project to be evaluated, staff and

end-users. In other words, everyone with a stake in the outcome of the monitoring and evaluation process should be involved in the design and implementation of that evaluation. For beneficiaries to turn from clients to citizens through their social agency they must be more than objects in the monitoring and evaluation process – they should be subjects. Long (1992) and King (2007) in their actor and process-oriented approaches supports this view, as they looks at social processes and change as a dynamic relationship between internal and external factors where concepts like 'actor' and 'agency' are thus central to the approach.

A social actor according to Long is defined as an active participant who processes information and develops strategies in his/her interaction with local and outside actors. Agency is defined as the capacity of a social actor to process social experience and to device ways of coping with life. Giddens (1984) sees actors as 'knowledgeable' and 'capable' of making their own choices and acting strategically in relation to the circumstances surrounding them. In development context this can be interpreted to mean that, for instance, stakeholders of a development project act to influence that project. They are oriented towards problem-solving; they learn how to intervene in the flow of social interventions around them; they continuously monitor their own actions; and they take note of contingent circumstances.

Agency does not merely imply decision-making capacity. Rather, it is also composed of social relations, and can only become effective through them. To be effective, agency requires organizing capacities. To put it simply, alone, an actor may not be in a position to exercise agency, but the actor must be a part of a network of social

relations through which agency can be channeled. The ability to influence others is dependent on the actions of a chain of actors.

Long (1996) states that there is no universal interpretation of agency across cultures agency is therefore translated culturally in the actor-oriented approach

> One should address the question of how far notions of agency, which differ according to the type of policy being promoted, can be imposed on local groups. Here I have in mind, for example, the concepts of 'participation', 'targeting the poor' or 'the role of the progressive farmer' in planned development (p68).

In other words we must be careful not to assume that a concept like participation is always in accordance with the culture in all development intervention settings. Thus, citizenship through PM&E theory posited here offers the prospect that citizenship can be claimed from below through active participation, rather than waiting for it to be conferred from above. PM&E can help to address how to scale up the effects of citizenship through participation beyond the locality and institutionalize them within the development project system so that they become rights that can be claimed from donor agencies or NGOs.

By seeing themselves as actors rather than simply passive stakeholders, user groups may be more able to assert their citizenship in a third sense though seeking greater accountability from service providers. One form of greater accountability is through increased dialogue and consultation. Accountability may also, involve broader mechanisms for citizens to identify indicators of success, and to monitor and assess performance.

Participatory approaches have increasingly been used to enable citizens to express their concerns more directly to those with the power to influence the policy process. Participatory policy research processes such as Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPAs)

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have helped create spaces for change at local government and national level, as well as in international discourses (Holland and Blackburn 1998; HelpAge International 1999; Narayan et al 1999). By bringing together those who are directly affected by policy and those who are charged with ensuring responsive service provision, opportunities are opened up for enhancing accountability and responsiveness. Participatory budgeting in Brazil offers an important example of the use of participatory approaches to enhance transparency. This has enabled citizens to engage directly in municipal fiscal planning, through an elaborate consultation and negotiation process (De Sousa Santos, 1998).

Through participatory monitoring and evaluation the beneficiaries affected by development intervention can eventually act as citizens on their own behalf. This can be achieved if the concept of social citizenship is expanded to include not only concepts of social right, but also social responsibilities exercised through self-action. Repositioning participation to encompass the multiple dimensions of citizenship-including a focus on agency based on self-action and self-identity, as well as demands for accountability amongst actors-beneficiaries of development interventions may see themselves as 'agents' rather than consumers, or clients in the 'induced' and 'invited' participation of mainstream development practice (Cornwall, 2003).

The Organization Learning

The current practice of participatory monitoring and evaluation resists allowing communities to lead the development and implementation of the evaluation process. Giving the progress in development evaluation in general and participatory monitoring and evaluation in particular, many in the NGO/donor world are still opting for fast results

on the ground while only rhetorically embracing community-based self-development and evaluation. Producing visible results validates the development activities and secures funding. Facing uncertainty and rapid change, donors and NGOS tend to make decisions that privilege NGOs self-preservation.

However, the emphasis on achieving rapid, visible results often backfires. While we can 'see' development happening, the less photogenic, but ultimately longer lasting aspects of development, such as local initiatives, community cohesion, resilience, self-reliance, and resourcefulness – leading ultimately to self-determination – takes a back seat. In other words, NGOs/donors tend to set up internal but largely unrecognized barriers to their own value-driven goals. This incongruity of behavior is rooted in a failure for organizations to translate new knowledge gained from evaluation into changed organizational behavior. As Edwards (1997) notes, NGOs, INGOs and donors tend to have difficulty with organization learning because it requires humility, honesty, openness, and the ability to welcome error. On the other hand, many development institutions have eagerly embraced organizational learning in principle, following the lead of commercial businesses. This step however has proven to be a bit problematic. Although many business are developing models of learning practices, neither the for-profit environment nor its corporate structures fit well with the environment and organizational forms needed for grassroots development.

A fundamental difference between the for-profit and the non-profit organization is from a value based paradigm. That is the notion of organization as borrowed from the for-profit world can be argued to work against responsiveness to the poor. In traditional for-profit organization, there is a direct link between the customer and the success of the

business. In general, the business must be responsive to customer needs, or sales will decline and the company will be in danger of liquidation. Development organizations and other non-profit, on the other hand, are usually set up to serve marginalized communities that are generally without voice. Whether or not a development organization adequately understands and responds to their needs seldom has an impact on the solvency of the organization. In order to remain solvent, development organizations must be responsive to its donor base – a group that is not receiving the organization's primary services.

While the for-profit world has built-in accountability structures between customers and company, there is a disconnect between the 'customer' and the organization for most non-profits which is inadequately bridged by the donor community. According to Synder and Cummings (1998) this is a symptom of the alien-hand syndrome, an organization learning disorder which involves a disconnection between organization intentions and actions. Organizations may have clear goals and well-defined routines, yet lack adequate incentives to ensure that actions are consistent with intentions. The practical implications of the above can be summarized as; development organizations may provide inadequate 'services' to marginalized individuals and communities without repercussions. As long as the donors are satisfied, the organization can continue to operate and grow. Success in a development sense – that is, empowering poor communities, giving them voice and developing self-governance skills – may in fact be considered secondary.

I am not advocating that one type of a unidirectional accountability replace another. However, I believe development organizations can do better in bringing their practices in line with their core values. For this to happen, there must be effective

feedback mechanism and accountability linked to communities where the effects of development projects/programs are felt. Organizational learning has been defined as a process of developing new knowledge that changes an organization's behavior to improve future performances (Garvin 1993). Such learning is not simply about making better decisions but also about an organization making sense of its perceptions and interpretations of the environment it operates in. Organizational learning maybe either adaptive (questioning the basic assumptions an organization holds about itself and the environment) or generative (questioning the basic organization's perceptions of both its internal and external relationships) (Baker and Camarata 1998).

The agenda of the 'learning organization' has likewise been described as a challenge "to explore...how we can create organizational structures which are meaningful to people so they can assist, participate and more meaningfully control their own destiny in an unhampered way" (Jones and Hendry 1994: 160). Development organizations can effectively meet this challenge through participatory monitoring and evaluation. To effectively use PM&E, an organization must make a choice to draw insights and feedback from the beneficiaries of the development projects/programs. The organizations use the results to refocuse and redefine itself, its operational choices, and its performances measures in light of its accountability to beneficiaries and stakeholders. I will like to state that this is not the only type of learning in which an organization can, and should, engage, but it provides a counterbalance to other types of learning that may fall short of addressing the alien-hand syndrome.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation posits that organizations must adapt their internal structures, systems and culture to the complex and evolving struggles of those in

poverty, including even the choice not to be 'developed'. The principles of PM&E challenges organizations to recognize that they need to adapt themselves to environments that are chaotic, uncertain, fraught with risk, unpredictable, not conducive to being standardized, often hard to fund, and which defy linear, quantifiable models for project planning and evaluation.

PM&E in contrast to non-participatory monitoring and evaluation does not 'adjust' the poor to fit in (and thus benefit from) standardized evaluation blueprint. Making stakeholders adjust to an existing program suggests that organizations may not acknowledge the uniqueness of the needs and conditions in each community preferring to focus on time and budget constraints. PM&E does not romanticize the poor or suggest that their interests can be easily defined or treated as an unfragmented whole. On the contrary, the core strength of PM&E with relation to organizational learning is that it is grounded and realistic in approaching the complexities of poverty and development from below. In short, PM&E rejects top-down evaluation and promotes the interest and priorities of beneficiaries and stakeholders so that their voices are not only heard, but can exercise a discrete and overriding influence not only on the actions of development organizations on the ground but also in their policy decisions as well.

Organizational learning through PM&E is to provoke intentional change. The engagement of different stakeholders develop a dynamic process through which the social production of knowledge occurs, contributing to a collective conception of learning about themselves, the organization in which they are involved and ultimately the essential features underlying the phenomena being monitored and evaluated. Thus, participatory

monitoring and evaluation becomes a praxis for fostering the creation of organizational learning process (Deiz, 2001; Robinson and Cousins, 2004).

In order to present an in depth analysis about the critical connections between participatory monitoring and evaluation, community/organizational learning and intentional change, I will examine the way in which participatory monitoring and evaluation has been conceptualized in terms of rationales for, conceptions of, and evaluators roles within participatory monitoring and evaluation over the last decade. Participatory monitoring and evaluation may be considered a community and organizational learning exercise facilitating the development of a holistic process of intentional change, however, there are some contextual challenges in the ways in which participatory monitoring and evaluation allows for the creation of learning environments.

In the development sector, expectations have grown over recent years about the potential of participatory monitoring and evaluation to contribute to learning especially community learning. For PM&E to contribute to learning a wide range of other activities (such as; creating an environment for critical reflection, identification of indicators, identifying information needs, agreeing on actions) are needed to fulfill the expectations. There are various definitions in present literature however, for the purpose of this practicum report I use community learning to mean experiential learning as a cyclical process that involves reflecting on experience, conceptualizing meanings that arise from reflection, deciding how the new understanding can be used to improve future practice, and taking action which leads to new experience. Hence, 'action' is integrated in community learning. This inclusion echoes Maturana and Varela's definition of knowledge as being "effective action in the domain of existence" (1987).

There is more at play when it comes to community learning than a simple feedback loop model – define indicators, then collect and collate data – as has been the practice. As Sterman (1994) argues: "A simple feedback loop model of learning obscures the role that mental models and strategy, structure, decision rules play in decision-making process" (p26). The role of sense-making and responding to change must be touched on to enable a clear understanding of the community learning process I am proposing here. Sense-making becomes a process of inner dialogue if it occurs at the level of an individual and lies at the heart of formal and informal debates when it involves more than one individual. In both cases, sense-making can be unconscious or more deliberate. PM&E can make learning – sense-making – more conscious and systematic through the deliberate implementation of activities. Such learning is based on the systematic seeking and sharing of information to help identify appropriate actions that, in turn, will be more effective for goal achievement that will lead to intentional change.

Participation is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the full potential of a monitoring and evaluative process to be attained (Torres and Preskill, 2005, 2001), evaluators have in recent years focused on understanding the role and practice of evaluation in the learning process of organization and communities (Diez 2001; Robinson and Cousins, 2004; Weiss 1998). When viewed through the prism of community learning, the emergence of sustainable networks could be considered one of the most relevant strategies in participatory monitoring and evaluation. The strength of this process is grounded in the partnership developed among stakeholders and beneficiaries and in the communicative nature of the monitoring and evaluative practice (Mckie, 2003), through which participants learn to reflect on their experiences, mutual interactions and shared

information within communities (Burke 1998; Cousins and Whitmore 1998; Levin-Rozalis and Rosenstein, 2005).

Moreover, one can argue that, through the continuous interactions of participatory evaluation, and the active flows of human, material and financial resources which evolve over time, the stakeholder and beneficiary group develops a dynamic through which the social production of knowledge is achieved. A community conception of learning is built in a reciprocal manner allowing group members to better understand themselves, the community with which they are involved and ultimately the essential features underlying the phenomena being monitored and evaluated. In this way, the participatory monitoring and evaluation process is understood as a developmental process of dialogue, cooperation and negotiation inspiring community learning (Preskill et al. 2003; Robinson and Cousins, 2004). This praxis implies a continual process of growth and improvement integrated with the symbolic, physical and social infrastructure of the organization, through which its members negotiate their different values, attitudes and perceptions. Such a dynamic process of knowledge prosecution and social mobilization goes beyond static conceptions of organizations to more forceful conceptions which are, essentially, the product of active, cognitive and reflexive endeavor.

The force is not only the reconciliation of differences but also the development of an interactive learning environment that provides a common perspective for all beneficiaries and stakeholders involved in the participatory monitoring and evaluative process (Billett, 2004; Garaway, 1995; Kalliola et al., 2006). Beneficiaries and stakeholders are therefore continually engaged in a collective articulation of action working together with the purpose of learning more about their community and about

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themselves in the context and situation in which they are developing. Underpinning this participatory process is the conviction that stakeholders and beneficiaries, regardless of their position within the community, have great creative capacities that allow them to get involved in a collective experience with all the senses, emotions and personal experiences that they bring with them (Garaway, 1995).

This is more likely to have a profound impact on the ways in which stakeholders and beneficiaries use their resources to learn more about their situation. There is a spirit of ongoing inquiry which allows for both examination of underlying assumptions and dialogue through a fluid complex (Garaway, 1995; Torres and Preskill, 2001) that provides participants with opportunities for leaning about effective participatory monitoring and evaluative practices (Preskill et al,. 2003). Participatory monitoring and evaluation appears therefore to be a way of rapidly interacting and learning with other beneficiaries and stakeholders, and enhance an opportunity to build sustainable networks for communicative actions and supportive partnerships (Diez 2001; Stubbs and Lemon, 2001). The sustainable nature of the networks of supportive partnerships and the multiple channels of communication between stakeholders and beneficiaries are likely to be experienced beyond the community context of participatory monitoring and evaluation (Marra, 2000; Smith, 2006), and this could have profound influence on their efforts to engage in a process of intentional change.

Intentional change for the purposes of this thesis is considered as a set of efforts by a group of stakeholders and beneficiaries towards higher organizational motives, like accomplishing collective projects, or developing organizational innovations (Boyatzis, 2006). This conception of intentional change has some organizational implications in the

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field of participatory monitoring and evaluation. As engaged stakeholders and beneficiaries want to learn from the participatory monitoring and evaluative process through participatory dynamics, certain conditions and procedures need to be developed and supported at the organizational level.

The rationale or underlying reasons for choosing a participatory monitoring and evaluation approach in a given evaluative project will be linked to participants' values, assumptions and interest. Two common rationales (out of the four discussed above) will be addressed to reflect the critical connections between participatory monitoring and evaluation, organizational/community learning and social or intentional change.

Utilization – we live in a world in which utility of innovative strategies is gaining a hold on modern organizations. Quality of monitoring and evaluation – including innovative, participative and interdisciplinary evaluation practices – has also been linked to utility. Indeed, referring to the Joint Committee of Standards for Educational and Evaluation (Sanders, 1994), Forss and his colleagues (2002) state that utility could be considered the most important criterion of monitoring and evaluation quality. As this focus on utilization is predominantly technical, the rationale of utility is characterized by its emphasis on the use and contribution of evaluation to program decision making and organizational problem-solving, its conservative approach to action and its reliance on the expert status of the professional evaluator (Brisolara, 1998).

Historically, a lasting issue of concern for evaluators has been the utilization of evaluation findings (Greene, 1998; Torres and Preskill, 2001). In fact, some authors suggest that many evaluation findings are misused or unused by stakeholders (Mark and Henry, 2004; Rebien, 1996; Thoeing, 2000). Evaluation researchers therefore began to

look at how beneficiaries and stakeholders affected by the monitoring and evaluation process could use not only the findings, but also the process of evaluation in a more appropriate manner (Alkin and Taut, 2002; Forss et al., 2002; Shulha and Cousins, 1997). It is well documented that one of the features suppose to enhance the process use of evaluation is the involvement of stakeholders and beneficiaries in many aspects of the evaluative process. The Patton definition of process use (Patton, 1998) depicts a process of organizational learning and individual changes resulting from involvement in a given monitoring and evaluative process, that is, 'the evaluation use that takes place before lessons learned are generated and feedback processes are initiated' (Forss et al., 2002:29). This has influenced the development of participatory approaches in evaluation practice.

Empowerment – the importance of the representation of those with the least power or lowest status in order to ensure that their interests are taken into consideration is highlighted by the rationale of empowerment. There is a focus, in organizational empowerment, on the meaning of training, management of power relations, participant readiness, adequate resources, coaching skill, and mutual support through coaching and interagency networks (Andrew et al., 2006). As these goals are clearly transformative, the empowerment rationale's primary purpose is the social emancipation and sustainable development of individuals and groups. From this perspective, evaluation processes and products are to transform power relations and to promote social action and change. Thus participatory monitoring and evaluation is conceived as an ongoing process of collective action through the inclusion of less prominent stakeholders in reflection, negotiation, collaboration and knowledge creation dynamics (Cousins and Whitmore, 1998; Weaver and Cousins, 2004).

This is also the point for Brisolara (1998) for whom beneficiary and stakeholders hold critical, essential knowledge for the understanding of the evaluative process, and of Burke (1998), who states that the process of participatory monitoring and evaluation must acknowledge and address inequities of power and voice among participating stakeholders and beneficiaries. This explicitly political process is, concerned with promoting social action for change, and transforming power relations in order to empower the most marginalized. Sensitive to the political nature of participatory monitoring and evaluation, the rationale of empowerment calls on beneficiaries to get involved in the articulation of the evaluative project as a matter of citizenship responsibility for social change (Brisolara, 1998).

As previously stated, participatory activity in evaluation has a wide range of meanings and there is no universal way to define participatory monitoring and evaluation. Some authors including myself support the idea that participatory monitoring and evaluation is best described as a set of principles and a process of engagement in monitoring and evaluation endeavors that respects and use the knowledge and experiences of key beneficiaries and stakeholders, embracing the contribution of their perspectives (Burke, 1998: Springett, 2001b). The importance of the process in participatory monitoring and evaluation, through which the participants develop a sense of ownership, new skills and confidence to improve the quality of their decisions, is stressed.

Cousins and Whitmore (1998) distinguished between two principal streams of participatory evaluation that nevertheless could be closely interconnected: practical participatory evaluation (P-PE) and transformative participatory evaluation (T-PE). P-PE

aims essentially to promote the use of evaluation, with the implicit assumption that evaluation is focused on some kind of program decision-making. Building on principles of knowledge creation between evaluators and program practitioners, the authors advocate a more intensive role for beneficiaries and stakeholders in ownership and control of technical problem-solving skills. Insofar as the participatory monitoring and evaluation process stimulates the collective production of knowledge, the results will be more meaningful for those responsible for program problem-solving and organizational decision-making and this knowledge will, therefore, be of greater use (Weaver and Cousins, 2004). As it is focused on problem-solving and decision-making, this approach implies an instrumental development of the participatory monitoring and evaluation, which aims to increase the usefulness of the knowledge it creates. P-PE is intimately linked to the rationale of utility, in which expert evaluators work together with the closest beneficiaries and stakeholders to produce knowledge in response to practical problems (Weaver and Cousins, 2004).

On the other hand, T-PE appeals to participatory principles and actions aiming to bring about the democratization of social change processes, by empowering more marginalized participants. Issues like control of production of knowledge, empowerment and critical reflection are at the core of this type of participatory monitoring and evaluation. The primary interest is to promote fairness through the involvement of individuals associated with all groups with a stake in the evaluative process. Through direct involvement and participation in the evaluation exercise, people from oppressed groups or marginalized sectors who do not normally have a voice in policy or program decision-making are thereby provided with such opportunities (Floc'hlay and Plottu,

1998; Waver and Cousins, 2004). This approach is ideologically rooted and remains closely reliant on the rationale of empowerment in which the evaluator encourages stakeholder and beneficiary participation in the creation of a sustainable network of communicative actions and supportive partnerships through which they will enhance their understanding of the links between knowledge, power and control.

Whereas the ideological and historical roots of these two conceptions of participatory evaluation are quite different, in practice they do not differ substantially. As Brisolara (1998) states,

> These strands of participatory evaluation [referring to P-PE and T-PE] need not be viewed as rival models of evaluation; both are participatory models that share a commitment to participation, differentiating between them in where they align themselves on a continuum that ranges from practical (utilization-focused, within the status quo) to transformative (action-oriented, ideological) (p25).

Reinforcing this idea of reconciliation between P-PE and T-PE, Springett (2001b) outlines some guidelines for engaging in participatory monitoring and evaluation based both on empowerment and collaborative problem-solving approaches, encouraging collaboration, interaction and reflection on practice. The channel for this process is dialogue (Kalliola et al., 2006; Springett, 2001a), a communicative process of social exchange through which we create new set of social relations, as well as relevant and appropriate knowledge.

Thus, we highlight the overlapping nature of the two streams of participatory evaluation: P-PE recognizes the political nature of the evaluation process and advocates an extended role for evaluators that includes elements of organizational learning, whereas T-PE is concerned with social action towards change, as well as with transforming power relations in order to empower the marginalized (Burke 1998). Participatory monitoring

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and evaluation process are then used to transform power relations through organizational

learning and to promote social mobilization and intentional or social change.

Implementing Community and Organization Change

Current literature shows that, PM&E has been widely credited with increasing the

relevance and use of evaluation process and findings in a variety of programs and

organizations (Huebner, 2000). Stakeholder and beneficiary participation in an

evaluation's design and activities is necessary, but not sufficient for the full potential of

evaluation to be realized within communities and organizations; that is for it to facilitate

learning and change on program, community and organizational levels. As Mathison

(1994) states: "One-shot program evaluations will not provide the information to address

fundamental organizational traits and characteristics which influence all programs" (p.

304).

Organizational and community learning is a continuous process of growth and

improvement that: uses information or feedback about both processes and outcomes (that

is PM&E); is integrated with work activities, and within the organization's infrastructure

(such as leadership and communication mechanisms); and invokes the alignment of

values, attitudes, and perceptions among communities and sometimes organizational

members (Preskill and Torres, 1999). This continuous process will involve: establishing a

balance between accountability and learning roles for PM&E; developing frameworks for

relating findings about particular programs and initiatives to broader organizational goals

and community aspirations; providing time for reflection, examination of underlying

assumptions, and dialogue among evaluators, programs staff community members and

organizational leaders; and reconsidering traditional roles evaluator roles and skills evaluators needs (Preskill and Torres, 2003).

In an organization where the above circumstances exist, organizations have the opportunity to fully deploy evaluation and particularly PM&E in service of their mission. However, PM&E evaluators and organizations interested in this vision of evaluation face significant challenges, including: accountability – hungry funders and legislators who continue to demand outcomes within short periods of time; overworked program staffs that continue to see evaluation as a nonessential, add-on activity for which they have little time; changing the negative attitudes of community members towards monitoring and evaluation which may be seen as non-inclusive; the difficulty of locating evaluators who have an interest in, and the ability to implement evaluations as a means for, community learning and organizational change; little support for redesigning projects or influencing organizations culture to sustain community learning; and organization members who may view evaluation as threatening, and remain uncomfortable with group dialog designed to facilitate learning and evaluation (Preskill and Torres, 2002; Weiss, 1998;Russ-Eft and Preskill, 2001).

Development organizations will have to overcome these obstacles to enable community learning. Organizations must go through stages of change to fully actualize this approach. The stages are: status quo; awareness of a need to change the exploration of a new approach to evaluation; transitioning to an organizational learning approach; adoption and implementation of an organizational learning approach; and predominance and refinement of the approach (Preskill and Torres, 2002; Rogers 1995). For donor organizations to make the transition from a more traditional evaluation approach to

community learning approach through PM&E, a number of things need to happen both within and outside the organization and evaluation practice.

The Dreyfus (1986) model posits five stages of the human learning process will address the outside change:

- Novice Stage – learning at the novice stage is guided by objective facts and rules. The novice never hesitates to follow the rules, but does what he or she has been taught no matter what the circumstances may be-rules are independent of context. The novice stage is necessary in order to gain initial practical experience, but rules soon become a limitation to further learning.

- Advanced Beginner – the advanced beginner gains confidence in performing certain elementary functions. He or she no longer thinks actively about the rules, but rules have become internalized and the learner acts automatically when facing situations he or she recognizes.

- Competent – as a competent learner a person starts acting according to hierarchic, prioritized procedures, and to take context into consideration.

- Proficient – the proficient person tackles situations differently, namely intuitively, based on prior experience from different contexts. As the learner acquires experience from different contexts, he/she becomes an expert. Actions at the expert level are intuitive: experts do not 'make decisions' or 'solve problems', rather they capture the totality of the situation, match it against endless previous experiences and reach a conclusion about what actions normally work. The relevance of the above to PM&E. First, PM&E by definition is about involving stakeholders and beneficiaries. As the Dreyfus model indicates, being involved in

processes, gaining experience from practice, learning-by-doing, trail-and-error will often be superior to any formal training or any rules-based education. Being involved in the evaluation process is in itself a factor which will add to experience and the likelihood of moving up the ladder of human learning-not only for beneficiaries but also for other stakeholders groups like organizational staff. Following the Dreyfus model this way of learning results in internalized knowledge: beneficiaries and stakeholders do not have to actively 'remember' recommendations from the evaluation, but recommendations have instead become part of their internalized rules and knowledge register, and will be used and applied, if not in a formal way then at least informally to begin with international change. Beneficiaries and stakeholders at all levels including donor representatives will learn from participating in an evaluation process than they will from merely reading about recommendations and normative rules in an evaluation report or being told about its content. Secondly, the Dreyfus model strengthens the finding that stakeholders who are 'in' the project – beneficiaries, staff, local officials – will have knowledge about the project through their day-to-day activities. Certainly beneficiaries in, for example, a rural development project, will have a life-time of experience gained within the context in which is undertaken. In a sense, they are already evaluation experts, they know instinctively and intuitively how to act and react in given circumstances; in the common sense of the term they evaluate circumstances every day.

To answer the question of how PM&E can help overcome the defensive mechanisms found in most donor organizations which prevents internal learning and change, it is

useful to look at Argyris and Schon (1978) who deal with some of these constraints and defensive mechanisms and how to solve them in an organizational context. Argyris and Schon distinguish between single and double looped learning.

Single-loop learning – in single loop learning, results of a given organizational project are evaluated against goals originally stated for the project, the purpose being to arrive at a measure of the degree to which goals have been achieved. In cases where achievements are found to be suboptimal, feedback from the learning process will ideally result in an adjustment of activities ensuring that original goals can be achieved. Goals are not questioned.

Double-loop learning – in double loop learning process, the evaluation of organizational –or project achievements leads to actually questioning the original goals and assumptions on which the project is based – sense-making for communities. A learning process is thus initiated in which not only activities, but also goals and basic assumptions are looked at critically, adjusted, and changed if necessary. Consequently, the basic conceptual frame of reference for the project and its organization is being disputed.

Defensive mechanisms are not easily overcome. According to Argyris and Schon (1978), at least two elements are necessary in order to achieve double-loop learning: a forum where people feel free to express their concerns; and an outside facilitator who can act as a catalyst in bringing out sensitive issues and mediate between different parties. Most evaluations are designed to deliver answers concerning the achievement of outputs and to make recommendations regarding how activities may be adjusted in order to achieve those outputs-this is the single-loop learning.

PM&E and most participatory evaluation assess the relevance of the objectives and assumptions that were formulated when the project was designed. The principle intentions of such participatory evaluations are to initiate double-loop learning. Non-participatory evaluation does not allow the evaluation to ensure a double-loop effect; but PM&E and other participatory evaluation are designed to over this short-fall and can facilitate the establishment of a forum where stakeholders feel free to express concerns and opinions: and this is guided by a facilitator acting as a catalyst to bring out sensitive issues and mediate between stakeholders. Thus it can be seen from the above that participatory monitoring and evaluation can in fact, facilitate learning at the individual, community and organizational level.

The role of evaluator varies according to the two streams of participatory evaluation previously identified. As beneficiaries/stakeholders become evaluators in participatory monitoring and evaluation practice, we can consider these roles as a set of functions, skills and abilities that beneficiaries and stakeholders must develop.

P-PE evaluators tends to suggest that roles and responsibilities should be divided in such a way as to promote the greatest utilization, that is, a shared decision-making model where all technical responsibilities remain with the evaluators while the identification of evaluation questions would be undertaken by stakeholders. With P-PE the evaluator assumes the role of technical expert, often being the final arbitrator of the efforts of the evaluation project, and ultimately bearing responsibility for the technical quality of the project. On the other hand, T-PE evaluators focus on the recognition of the functions, skills and abilities of the stakeholders. This is precisely a central aspect of this

role: ensuring that all stakeholders' competencies are taken into consideration and put into practice.

Participatory evaluators play the role of facilitator that fits with both the conceptions and rationales of PM&E. The role of a participatory evaluator/facilitator shifts from being a principal investigator and participant observer to becoming responsible for accomplishing tasks related to learning, mediation, teaching, local development, social change, education and promotion of interactive learning environment. As a coordinator of this set of tasks, the participatory evaluator helps to organize and bring all the phases of the evaluative projects together, so meaning and values can be negotiated by the group though leaning, communicative strategies. The evaluator becomes consequently a partner in a process in which everyone is committed to intentional change (Rosenstein and Levin-Rozalis, 2002). In short; evaluators in participatory monitoring and evaluation facilitate to enable evaluation approaches to be adapted (with quality) not adopted by communities.

One of the distinctive features of participatory monitoring and evaluation is the creation of a dialectical process in which the focus on not only on the consensus between different and often conflicting stakeholder perspectives, but also on the development of a set of ongoing practices based on mutual interaction, cooperation, dialogue and negotiation (Springett, 2001a,b; Cousins and Whitmore, 1998). This distinctive feature allows communities to critically re-assess their development and if communities cannot do this development initiatives cannot truly facilitate poverty alleviation or any other goal it may have.

Intentional change through community empowerment must entail community ownership, management and control of their development. by honing skills to monitor and evaluate their development, communities become capable of managing the development process on their own, this ability and the motivation that it engenders, enables communities to eventually independently sustain their development process.

As with any initiative, however, participatory monitoring and evaluation will be of little use if it is not consistently supported by donor organizations and other stakeholder such as project staff. Hence, development agencies must make a long-term commitment to use participatory monitoring and evaluation and complementary participatory approaches. Development beneficiaries must by de facto, support the process.

Building community capacity through participatory monitoring and evaluation and management of development process is a gradual process and development agencies must be willing to permit long-term participatory monitoring and evaluation of development projects and accommodate the measured nature of intentional change. Monitoring and evaluation findings should be fed back into the continued strengthening of development projects.

To realize intentional change in communities and for beneficiaries to become active citizens of their development process, they must gain requisite skills in analysis and re-assessment of local development. Participatory monitoring and evaluation can help beneficiaries to develop these skills. Development agencies can then legitimately assert that their projects have supported community development, rather than imposing external 'development' process at odds with community needs.

Building the capacity of local communities requires the development of processes that are simple and comprehensive so as to create ownership of the entire process at the community level. In the first place there must be a development of a common understating of PM&E and misconceptions of evaluation as an activity conducted by outsiders and project managers must be addressed. This stage will help to explain why PM&E is important to the community and what the community will gain from participating in PM&E. Secondly beneficiaries and stakeholders develop a common vision and agree on measurable results and process that need to be monitored and evaluated. The third step is developing indicators to monitor progress towards achievement of results over time and to compared to targets, to measure beneficiary satisfaction, and to measure actual results against planned or expected results. The methodology to collect data and analyze data follows. Reflections and learning from participatory monitoring and evaluation is the process that helps the team to analyze what is working, what is not working and why.

For the purpose of this thesis I will adopt the present view of Burke (1998) and Springett (2001b) who support the view that participatory monitoring and evaluation is a set of principles and a process of engagement that respects and uses the knowledge and experiences of beneficiaries and stakeholders. The focus of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process should be to enable participants to develop a sense of ownership, skills and confidence to improve the quality of their decisions and their lives.

Chapter III

Methodological and Empirical Review

Introduction

Chapter II reviewed current literature on participatory monitoring and evaluation focusing on characterizing the factors that shape the capacity building process and defined capacity building in the context of PM&E. As highlighted in the previous chapter there is currently little research on the link between capacity building and PM&E.

This Chapter will explore the link between the two variables by reviewing empirical data from three case studies. The three case studies will focus on the relationship between capacity building during the participatory monitoring and evaluation process the actionable knowledge impacted through the process and how that knowledge can bring about intentional societal change. My goal is to show the process or mechanism that (1) generates capacity building (empowerment), (2) generate actionable knowledge (learning) and (3) generate the use of knowledge acquired (utilization). The three case studies will used to accomplish the stated goal.

Methodology

Monitoring and evaluation is a recognized development practice which allows for change and learning if implemented effectively and regularly. Participatory monitoring and evaluation differs from non-participatory monitoring and evaluation by attempting to include beneficiaries and stakeholders in all aspects of the process. To this effect, participatory monitoring and evaluation has the added advantage of being able to build

the analytical capacity of participants to evaluate their own needs and priorities, make

decisions on these issues and take action to address them (Estrella et al 2000).

Guijt and Gaventa (1998) compare traditional and participatory monitoring and

evaluation as:

Table 6

Field	Traditional Monitoring and Evaluation	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
Who plans and direct the process?	The directors responsible for the project and/or outside experts	Local people, project staff, project directors and other partners with the help of a facilitator
Role of the main beneficiaries	Solely to provide information	Formulating and adapting methods, collecting and analyzing data, sharing results and translating them into action
How are the results measured?	Using quantitative indicators, of defined externally	Using indicators, many of them qualitative, defined by the actors themselves
Approach	Predefined, rigid	flexible

The principle of participation and its critical relevance in ensuring transformative

and intentional change through capacity building has been established throughout this

practicum report. This principle empowers communities to influence decisions that affect

their existence. Genuine participation goes beyond consultation to active engagement of

beneficiaries in not only transforming them into citizens, but also in determining

priorities and actions to address identified needs, implement and monitor progress of these actions.

My methodology is to answer the question can participatory monitoring and evaluation contribute to community capacity building and learning to enable the transition from beneficiaries/clients of development projects to citizens of development. To answer this question I will look at different participatory monitoring and evaluation designs including (1) aims and objectives, (2) data collection methods, (3) quality assurance methods in three case studies and (4) the role beneficiaries and stakeholders played. Also the skills or capacities gained by beneficiaries and stakeholders in the PM&E process will be examined. The PM&E process must accomplish three functions: utilization, empowerment and capacity building through learning.

- o Utilization – there is a logical, direct relationship between the decisions made about the purpose, audience, specific questions, and kinds of data to be collected in an evaluation and the potential usefulness of its results. More specifically, the literature has underscored the importance of beneficiaries and stakeholders participation in the process of identifying the specific questions for the evaluation. Also, the utilization of evaluation results lies more in its process than its product.

- o Empowerment – participatory monitoring and evaluation is also a process that facilitates the development of perceived and actual control over the fate of a community of people joined by their relationship to a social program. Empowering processes are those that provide opportunities for people to work with others, acquire decision-making skills, and manage resources. PM&E processes enable program stakeholders' to work with evaluators to design and

conduct PM&E. However, empowerment is an intangible benefit of participation that is difficult to measure quantitatively. The following criterion can be used to measure empowerment: quality of engagement of various actors in the project by the community; changes in levels of influence of project participants at various levels; increased cooperation among community members; and community networks created as a result of participation and collective action.

o Learning – for the purpose of this thesis I have decided to examine learning as a way of understanding the mechanisms underlying the relationship between capacity building and knowledge co-construction. Current literature outlining PM&E practices, frameworks and theoretical discussions about learning or learning concepts often do not mention knowledge utilization, knowledge transfer or capacity building theories. Preskill and Torres (2000), in their discussion on re-conceptualizing what 'use' means, writes evaluators should be interested in the use of evaluation to facilitate learning. In PM&E learning is often the ultimate goal however, the approach in PM&E addresses the fact that problem solving informs further decisions and that is an important goal that cannot be under emphasize (Weaver and Cousins, 2004). Even though the first chronological step during participation maybe to generate knowledge through learning, the knowledge acquired needs to translate into action if a decision on a project or program is to result. PM&E contribute to leaning through experiential learning as a cyclical process that involves reflecting on experience, conceptualizing meaning that arises from reflection, deciding how new conceptual understanding can be used to improve future practice, and then taking action which leads to new

experience. Hence, 'action' is integrated in this type of learning. All learning depends on feedback hence PM&E approaches can make learning more conscious and systematic through the deliberate implementation of activities.

The preference for qualitative designs is justified by the awareness that beneficiaries of development projects are the creators of knowledge in their own reality through a process of reflection and action. The importance of creating learning organizations and communities leads to intentional change. PM&E process empowers stakeholders because it gives credence to their own knowledge and perspectives, it allows them to create knowledge from their own experience, it ensures co-construction of knowledge which enhances utility. Techniques to be used in the case studies includes: focus group discussions; key informant interviews; semi-structured interviews; and participatory learning and appraisal (PLA) techniques (including scoring, voting and ranking) and observations. Also, how stakeholders/participants should be selected, developing consensus, negotiating indicators, data collection and analysis process and changes through learning that will be achieved are addressed below.

Figure 1

PLA techniques

Ranking and scoring methods can be used to explore people's perceptions, elicit their criteria and understand their choices regarding a wide range of subjects. The use of ranking and scoring methods often shifts attention away from the interaction between outside investigators and local people, and towards the analyses themselves. By drawing attention away from people and towards the matrices and diagrams being constructed, these methods allow tensions to be diffused and concern to be drawn away from otherwise restrictive differences in status, style or speech among the local people or between the outsiders and the local people. In addition, vigorous debate is often generated among those involved and can lead to exciting and unexpected results.

Ranking and scoring methods are particularly valuable for illustrating to both the outside agents and local analysts how radically different each groups perceptions and beliefs can be, and what similarities exist. In sum, it is not the final matrix that is important but the discussion that occurs as it is being created and the knowledge that is shared-the process-that counts.

Source: Pretty et al., 1995, Chapters 1,2,4 and 5, A Trainer's Guide for Participatory Learning and Action, IIED Participatory Methodology Series, pp 83-85

o Identifying Stakeholders – involving stakeholders is critical to developing successful PM&E systems, integrating different perspectives. However not everyone can or maybe willing to take part but every attempt should be made to have a wide range of representation from donor representatives, government officials (if applicable), project field staff, community organizations and their members as well as non-project community members. Thus all participants should be selected purposefully.

o Developing Participant Consensus – this process should be geared towards developing a common understanding of the concepts and principles of

participation, monitoring, evaluation and indicators to all program staff, beneficiaries and partners.

o Negotiating Indicators – here stakeholders and beneficiaries negotiate, identify and agree on indicators to monitor progress towards achievement of results over time as compared to targets and also to measure beneficiary/stakeholder satisfaction. Indicators must also measure actual results against planned or expected results in terms of quality, quantity and time lines. That being said indicators for PM&E must measure tangible and intangible changes.

o Data collection and analysis – it is important that the research team collecting the data includes beneficiaries/stakeholders in order to build up capacity in local organizations. Training on data collection and analysis must be provided and regular informal sessions may be required.

o Learning and Change – this is the stage where reflection and learning from the PM&E takes place. It helps the monitoring and evaluation team with the help of the facilitator (external evaluator) to analyze what is working and not working and why. Reflection allows beneficiaries/ stakeholders to reflect on the progress of the project towards achieving its goals and to how to adjust activities. It provides a forum for exchanging and evaluating information; and it also allows beneficiaries and stakeholders to systematically review their activities. Reflections needs to be carried out for each result (or activity or process) and its indicators, one at a time. Simple questions can be used to examine the results of any data analysis. Questions such as: what have we achieved so far; what is the progress on our results/indicators; what worked well; what did not work well; and what do we

need to change? Decisions should be made within teams about implications of the analyzed information for stakeholders/beneficiaries and on decision-making within the project. The results of the reflection are used to make decisions (feedback) and to adjust activities if and when need be so that PM&E is a learning process.

Case Studies

I reviewed different cases and selected these three based on the level of participation in the monitoring and evaluation process. The term participation within these monitoring and evaluation case studies is based on how involved beneficiaries were involved the process. In order to ascertain participation as precisely as possible, the role of the beneficiaries and stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation process was that is design (redesign) phase, data collection phase, analysis phase and implementation phase.

To generate a sample of PM&E cases I researched data bases in social science, education and health as well as google scholar, for all English-language journal articles, e-books, chapters, and book reviews published between the years 1998-2008 using the search terms: participatory evaluation; participatory monitoring; participation with monitoring and evaluation; project monitoring and evaluation; and participatory monitoring and evaluation

I also searched the content of specific journals and libraries from the same period using the same search terms: the American Journal of Evaluation [formerly Evaluation Practice]; the Canadian Journal of Evaluation; educational Evaluation and Policy

Analysis; evaluation Review; the Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation; Institute of

Development Bulletin; British Library of Development Studies; and Eldis publications.

In additional I manually searched the indices of book in which I identified chapters on

participatory monitoring and evaluation or any of the search terms above. From these

searches I identified over 100 unique chapters, articles and book reviews, excluding

dissertations, conference presentations, and unpublished reports or articles.

Case Study 1

Merydth Holte-McKenzie, Sarah Forde and Sally Theorbald embarked on

participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy for a Kenyan youth-based NGO.

Project Background and PM&E Methodology

Established in 1999, Moving the Goalpost Kilifi (MTGK) is a community based

organization in Kilifi District, Coast Province, Kenya. While the organization's external

face promotes and teaches football to girls and young women, it also aims to foster those

players' life skills – defined as self-esteem, confidence, team work and organization –

and their capacity to make an active contribution to local community development.

MTGK operates in three of the seven municipal divisions within Kilifi District.

There are currently over 70 school and community based girls and women's football

teams affiliated with MTGK, most of them primary schools. Prior to this study being

carried out, MTGK's monitoring and evaluation strategy ran on a semi-regular basis with

structured visits to football teams conducted once or twice a week, when time permitted.

However, a combination of over-stretched human resources and insufficient funding

meant that during 2002/03, only 30 of the 72 school-based teams were visited. One of the challenges the organization is facing is that while this approach provides good feedback on some aspects of MTGK's program, it has no way to monitor and evaluate whether the life skills they are trying to build in the players are having any effects.

The aim of that study was to contribute to the development of a participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy for MTGK. It was not important that they indicators and methods be replicated to other projects or settings, but that they were appropriate for the players who identified them at a certain point in the organization's development. Thus, a qualitative approach was particularly well suited to do this. The study aimed to meet three objectives:

- o Facilitate program participants to develop indicators for measuring changes in empowerment.
- o Explore and pilot test potential participatory methods appropriate for monitoring and evaluating the indicators.
- o Assess and develop where necessary MTGK's capacity to coordinate and conduct a regular process of monitoring and evaluation.

The participants of the PM&E process were selected on the basis of their particular knowledge and they were:

- o Girls involved in team leadership positions.
- o Representatives of different age and educational background groups.
- o A research team composed of the first author (McKenzie)
- o Two research assistants, selected from the all female players at MTGK.
- o Female translator of similar age, nominated by a local research program.

o Data was also collected through the use of PLA techniques with what became known as the planning group, a self-selected sub-group of MTGK's 15 member Girls' Committee.

The qualitative techniques used in gathering data, were:

o Key informant interviews.

o Semi-structured interviews.

o Focus group discussions (FGDs).

o Participatory learning and appraisal (PLA) techniques.

o Observation .

This 'toolbox' of techniques was critical in achieving active and meaningful participation.

Focus group discussions were conducted with players to form the basis of the devlopment of the indicators. Semi-structured interviews were also held with family and adult associates in order to triangulate what the players had said in the FDGs and provide any additional insight into the players' discussions. FDG participants were encouraged to analyze what empowerment "looked like", as defined by the life skills, share examples of how and where they would demonstrate these attributes, and identify specific changes they have experienced since they began playing football. They were also encouraged to discuss ways to measure changes in empowerment in themselves. Three FDGs were dedicated to defining issues related to teamwork, leadership and organization; three others focused on confidence and self-esteem.

It was decided in consultation with MTGK staff that the 15 member MTGK Girls' Committee would work with the research team to decide which indicators best reflected

the individual life skills, choosing two to three indicators per skill. In order to achieve this, the PLA techniques of scoring, voting and pair-wise ranking (as a tool, pair-wise ranking helps both the group and the researcher to understand the criteria used by different people for making different choices between alternatives. It also helps to "explore the trade-offs made during the process of choosing" (Pretty, Guijt, Thampson & Secoones, 1995, p. 86) were used during the planning sessions.

In keeping with the participatory nature of the process, the initial lists of indicators were given to the planning group to determine whether indicators: were missing and there needed to be added; needed to be removed because they were not applicable/appropriate; and if indicators should be reworded. After the list of indicators were agreed on the planning group began the job of narrowing them down. To score the indicator, the planning group was split into smaller groups of three and given the task of discussing the individual indicators, giving each a grade out of three. This technique was used to help the planning group determine what their priorities were among the list of indicators. Bearing in mind the need to limit the number of indicators, a decision was taken by the planning group to choose the top two of three ranked indicators of each life skill.

Once the indicators had been prioritized, they were given to the two Girls' Committee members of the research team in order to provide definitions for the individual indicators and identify specific sub-indicators. It was felt that the former would clarify what the girls understood or meant by the indicators they had chosen while the latter would determine the particular characteristics MTGK would need to sue to measure changes in the players.

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Selecting Data Collecting Techniques – in order to incorporate the perspective of the players, the planning group was given the opportunity to consider the indicators for one of the life skills and come up with potential methods for measuring changes in the players. Only one life skill was chosen in order that it could serve as a framework for developing methods for the other life skills. While this task was not easy, the four pairs of participants were able to analyze in a basic way, how they would gather information from players. The PLA technique of problem analysis was used informally during these sessions. Each pair was given the chance to present their ideas to the group, while other methods that had proved successful during the data collection and which were not highlighted by the players, were also presented by the facilitator. Positive and negative aspects of all the methods were noted. The group then decided on the methods and chose FDGs, interviews and observations as those which they felt were most appropriate for the indicators and MTGK.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms – as a research study, the process sought to ensure the trustworthiness of the methods and findings by accurately reflecting the study setting, methodological limitations and biases (Patton, 2002; Pretty, 1993). Due to the participatory nature of the process, and the specific relevance it had to both the organization and the players who worked on it, the quality of the outcomes should be measured more by their "attempt to represent reality rather than to attain [an absolute] truth" (Pope and Mays, 2000, p. 51).

Data Analysis – analysis took place on multiple layers and characterized by being highly iterative, reflective and participatory. The first stage of analysis, immediately following the FGDs provided an opportunity to become familiar with the data. This was

achieved by reading through the transcripts and field notes. As the process progressed, key concepts, ideas and recurrent themes were noted in the margins using a color coding system. These themes were then indexed according to the five life skills-teamwork, leadership, organization, confidence and self-esteem. During this phase, sensitizing concepts (Patton, 2002) were utilized in order to put the data into a format that the planning group would be able to quickly understand and analyze themselves. Due to time constraints, this initial analysis was conducted by the principle research. The second and third stages of analysis were iterative in that the research team and planning group spent time scoring, voting, ranking and defining the indicators.

Building Local Capacity – capacity building of the research team and the planning group shaped the data gathering. As part of the evaluation, it was anticipated that the players would participate in the planning, tool refinement, data collection and analysis. With this in mind, two capacity building measures were achieved. First, in order to increase participation, two research assistants (both members of the MTGK Girls' Committee) were nominated by the MTGK Girls Committee, and a female translator of similar age was brought together with the principal research to form a research team. Second, the MTGK Girls' Committee, through the planning group, was at the forefront of the data analysis.

The research team's training consisted of three initial days of team building conducted by the principal researchers and focusing on working together to uncover:

o   What is M&E and why is MTGK doing it?

o   Main aim/objective of MTGK including discussion on the life skills.

o   FDGs, checklists, question development and probing.

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o PLA techniques.

o How to facilitate.

o Ethical issues on consent and confidentiality.

In addition, regular informal training and sessions were held by the principal

researcher throughout the study with the research team to:

o Self-evaluate team progress.

o Analyze the results the team was getting.

o Review some of the topics covered in the initial training.

o Review the checklist, questions and probes the team could use.

o Introduce new techniques such as observation.

o Strategize .

The most critical point is that all discussions with the research team were open and

participatory. It was critical to the development of MTGK's capacity to encourage the

research team to analyze their actions and be self-critical. In order to assist the MTGK

Girls' Committee in their role, the following activities were under taken: regular

progress reports were made at bi-weekly committee meetings; committee members were

invited to participate in a practice FDG; committee members were invited to participate

in the planning sessions; and a final report on the findings of the study and initial

recommendations was presented to the committee. Regular training and self-evaluation

sessions allowed the group to develop their skills and expertise in qualitative and

participatory research methods.

<u>Case study 2</u>

Janet E. Bradley, Marcia V. Mayfield, Manisha P. Meta and Anatole Rukonge's

participatory monitoring and evaluation of reproductive healthcare quality in Tanzania

will be used to address the question of local organizational learning. The report described

the strategies used by an international reproductive health organization to collaborate

with local stakeholders in a long-term participatory monitoring and evaluation to quality

improvement, focusing on defining quality of care, identifying problems in health

facilities, setting goals and seeking solution to those problems, tracking changes in

quality over time, and feeding this monitoring and evaluation information back into the

quality improvement process.

<u>Project Background and PM&E Methodology</u>

The reproductive health care program in Tanzania is managed overall by a

consortium comprised of the Ministry of Health, UMATI (an International Planned

Parenthood Federation affiliated) and EngenderHealth. It aims to improve the quality of

reproductive services in over 100, mostly public district hospital sites. The project began

in 1994, building on an earlier project designed to increase access to permanent and long

term methods of family planning, and which focused on training physicians and nurses in

clinical techniques and counseling, in renovating facilities, and in assisting with provision

of equipment and supplies.

The project approach was one of uncoordinated efforts of development agencies

to do something concrete and measurable-train staff, provide equipment, produce

information, education, and communication materials and build facilities. However, with

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this approach it was difficult to sustain improvements: practitioners remained unmotivated, services and supplies remained unreliable, infection prevention was patchy, facilities were still inadequate, and staff capacity for managing quality improvement was never really developed. What seemed to be lacking was an overall effort to build sustainable capacities (people and systems) within organizations to manage and evaluate the quality improvement process from within. Local counterparts – at the site and headquarters level – did not own the quality improvement process. Instead they remained passive recipients of technical assistance: external project staff members identified their problems, suggested solutions, provided training and equipment, and then evaluated how well they were doing. Due to the problems stated above a new project was planned to focus on building capacity of local staff to take charge of managing the quality improvement process themselves. Thus supervisors of over 100 sites were trained in how they can best support and empower site staff to identify and meet their own needs.

Techniques used for the PM&E process involved – supervisors and site stuff discussing quality issues with the assistance of several tools including a self-assessment technique called COPE. COPE is an approach which encourages large group participation, inclusiveness (from senior management to grounds' men), self-assessment, problem identification of provider needs for growth and development and the development of an action plan. The most important part of COPE is a set of guides containing questions about the quality of reproductive health services at the site, organized in a Client's Rights and Provider Needs framework (this was based on Huezo and Diaze, 1993 framework).

Selecting indicators – the indicators or questions were meant to stimulate thought and discussion, and staffs are invited to decide for themselves which issues to focus on. Staff then develop a plan o faction and designate a committee to oversee progress. Another important part of COPE is the client interview. Staffs interviewed a minimum of ten clients during each COPE exercise to ask them about problems and to ask them for recommendation. Also, community representatives were invited to participate in with their recommendations and thoughts on the planning exercise. Part of the participatory COPE process involves site staff participating in identifying what training is required at this site. The idea was that instead of staff being called to central training events, the site staff participate in discussions about their training needs and then try to address them using local trainers, supervisors or colleagues already working at the sites.

The project has focused on changing the nature of supervision, so that it has become less formal and inspection oriented, and more supportive and facilitative of site staff. Emphasis has been placed on joint discussions of what quality means, rather than imposition of quality standards; and supervisors have thus become partners in quality improvement, rather than assurers of quality standards. An important change in the way that quality is addressed is that providers take ownership for identifying what quality is and how it can be improved: supervisors are principally the initial facilitators. As supervisors and staff started working on quality issues in Tanazania, both expressed a need to: simultaneously measuring how well they were doing in achieving quality, and a site's progress towards improved quality services.

Participants for the PM&E process included:

o Local Supervisors

- o Site staff

- o Clients

50 local supervisors attended a workshop at which they reviewed and drafted 50 possible quality indicators for the program these indicators were then discussed at local COPE meetings. Indicators which were agreed upon at the local level were then presented at meeting with supervisors which lead to 10 quality element and each element has a set of indicators.

Data collection – site staff form teams that walk through the facility (from maternal and child health/family planning clinic, to the maternity ward and operating theater), discuss with colleagues, and reach consensus about whether the site or department fulfils the criteria for answering yes or no to the individual indicators.

Scoring data – should an answer to a question be yes, the site scores one point. The indicators for each element are totaled and then the total number is divided by the total possible to form a percentage score for each of the tem elements of quality. The tool is meant to be used flexibly, so that if staff felt that a particular indicator is not appropriate for their facility, they are able to delete that indicator for both the numerator and denominator. Staff work as a team to add up the scores immediately, had draw bar charts (one bar for each of the ten quality elements) and meet to discuss issues arising.

Organizational learning and local capacity building – the key element in the Tanzania PM&E process was to trust the knowledge and integrity of site staff, and to work with them in a participatory manner, to build on existing resources and capacity at the site. The use of the (adapted) Huezo and Diaz framework in COPE, which both acknowledges provider needs and defines clients' right, and encourages self-assessment and problem

solving for setting site-specific program agendas, have helped providers to take action. Further, the use of the same framework for staff themselves to more closely measure progress towards goals through PM&E, has served to reinforce these ideals. Staff now understand what quality is and how they might address problems, suggest that by opening the discussion, encouraging wide participation, and using appropriate tools, some clarity of purpose has been achieved.

The training of supervisors to be non-judgmental and more helpful has encouraged staff to be more open about their problems, instead of hiding them for fear of retribution or shame (Bradley, 2000; 1998). Training of supervisors to be facilitators of the quality improvement process, rather than the overseers of quality assurance is a fine distinction, but an important one in helping site staff know that they are the key players and decision-makers, rather than merely the instruments of quality implementation. Within this environment, the use of simple self-assessment tools such as COPE and PM&E have helped to operationalize the quality framework and have allowed staff to take a greater role in implementing a quality improvement process that is designed to meet their needs. Initially introduced by supervisors, these tools are now frequently sustained by staff themselves without outside facilitation.

The success of involving front-liner workers in developing and implementing action strategies through the use of participatory tools is well documented (see Lynam et al., 1993; Bradley, 1998). It has been noted that beneficiaries and stakeholders are able to identify issues and find solutions for solving them usually through untapped skills. The study also found that discussions with beneficiaries or clients have brought about a new level of understanding of what quality means with regards to the service being provided.

Similarly, the participation of workers in different levels in quality discussions have meant that different perspectives on problems and their solutions can be found among them through these discussions. When evaluators participate as facilitators workers feel empowered to effect changes which may not always be dependent on funds or outside resources. According to the case study problems solved through PM&E approaches have included: improvement in infection prevention practices; repair of equipment; identification and satisfaction of training needs for staff; identification of barriers to services for clients/beneficiaries; raising of funds for needed improvements or services; and an inclusion of a wider group of staff in site-driven training initiatives.

According to the case study, further program assessment revealed that in some districts the local supervisors have expanded the use of COPE and PM&E down to health centers and dispensaries not included in the project. Most of the sites visited could report solving long-standing problems such as repair of water pipes, purchase of mosquito nets for in-patient beds, building of wells, repair of incinerators and construction of fences and sheltered corridors within wards.

Case study 3

Penelope Ward's case study on CARE International's organizational learning through PM&E presented in Estrella (2000) outlines the process that CARE Zambia underwent to achieve the shift towards a more learning-oriented and participatory approach to livelihood development. Ward used the Livingstone Food Security Project (LFSP) to illustrate the steps and strategies CARED undertook to improve institutional learning and becoming more responsive to people's needs and priorities.

Background to Project and PM&E Methodology

CARE Zambia's activities initially included those related to responding to the severe drought to the early 1990s, and interventions to mitigate the effects of escalating inflation and extreme poverty in urban areas. The organization noticed by 1994 that conventional development approaches, such as food for work (FFW) activities, created dependency. Project participants were abandoning marginal income-earning activities for the perceived security of FFW. As a consequence, CARE Zambia decided to reorient its development strategy. The household livelihood security (HLS) approach was adopted, which provided a more holistic perspective on factors that affect people's livelihoods. Fundamental to this reorientation process was a shift from physical development projects towards a more human development emphasis, aimed at building individual and organizational capacities.

Using Household Livelihood Security (HLS) approach as a framework, CARE Zambia then began to encourage a more learning-oriented approach within the organization. The HSL approach was promoted within CARE Zambia in order to:

o Improve CARE's ability to target poor and vulnerable households in its program.

o Monitor and develop a deeper understanding of trends in the improvement or decline of HLS in communities over time.

o Ensure that project activities address livelihood and food security concerns of households.

o Create synergistic relationship between projects with the same geographical coverage, so that activities of different projects complement each other and help to address the overall needs of vulnerable households.

o Create coherent office information and monitoring systems that are able to measure project impact at different levels within a community/project area.

Adopting the HLS framework within CARE Zambia emphasized the importance of building a learning-oriented organization in order to improve its livelihood development activities. The learning organization as a concept is increasingly recognized as a valuable tool for strengthening people's capacities establishing effective feedback mechanisms, and improving performance (Karash, 1997).

The Livingstone Food Security Project (LFSP) had as project objectives:

o To develop a community-based seed multiplication and distribution system.

o To build the capacity of community institutions to plan, manage and maintain activities crucial to drought mitigation and ensuring household food security

o To develop sustainable farming systems.

o To improve water harvesting methods.

o To raise income by developing market linkages and improving income-earning opportunities.

Participants in the PM&E process were:

o Project field staff

o District and field staff from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)

o The villagers living in the Southern Province

o Members of village management committees

Techniques used to evaluate the project were:

- o Individual interviews

- o Household interviews

- o Wealth-ranking

Figure 2

Wealth or well-being ranking is a common tool used to establish and define local terms and definitions of wealth status. It is useful for obtaining a quick, general understanding of the nature of wealth differences in a project area, and for determining the approximate wealth status of participants (Adapted from FAO 1992. Sociological Analysis in Agricultural Investment Project Design, Rome; cited in Estrella 2000)

Three types of livelihoods were identified by communities together with LFSP staff:

Rich households:

Can maintain household livelihood security on a continuous basis

Able to withstand shock (a one-off event, such as the death of a breadwinner or a season of drought) and prolong stress (a long-term even, such as continued drought, illness or unemployment)

Moderate household

Suffer shock and stress, but have the resources to be able to recover relatively quickly

Poor household

Become increasingly vulnerable as a result of shocks and prolonged stress

CARE project staff found that identifying people's criteria of well being as livelihood categories were critical elements in establishing baseline information of subsequent monitoring activities.

The wealth-ranking exercises enabled staff to:

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Develop a deeper understanding of vulnerable households within their project area

Identify criteria for monitoring and improvement or decline of household livelihood security overtime, particularly in poorer households

Review and target project activities more specifically at households' livelihood and food security needs

The LFSP staff designed a monitoring system centered around the use of the HLS model. The model was used to structure interviews with individual village households. This information was later supplemented with a wealth-ranking exercise conducted together with participating villagers, who specified their own categories of wealth and identified sustainable livelihood indicators for future monitoring (see Figure 2).

By using the HLS model to structure the household interviews and then applying the wealth-ranking exercise, CARE Zambia project staff and participants gained a better understanding of people's livelihoods status, their coping strategies in times of stress and shock, and their needs. This initial assessment provided the basis for developing a monitoring a framework. Due to the large project area and relatively few staff, it became imperative that the implementation of the monitoring system be conducted mainly by the villagers or groups within each community. A pilot community self-monitoring system (CSM) was introduced in 45 villages. Participants included members from village management committees (VMCs), who are elected by villages and who were initially mobilized by CARE Zambia to manage good relief activities.

CARE staff provided training to build the capacity of these local institutions, including training selected members in monitoring, collecting and evaluating information. CARE staff then held follow-up meetings and workshops to help VMC

members analyze information, especially in drawing out trends across the project area and by comparing data collected by the various VMCs.

Initially LFSP staff had limited or no experience in applying the HLS framework and using participatory techniques. As part of their training in PM&E, project staff conducted a series of participatory appraisal activities (such as wealth ranking) in three different farming system zones within the project area. CARE staff gained hands-on experience (learning by doing), working jointly with communities to establish base-line information, analyze farmer livelihoods, and learn about key issues affecting livelihoods and people's priorities.

Many of CARE staff had little experience of using participatory methods in the field and had yet to grasp the full implications of applying participatory approaches throughout the project-cycle. Their previous work experience with conventional monitoring and evaluation and projects still strongly influenced their behaviors and attitudes in the field and in programming livelihood activities. Regular reinforcement of team learning and self-assessments was critical in preventing project staff from returning to conventional, top-down evaluation and planning.

Initially CARE staff used the HLS framework mainly to conduct a needs assessment for determining interventions and establishing baseline information. As project staff grew more confident working with villagers and gained a better understanding of local situations, project staff then carefully reoriented their strategy to emphasize the strengthening of community institutions. Project staff sought to build local capacities by establishing a CSM system through VMCs. Project staff worked together

with VMCs to analyze and compare information across the project area, and to discuss how this information could be used to improve project interventions.

Summary of Chapter

This Chapter has attempted to demonstrate the distinction between learning that occurs as a result of the findings that are reported in the evaluation, and the learning that occurs during the process irrespective of what is said in the report. The case studies have shown that participatory monitoring and evaluation with the right process can be synonymous to capacity building; it can be the process that generates insight and knowledge. The case studies have highlighted the fact the relationship between capacity building and participatory monitoring and evaluation. If capacity building and most specifically the intentional use of the knowledge acquired through PM&E is integrated into the practices of the evaluation, learning that fosters the development of shared values and understanding takes hold.

An underlying premise to this thesis is intentionality. This premise is important to my thesis because, unless someone – an evaluator or project implementers – actively seeks and want to use the evaluation process to build capacity it will never happen. Preskill, Zuckerman and Matthew (2003) write: "Perhaps our most important finding, though terribly obvious in hindsight, is that process use should be intentional" (p.432). Evaluation experiences should be educative and stakeholders must learn and gain some skills as a result which will leave them better in the future.

CHAPTER IV

Analyzes of Empirical Findings

Introduction

      As the field of evaluation has grown and matured over the years, the general aim has been to make evaluation findings more meaningful and empowering to stakeholders, more useful for decision makers and more effective within organizations. The following pages will analyze how evaluators facilitated MP&E as shown by the case studies in the previous chapter. How the facilitation process contributed to building capacity and a sense of community.

      In Chapter III I showed that researchers such as Harison (1997) and Mobbs (1998) argued that building capacities and fostering empowerment are more effective ways to achieve sustainable development than programs and success indicators imposed by outside experts. They point out that outside experts usually have limited knowledge and understanding of the particular context needs and issues of a community. Local solutions to achieving sustainable development are seen as important outcomes of a capacity-building approach to evaluation. Freire (1970) said it best in his 1970 book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that every human being, no matter how 'ignorant' or submerged in the 'culture of silence', is capable of looking critically at the world, and that provided with proper tools, he can gradually perceive his personal and social reality and deal critically with it.

Thus, capacity-building through participatory evaluation is a key for sustainable development. According to Uphoff (1993) learning from experience is the fundamental benefit of PM&E mainly because non-participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches have been largely donor-driven and it tended to be used as a control and justification mechanism rather than a learning and capacity-building tool. What is potentially a powerful tool for facilitating capacity-building and learning is reduced to a method of accounting and control thus, the capacity-building aspect of evaluation is lost on recipient organizations and beneficiaries of the development program.

The three case studies described evaluators working directly with community members to facilitate local understanding with participatory monitoring and evaluation processes. The PM&E process allowed communities to review the expected results of the development plans and projects, adjust goals and formulate new strategies and learn how to interpret, compare and analyze data based on indicators defined by participants from the outset this is what capacity building through knowledge co-construction is about. Participatory monitoring and evaluation processes can play an important role of allowing for the transition of development clients to citizens or initiators of development initiatives if its influence is understood. The three case studies in Chapter III break down the influence of the evaluation processes and how these processes can be used to build capacity.

The first case study on Moving the Goalpost Kilifi (MTGK) highlights how PM&E process was used to build the capacity of community members while evaluating this community based organization. Participants of the PM&E process were the girls involved in team leadership positions, who represented different ages and educational

background. The girls in the program selected the indicators through interviews, discussions and negotiations. The committee of girls came together to combine the list of indicators from members of the community and the organization and determined whether indicators were missing or needed to be removed or reworded. Participants decided on data collecting techniques after going through the process of understanding what information they needed and how best to engage the community. Local participants know their members better than the evaluator they are more aware of what technique will work better in engaging members. The participants went through informal training to acquire skills in planning, tool refinement, data collection and analysis. According to the evaluator it was critical to the development of MTGK's capacity to encourage the participants to analyze their actions and be self-critical.

The PM&E process allowed local stakeholders to determine measurements for success and contributes to local capacity-building for decision making and action oriented planning. Due to community members being part of the PM&E process the skills they acquired became a part of their collective memory which will assist them in addressing future community needs and affirms their goals of the desired future. The communities' development from below is created by learning from and better understanding past experiences. The process enabled communities to play a greater role in defining their own development process and to reaffirm local knowledge. From the case study we see that community members, regardless of their position or educational background took part in decision making and learned how to develop a common goal, reach consensus, analyze information, and worked towards achieving agreed on goals. Consequently, communities are able to visualize their objectives, check their progress,

verify their achievements, recognize obstacles, and re-adjust goals and expected results accordingly.

PM&E recognizes the importance of institutionalizing capacity building as a system that operates for the organization as a whole. By participation, we mean the full involvement of both the community and the different levels of organization staff in all aspects of the project implementation – from activity implementation to decision making. The methodological steps taken in the PM&E process in the three case studies but especially the final two case studies address the utilization or intentional use of co-constructed knowledge, generating actionable knowledge (empowerment) and experiential learning. The case studies show transformative evaluation through PM&E as steps that can be considered as building blocks that are a part of a continuous process rather than a distinct step. These building blocks were identified in the previous chapter as international use of co-constructed knowledge (utilization), generating actionable knowledge (empowerment) and experiential learning which I summarized as capacity building.

Although local stakeholders are more often than not involved in non-participatory monitoring and evaluation their roles have usually been limited to consultation. Local stakeholders were often regarded as sources of information rather than key actors capable of playing a central role in the decision-making processes. In order to carry out PM&E effectively, the case study on quality healthcare in Tanzania and CARE International highlights the fact that it is not sufficient simply for evaluators to use participatory techniques. There must be a real commitment to the philosophy of participation at all levels within development organizations, and a full understanding of what participation

means and how to apply participatory techniques in an appropriate manner that would ensure full local involvement. To ensure that this commitment to participation is not confined to project implementation, but is carried through to organizational decision-making, it is essential for senior management – supervisors and project coordinators – be fully involved.

The problem with the project quality healthcare program in Tanzania was the lack of an overall effort by the program or previous monitoring and evaluation approaches to build sustainable evaluation capacities within the organization to mange and evaluate the quality improvement process from within. Local counterparts – at the site and headquarters level – did not own the quality improvement process. Instead they remained passive recipients of technical assistance: external project members identified their problems, suggested solutions, provided training and equipment and then evaluated how well they were doing.

The new project was participatory from inception. Supervisors from 100 community health centre sites were trained in how they can best support and empower site staff to identify and meet their needs. The new project focused on changing the nature of supervision, so that it becomes less formal and inspection oriented, and more supportive and facilitative of site staff. Through the PM&E process emphasis was placed on joint discussions of what quality means to staff and how it can be improved. Participants of the PM&E process were; supervisors, site staff and clients. The key element for the evaluator through PM&E process was to trust the knowledge and integrity of site staff, and to work with them to build on existing resources and capacity at the site. The use of the (adapted) Huezo and Diaz framework in COPE, which both

acknowledges provider needs and defines clients' right, and encourages self-assessment and problem solving for setting site-specific program agendas, have helped providers to take action. Further, the use of the same framework for staff members to more closely measure progress towards goals through PM&E, has served to reinforce these ideals. They now understand what quality is and how they might address problems, suggest that by opening the discussion, encouraging wide participation, and using appropriate tools, some clarity of purpose has been achieved.

The training of supervisors to be non-judgmental and more helpful has encouraged staff to be more open about their problems, instead of hiding them for fear of retribution or shame (Bradley, 2000;1998). Training of supervisors to be facilitators of the quality improvement process, rather than the overseers of quality assurance is a fine distinction, but an important one in helping site staff know that they are the key players and decision-makers, rather than merely the instruments of quality implementation. Within this environment, the use of simple self-assessment tools such as COPE and PM&E processes have helped to operationalize the quality framework and have allowed staff to take a greater role in implementing a quality improvement process that is designed to meet their needs. Initially introduced by supervisors, these tools are now frequently sustained by staff themselves without outside facilitation.

The success of involving front-line workers in developing and implementing action strategies through the use of participatory tools and processes is well documented (see Stevahn, King, Ghere, and Minnema, 2005; King and Volkov, 2005). It has been noted that stakeholders are able to identify issues and find solutions for solving those issues usually through untapped skills. The two case studies also found that discussions

with stakeholders brought about a new level of understanding of what quality means with regards to the service being provided. Similarly, the participation of workers in different levels in quality discussions meant that different perspectives on problems and their solutions can be found among them through these discussions. When evaluators participate as facilitators participants feel empowered to effect changes which may not always be dependent on funds or outside resources. According to the case study problems solved through PM&E approaches have included:

- o Improvement in infection prevention practices.

- o Repair of equipment.

- o Identification and satisfaction of training needs for staff.

- o Identification of barriers to services for clients/beneficiaries.

- o Raising of funds for needed improvements or services.

- o An inclusion of a wider group of staff in site-driven training initiatives.

From the case study two, further program assessment revealed that in some districts the local supervisors have expanded the use of COPE and PM&E down to health centers and dispensaries not included in the project. Most of the sites visited could report solving long-standing problems such as repair of water pipes, purchase of mosquito nets for in-patient beds, building of wells, repair of incinerators and construction of fences and sheltered corridors within wards. Findings from the PM&E have been utilized under different conditions even those outside the quality health program.

It is well documented in my literature review that simply articulating recommendations from evaluation is not sufficient for utilization of evaluation findings. This process leaves a gap between evaluation and planning future initiatives since there

will be a lack of a consistent mechanism in place to integrate learning from experience into PM&E process. The three case studies show that for PM&E to effectively build capacity, learning in PM&E must be a continuous process of reflection with constant feedback between program planning, monitoring and evaluation. The learning loop should include discussions about how to move forward throughout entire PM&E process clearly identify responsibilities for beneficiaries and stakeholders involved. In other words if beneficiaries and stakeholders are engaged in the PM&E process there must be a continuation of this process that enables them to follow through with their initial findings to develop strategies for intentional change. From the case studies we can see that the strongest push for intentional change – that is linking evaluation to plans and outlining future strategies – comes from the community themselves. Developing communities are rarely content to look at impacts without considering what should happen next in order to achieve their aspirations, solve at least some of their problems and ultimately to increase bottom-up accountability of their development process.

The case study on CARE International helps us understand the challenge of trying to overcome the tendency of monitoring and evaluation being extractive in terms of gathering information and how PM&E can empower participants through proactive self-monitoring and learning. Many of the techniques used in this case study have great potential for encouraging participation at the grassroots and for genuinely involving program beneficiaries and stakeholders in the analysis and the utilization of evaluation findings. All three case studies have shown the PM&E techniques stand the danger of becoming extractive if insufficient dialogue is sustained with communities, and if they are only used as information gathers. Should this occur, information – and hence learning

– will flow one way: out of communities and simply into project management and as stated in Chapter III such learning is part of the current issue with sustaining community development. Joint analysis and discussion help communities and staff to learn from each other and identify ways to improve program planning and to build local organizational capacities. A learning oriented, monitoring and evaluation process helps in motivating and empowering communities to take action themselves, which in turn strengthen local capacities and promote self-reliance.

Participation is a process not just an activity and even though the three case studies demonstrates that staff of the various programs had to apply participatory methodologies in the field within a relatively short period of time, it must be noted that, adequate time must be given to the process of internalizing and applying these new attitudes and behaviors if they are to be sustained. Adequate training and follow-up are all critical components of this process. Ownership of a process is a vital component of capacity-building. Field staff in all three programs will need to follow up with beneficiaries regularly to sustain progress, and provide support in dealing with problems that arise. In order to strengthen local capacities and sustain community change, beneficiaries will need to play a greater role throughout the entire PM&E process, and not simply act as data gathers.

One can make a fair argument that the ideas for both projects came either from international project staff or from grassroots workers in other countries, thus, it can be argued that these projects is not fully participatory. Design of project goals and objectives did not originate within Tanzania, Kenya or Zambia nor did the PM&E tools involved in the monitoring and evaluation process. The PM&E process ensured that beneficiaries

participated in using these tools to collect and analyze data and designing plans to address issues that these tools raised. However, the PM&E process did encourage beneficiary participation in the subsequent re-design of the tools. Critics of PM&E often attack it for its lack of rigor. According to critics this stems from the lack of scientific standards in methods, indicators, data collection, and interpretation. By opening up the process to 'unskilled' participants, the quality and credibility of information is assumed to decline and methodology 'lacks rigour'. I will argue that external assessments have some limitations. Data collected by external experts fails to identify important gains and are based on information provided by staff who are all too well aware of exposing the failures of their programs.

I will argue that stakeholders are more willing to be objective and honest about what the state of services, if data collection is undertaken in the context of a program in a non-threatening and non-punitive way. Findings are more meaningful and credible to the users. The findings speak of 'real' criteria of change and empowerment for beneficiaries which has been advocated throughout this practicum report. To be locally relevant, monitoring and evaluation of development interventions must be participatory and action-oriented. To be locally viable in the long term, it must be simple – not scientifically complex – and also adapted continually.

The question of ensuring both local participation and external validity also depends on the level at which monitoring and evaluation information is needed and by whom it is used. When local data is needed at level's beyond the catchment or community, it will be increasingly important to consider conventional standards or validity and rigor. Here are several options for dealing with the unresolved rigor of

participation debate. One approach is to view it as a sequential process of skilling (Abbot and Guijt, 1998). In elaborating on a sequential process of skilling, Gubbels (cited in Rugh, 1995) suggests that initially the participatory aspect can be emphasized. As those involved become more skilled in undertaking a participation process, they can gradually work to ensure that results are considered externally valid. The CARE Zambia case study demonstrates how the organization is learning to implement new monitoring and evaluation skills where 'rigor' was initially the focus to the detriment of group learning and participatory behavior which is slowly being adjusted as skills grow.

In practice, the balance between scientific rigor and local participation will depend greatly on the objectives of the monitoring and evaluation process and its audience. If monitoring and evaluation is less about providing proof to others, and more about improving leaning and planning, then participation of beneficiaries can be prioritized. Yet if proof is needed for scientific and/or policy audiences, then externally acceptable approaches might be needed to demonstrate changes.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

<u>Introduction</u>

Ideally, development initiatives should come from participatory grassroots

organizations and grow from there, generating their own support systems and resources.

In reality, this rarely happens and there is often a need for an outside catalyst to plant the

seeds of change in a community. Experience in the field of development has also shown

that real development, which involves long-term change and sustainable impact, can only

be achieved by ensuring local ownership of the development process. Without local

ownership, change tends to be short-term and limited, and often does not even address the

real needs of local communities and people.

However, the paradox of supply help to self-help, "assisted self-reliance"

(Ellerman, 2005) or assisted autonomy is the fundamental conundrum of development

assistance. David Korten (1980) terms this fundamental conundrum the central paradox

of social development: the need to exert influence over people for the purpose of building

their capacity to control their own lives. This brings me back to my previous point about

what the goal of development should be. Increase in wealth should not be the goal; the

goal should be development as freedom or autonomy in the sense of the capabilities

approach (Sen 2000; Alkire 2002) of having the capability and know-how to satisfy one's

own needs. Development agencies do not do development; at best they do development

assistance. There are many strategies for development assistance that may supply 'help'

in some form but actually do not help people help themselves (Ellerman, 2005) in other words the forms of help that override or undercut people's capacity to help themselves is not help at all.

Achieving local ownership requires the involvement of local stakeholders in all aspects of development including monitoring and evaluation. The case studies in the Chapter III show that participatory monitoring and evaluation is essential if the purpose of a monitoring and evaluation process is to be understood and respond to local realities and to ensure that results are used for change. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is also critical if local ownership over the development process is to be assured because it allows local stakeholders to determine measurements for success and contributes to local capacity building for decision making and action oriented planning.

Recommendations

The three case studies demonstrate participatory monitoring and evaluation in different contexts. They identify elements that ensure participants have both the access and ability to participate in a PM&E process because access and ability are both building blocks in building stakeholder capacity.

Access is defined as the opportunity to participate in an M&E process that includes more than one stakeholder/beneficiary group (Estrelle, 2000). Ability can be defined as the skill or knowledge required to do something (ibid). In general attempts to increase access are focused on creating opportunities for participation within an M&E process, whereas attempts to increase ability are aimed to improve the skills and knowledge base the stakeholder groups and individuals.

Capacity building for PM&E starts at the very beginning, from the point of establishing the framework to the PM&E process. However, simply identifying the participants for PM&E does not necessarily ensure their access or ability to participate. The power dynamics is one of the most important constraints that must be addressed and this can be done by collectively building participants capacities so that there is a mutual understanding and agreement concerning; the basic terminology to be used; the language; the roles and responsibilities of those involved; the definition of layers of indicators; the risks and vulnerability of interaction; and the different expectations.

After the PM&E process has been established, there is a continuing need to train new people entering the PM&E process and to increase the skills of those already involved in order to improve the process's ability to analyze and act on the lessons arising. Capacity building must be fluid and responsive, which makes it very difficult to prescribe what particular skills might be needed at specific times in the process. Different stakeholders/beneficiaries bring different skills, capacities, expectations, and interests within a wide range of contexts and situations-all of which influence the capacity building needs.

The first capacity that is required for a PM&E process to be effective is accessibility. Evaluators must ensure that accessibility is incorporated into the design, development, and implementation of the PM&E process in such a way that it seeks and encourages access by everyone. Access must be an integral part of the PM&E process. This means that one of the first questions that needs to be answered is why a participatory monitoring and evaluation process. Answering this question will help evaluators identify who should

be involved initially and help define some of the initial agreements about principles, concepts, indicators, methods and tools for measurement, and uses of the results. The capacities to be built are: an understanding of the conceptual background of monitoring, evaluation and participation; specific PM&E skills such as the design and use of tools; and a proficiency in other essential skills such as literacy and negotiation that are necessary to further improve a participants' access to the PM&E process.

PM&E embraces the principle of wider inclusion of people in monitoring and evaluation processes, and it must therefore be noted that different stakeholders frequently have differing expectations of PM&E and differing contribution that they can make. Each of the stakeholder groups involved in the PM&E not only bring different expectations, they bring differing capacities and perspectives to contribute to the process. On the part of the community or a stakeholder group, their capacity to effectively negotiate access to the monitoring and evaluation process with other actors in the process can be greatly constrained by their limited powerbase. On the side of the dominant PM&E stakeholders, their capacity or their willingness to share power and resources, such as information, allows alternative voices to be heard and incorporated into the process as an important influence on accessibility. Unless beneficiaries are recognized as contributing members of the process, their contributions can be dismissed or considered less important than other stakeholders. This effectively blocks their access to the PM&E process because their participation is superficial.

Another important aspect to capacity building is strengthening the abilities of stakeholders/beneficiaries to participate in the monitoring and evaluation process. Estrella (2000) has come out with three major capacity-building elements that evaluators and

project implementers can use to strengthen community and institutional abilities to

engage in PM&E. The elements are: formal training; experiential learning opportunities;

and availability of resources.

Figure 7

Formal training	Experiential learning opportunities	Availability of resources
Tools	Exposure to participatory methods	Financial
Conceptual/methodological issues (participation and M&E)	Incorporation of participation and M&E tools and methods into everyday activities	Human
Analytical framework	Building existing experiences	Information
Philosophical basis	Values and principles	Material

Training in a formal setting is the most commonly identified capacity-building

approach. It's the starting point for most projects and organizations desiring to establish a

PM&E process. Training as an approach to building the abilities of stakeholders to

participate in the monitoring and evaluation process is effective in quickly covering

practical issues associated with PM&E. These practical issues discussed previously

include: understanding the concepts of participation, monitoring, evaluation and learning

systems; skill building in how to use PM&E; and the tools and methods for measuring

change.

The relevance of linking formal training with hands-on (learning by doing)

experiential learning as an approach to building capacity cannot be over stated. There are

many examples where the PM&E process was not established through formalized

training instead, participation was built into exiting monitoring and evaluation process. Experiential learning is necessary to make the training practical for the participants and to give the individuals involved a sense of confidence in carrying out PM&E. It is crucial for putting the information coming out of formal training into the facilitator's and participants normal context, making it easier to translate concepts, values and principles into practice (Lawrence et al, 1997 a & b). Furthermore if a PM&E process is to be successfully integrated into everyday activities, many of the authors of the case studies stressed that it must be built from local forms and ideas of participation, co-operation and solidarity.

A topic that that has not being fully addressed is resources. A lack of resources is frequently noted as one of the greatest constraints to building the capacities of beneficiaries/stakeholders in PM&E. Resources in this context is not limited to funds but extend to human, information, inadequate information and insufficient materials (Waddington and Mohan, 2004; Wade, 1997) are all constraints to building institutional and individual capacity in PM&E.

There are significant costs associated with PM&E that must be acknowledged. Financial cost will not be addressed here however, it must be noted that bringing together a number of beneficiary/stakeholder groups to discuss the indicators, methods and tools to be used and to analyze the information gathered is seen as important for building their access and abilities is costly in terms of time. This substantial human resources is important to note when talking of incorporating marginalized groups. Access and ability must include the assurance that stakeholders are sufficiently informed about the possible risks and benefits of actively engaging in a PM&E process.

The central goal of development interventions is to change a situation, from one that is considered problematic to one that is desired. Tracking this change is thus a key concern for such interventions and the underlying reason for monitoring and evaluation. To the extent that the main focus is placed on measuring change, participatory monitoring and evaluation is not so different from other more conventional approaches. However, the distinguishing feature is the conceptualization of how to measure change, and who is involved and for what purposes. In PM&E, participation becomes a central feature of the entire process, from defining objectives and information needs to analyzing and using results. The case studies above includes efforts that involved stakeholders/beneficiaries in developing the PM&E system itself. The case studies above demonstrate PM&E as a process involving: primarily beneficiaries and community members and a partnership between project beneficiaries, stakeholders and the usual external monitoring and evaluation specialist/experts.

Even though the monitoring and evaluation of the case studies were concerned with measuring and judging performance, participatory monitoring and evaluation aims to go beyond simply judging and making decisions, and also seeks to create an enabling environment for stakeholder/beneficiary groups to learn how to define and interpret changes for themselves, and hence to take greater control over their own development. As illustrated by the three case studies, PM&E often carries a multiplicity of goals, reflecting the diverse interests and concerns brought forward by those participating in the process. However the case studies show that whichever goals maybe pursued evaluators ensured that: the agenda for PM&E was explicit to all parties involved; and the role of

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deciding which PM&E goals to pursue were made participatory. This process involved extensive negotiations, consensus building, trade-off or compromises as demonstrated by the case studies. Unlike conventional monitoring and evaluation approaches that are often driven by the information needs of outsiders (e.g. donors, central management and other external interests), PM&E aims to carter to the information needs and concerns of a much wider range of actors who have a direct or indirect stake in development changes and outcomes.

A function of selecting indicators is to reveal changes related to a specific phenomenon that, in itself, represents a bigger question or problem. Another function of indicators lies in the negotiation process itself. By bringing different stakeholders/beneficiaries together to identify which information is critical, it helps clarify goals and views on change, information needs and people's values. Another important function is empowerment. Beneficiary participation in indicator identification is empowering as it allows local views to dictate what constitute success for change. Holte-McKenzie *et al* and Bradley *et al* describe in their case studies above how youth and nurses learned how to design their own evaluations after participating in the monitoring and evaluation process.

Conclusion

In light of everything discussed and analyzed in the foregoing Chapters, my aim has been to ensure readers understand the fact that in order to sustain development from below stakeholders of development programs will have to move from consumers or clients to owners, initiators or citizens of development initiatives. I have shown that there

is a fundamental but important link between capacity-building, participatory monitoring and evaluation and self-reliant development that cannot be passed over or ignored. The implication for development from below in terms of the way planning, participation, monitoring and evaluation are linked through PM&E are considerable. A process-oriented rather than a project based approach to development begins through the processes I have addressed above. In the project based approach, planning, participation, monitoring and evaluation are treated separately – as discussed with practical evaluation – for each project; consequently, it is more difficult to create continuity. In process oriented approach – or transformative evaluation – participation, planning, monitoring and evaluation becomes part of an ongoing process that allows continuous learning. The trajectory may shift, but the momentum will be forward. By using participatory PM&E the community becomes the engine driving this momentum, and they can control its direction. This is my recommendation to project managers and specifically program evaluators.

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