Contents

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> I give a meaning to the word "dialogue" that is somewhat different from what is commonly used. The derivations of words often help to suggest a deeper meaning. "Dialogue" comes from the greek word DIALOGOS. LOGOS means 'the word', or in our case we would think of the "meaning of the word". And DIA means "through" - it does not mean "two". a dialogue can be among any number of people, not just two. Even one person can have a sense of dialogue within himself, if the spirit of the dialogue is present. The picture or image that this derivation suggests is of a STREAM OF MEANING flowing among and through us and between us. It is something creative. And this shared meaning is the "glue" or "cement" that holds people and societies together.

David Bohm, On Dialogue, p7

Introduction

This booklet explores some questions, innovations, ideas and case studies related to five themes that emerged from the first phase of a research project entitled 'What in the World'. These themes were identified by community development practitioners in the United Kingdom as being ones they would most value learning about from other practitioners around the world. The themes are:

1. Environment/Sustainable community development
2. Capacity building and training
3. Refugees and migration
4. Women and Children
5. NGO Regulation and Governance issues

Each theme is explored in this booklet by examining some of the key elements of the theme, picking out some important issues relating to the theme from literature sources, and bringing to life some case studies that illustrate different dimensions of the themes. Because reality is much more complex and inter-related than theory, the case studies often include reference to many of the themes rather than fitting neatly into only one. For this reason we present the case studies in the second half of the booklet and have included tables in the first part to indicate which of the themes the case studies relate to. The case studies are drawn from many different parts of the world – representing as many of the regions in which the IACD has members as possible. The case studies are not presented as examples of 'best practice' – they are merely examples of how people are interpreting and undertaking community development in various parts of the world, and of the sorts of issues and questions community development workers are grappling with.

The themes are, of course, very broad and it is not the intent of this research to comprehensively cover all the possible different interpretations and dimensions. Rather, we have chosen particular aspects that are highlighted in the case studies or represent innovative, important or that newer interpretations which could assist in opening a global conversation in the community development field.

Conversation starters

There is so much happening across the world that can provide inspiration for other community development workers. This booklet cannot hope to cover all there is to explore under each of the themes. For this reason we have chosen particular aspects within each theme that could be used to spark off further ideas, innovations and conversations. We therefore finish each theme with a series of questions that could be used as 'conversation starters' and a list of further resources that could be useful stimulants for people wishing to discuss the issues further. It may even be the case that some groups wish to use the booklet as the basis for a learning circle or group discussion forum.

1 See phase one report of What in the World, available at www.iacdglobal.org

Can we learn from overseas examples?

We learn about community development in many different ways – in colleges and universities, at work, from other practitioners, from mentors, and from hearing about what is happening in other places both within our own countries and from overseas. When we explore community development in other places we need to be careful to remember that what works in one place, with one group of people, in a particular context, may not work so well in the place where we work, the people we work with or in our particular context. So, it is not the case that we can merely replicate examples of good community development practice that are experienced or heard about in other places. However, there are many other ways in which we can learn from examples of community development in other places:

- We can learn about the methodology that people use…how do other people 'do' community development, and how may that inform our own practice?
- We can reflect on our own practice by opening up to other ways of engaging in community development practice;
- We can be inspired to try different things by hearing about what others are doing;
- We can rekindle hope that there are ways forward and that when people work together to address issues, amazing things can happen;
- We can see issues that we experience in our own contexts in a new or different light and this may help us to open up different interpretations or help us to see things from other perspectives;
- We can open up dialogues and exchanges with people working in the community development field in different places, and thereby challenge ourselves and each other in many ways.

So, what we are presenting in this booklet are not answers or perfect models that can be merely replicated in any context – but we think that the sharing of ideas, stories and experiences can result in hope, inspiration, reflection and dialogue.

Feasting on Knowledge and Experience:
Balancing Information, Learning and Dialogue

> *What to do with too much information is the great riddle of our time. My solution is to look at the facts through two lenses simultaneously, both through a microscope, choosing details that illuminate life in those aspects that touch people most closely, and through a telescope, surveying large problems from a great distance. I hope I say enough to show that humans have many more options before them than they currently believe.*
>
> *Theodore Zeldin, An Intimate History of Humanity, p18*

In exploring the themes of this research, we were very aware that there are mountains of information available on each of the topics. We were therefore keenly interested in providing enough information for opening up issues and tensions, whilst not overwhelming readers with information and analysis. In each of the sections we have tried to present tasters and an entrée into the topics, whilst leaving enough space for a feast of hearty conversations about and around them. If readers wish to explore these issues further we have also presented some tasty desserts in the form of further resources, readings and practice examples which can be easily located in paper or electronic forms. We welcome you to the table and hope this will create the beginnings of some global feasts of sharing around these topics!

Where in the World?

A call was made throughout the IACD network for case studies centering on the five themes identified above. There were many responses from the network – though the country with the highest number of responses was India. Unfortunately, due to space and time restrictions, we could not include all the case studies we were sent – but we hope to include these in later publications. We received case studies for this report from the following countries:

As there are many parts of the world not represented in the case studies, we have tried to include references in the literature and the further resources which are as diverse as possible. We have also made reference to other case studies available on the Internet that relate to the themes. In this way we hope we have covered a diversity of contexts and drawn learnings from a range of places and spaces around the world. Of course there will also be other contexts that will be explored in the course of the dialogue we hope this booklet will provoke and which we invite you to join!

... "(the elements of change are) golden threads, weaving a tapestry filled with vision and experience. At the centre lie the individual strands: finding one's own – and also kindred – voices and passions; discovering hidden skills or talents; forging lasting friendships; learning to listen better and not to prejudge people and their motives; making meaningful contributions to our families and to society; thinking 'big' and daring to take risks; kindling leadership potential. The next section of the tapestry is filled with pieces local in nature: strengthening communities by building citizen participation and depth of leadership; sparking greater democracy by encouraging citizens to act; uniting former adversaries by better understanding them; and reducing societal isolation by teaching us to function in an inclusive manner. Finally, overall, a global weave completes the piece, as newly minted environmentalists and stewards step forward and encourage future generations to become ardent advocates for the Earth."
Alix Hopkins, Groundswell: Stories of Saving Places, Finding Community, The Trust for Public Land, San Francisco, 2005, p. 183

"**Alternatives to war,** non-sustainability and social and economic injustice are becoming a survival imperative. These alternatives need to combine our making peace with the planet and our making peace among people from diverse cultures. One is not possible without the other. The roots of terrorism, violence and war lie in environmental and economic exclusion and the insecurity it generates. People's security does not lie in larger military budgets, bigger bombs and stronger police states. It lies in ecological security, in economic security, in cultural and political security. Rebuilding these multiple securities is the only way to create peace, justice and sustainability."
Vandana Shiva, (2002) Paradigm Shift: Rebuilding True Security in an Age of Insecurity, in Resurgence, no. 214, Sept/Oct

Environment and Sustainable Community Development

Environment and Sustainable Community Development

Overview

There has been much written in the past few decades about the impact of humankind on the environment, and the need for more action at a local level to address the increasing global concerns about environmental degradation and ecological destruction. In this section we explore some of the key issues raised in community development work that has engaged around an environmental and ecological focus. The chapter calls into question what we mean by environmental community development work, but also explores we can work towards 'sustainable' community development, whether that means ecological, financial or social sustainability.

Background

What in the world is 'sustainability'?
Sustainable…"able to be maintained at a certain rate or level"
New Shorter Oxford Dictionary.

Sustainability is a term that is almost as elusive as 'community'. For many of us, the notion of sustainability is inevitably linked to environment, but sustainability can just as easily refer to finances, to community processes, to social justice. Even though the principles underlying sustainability (such as thinking of the impact of actions on future generations) have been around for as long as humanity, the concept of sustainability started to be debated seriously in the 1970s, when a number of politicians, activists and authors began to highlight the tensions between economic growth and environmental survival. The notion of 'sustainable development' was launched into the international political agenda in 1987 with the release of the World Commission on Environment and Development's report "Our Common Future" (better known as the Brundtland Report). This report outlined what is still the most commonly cited definition of sustainable development (see table one). There are now a myriad of definitions of sustainable development – and despite this, there are still many who argue that sustainable development cannot adequately be defined at an operational level. That is, no matter how we describe what sustainable development is, how do we ensure that we as individuals, and the institutions that make up our communities, regions, nations, and international arena, really can act in ways that ensure that development is sustainable?
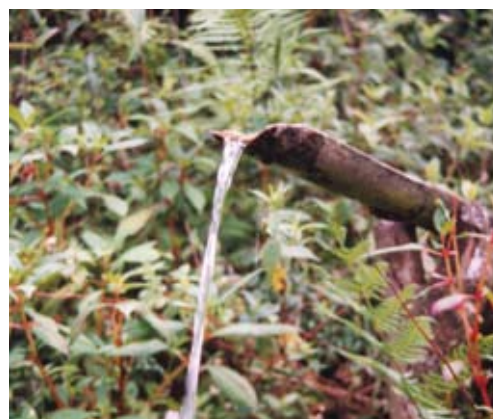
Definitions of Sustainable Development and their sources

- Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
  Source of definition: *'Brundtland Report' World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987*

- A sustainable society is one that can persist over generations, one that is far-seeing enough, flexible enough, and wise enough not to undermine either its physical or its social systems of support.
  Source of definition: *Donella Meadows, et.al. Beyond the Limits. Post Mills, Vt: Chelsea Green Pub. Co. 1992.*

- Sustainable development means achieving a quality of life (or standard of living) that can be maintained for many generations because it is:
  1 Socially desirable, fulfilling people's cultural, material, and spiritual needs in equitable ways;
  2 Economically viable, paying for itself, with costs not exceeding income;
  3 Ecologically sustainable, maintaining the longterm viability of supporting ecosystems.
  Source of definition: *IUCN – World Conservation Union, 1993.*

- Sustainability needs to include nature and people's sustainability, recognising that nature supports human life and provides the main sources of our sustenance. The integrity of the processes and cycles in nature need to be maintained. A false sense of sustainability is based on three major flaws – that primacy is assigned to capital; the division of production and conservation; and the assumption that nature and capital are substitutable.
  Source of definition: *Vandana Shiva (1992). 'Recovering the Real Meaning of Sustainability' in Cooper, D. E. and J. A. Palmer Environment in Question: Ethics and Global Issues. New York, Routledge.*

- Sustainable development involves the simultaneous pursuit of economic prosperity, environmental quality and social equity. Companies aiming for sustainability need to perform not against a single, financial bottom line but against the triple bottom line.
  Source of definition: *World Business Council on Sustainable Development http://www.wbcsd.ch/*

- Formally, we define sustainability as: undertaking environmental, economic, and social activities in a manner that ensures local and global ecosystem structures and functions are able to maintain themselves in perpetuity. Our definition of sustainability gives express preference to ecological sustainability. This is an acknowledgement that the other two dimensions - economic and social - depend upon on a healthy natural environment in order to maintain or achieve sustainability.
  Source of definition: *Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources, Canada http://www.cier.ca/sustainability_rts.html*

- As long as you plant trees and don't ask questions, nobody will bother you. It's when you start looking for the causes of environmental degradation, rather than constantly dealing with the symptoms, that you enter into the arena of politics, human rights, justice and equity. In Kenya the government claims it has a right to encroach on forests;that it wants to create jobs. But forests are important for water security, for example. If the government is going to encroach on forests, people must be informed and must understand the impact... because 20-30 years along the road, they will have no water, streams will dry out, they will not be able to grow their crops, and there will

be famine. That's the time we start asking the world to give us aid to feed our people. Instead of waiting until we see starving children, I would rather go to the root cause of the problem.
Source of definition: *Wangari Maathai, one of Africa's foremost fighters for sustainable development and environment during an interview at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. cited by: Sandra Mbanefo Obiago, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE PRESS IN AFRICA, Voices from Africa, http://www.un   ngls.org/documents/publications.en/voices.africa/number6/vfa6.05.htm*

• Sustainable community development is the ability to make development choices which respect the relationship between the three "E's"-economy, ecology, and equity:
  - Economy - Economic activity should serve the common good, be self-renewing, and build local assets and self-reliance.
  - Ecology - Humans are part of nature, nature has limits, and communities are responsible for protecting and building natural assets.
  - Equity - The opportunity for full participation in all activities, benefits, and decision-making of a society.
  Source of definition: *Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED), USA http://www.maced.org*

Perhaps at the heart of many of these definitions and much discussion about sustainability lies the question of how we understand the links between the environment, the economy and the society (or in the case of community development, the community). If the balance is too much in favour of the growth of one of these over the others, then it could be said that there are issues of sustainability. It may be interesting to discuss examples of where any one of these has come to dominate the other two.

The question for developing practical ways to enact sustainability then also becomes, is it possible or desirable to hold these dimensions in balance, or should there be some kind of hierarchy?

On top of these broad issues of balance, the notion of sustainability has also grown to include other dimensions – people now talk of sustainability with certain prefixes – ecological sustainability, financial sustainability, social sustainability. Certainly in community development projects too, sustainability has sometimes been code for 'financial independence'.

So what does all this mean in practice? In community development, the notion of sustainability has sometimes been used to ask, whether the 'ability' of the community been built for an activity, project or programme to be 'sustained' after the funding finishes, the worker leaves or the work ends. Or to ask what 'abilities' need to be built on, developed, created or continued in order for a community to 'sustain' a piece of work. Or from an asset-based perspective, what 'abilities' have 'sustained' a community through the years.

There is increasing recognition that local communities are crucially important if we are to find ways to practice sustainable development rather than just talk about it! Not only are the impacts of environmental, economic and social degradation felt at local level, but people's participation in addressing issues begins at local level. Further, it is at the local level that we can most clearly see changes happening, and appreciate what works. This does not mean that we don't need national, and even international changes in order to address broad-scale environmental and economic issues such as climate change and poverty – this level of change is, of course, crucial. However, we should not discount the power of change at local community level in the building of sustainable futures.

Tools and processes that can help us to name what is sustainable in local communities

In this section we briefly outline some helpful ways in which we can measure aspects of sustainability and engage communities around aspects of the environment.

Measurement can never, in and of itself, change anything. Yet if we can understand the issues affecting us and we can communicate about the need and possibility of creating change at a local level, then measurement tools can be helpful as a part of this communication process. Below are two measurement tools that have assisted some communities to engage with issues of sustainability.

Quality of life

Economic growth is often measured through the 'standard of living' (which measures capacity to consume and therefore measures income – the Gross National Product per capita). Our health, environment, sense of security, connectedness, quality of the air we breath, the quality of our education and livelihoods are not included in a standard of living measurement. They are issues of quality of life. The tensions between the two measures can be seen most clearly when we realise that people living in some of the worst slums of the world often have a higher standard of living (ie. they earn more money per day) than people living in a rural setting. If we were measuring quality of life, however, especially in environmental terms, the reverse may be true.

> *Our ability to create a high quality of life in the 21st century depends on our ability to look at the new situations that have emerged, clearly and honestly. We need to recognise that the profound shifts in realities which have taken place force us to change our concepts of success. Many driving forces have altered the situation of families, neighbourhoods and community.*
>
> *Robert Theobold, 1999, Visions and Pathways for the 21st Century,*
> *Southern Cross University Press, Lismore.*

Measurement of Standard of Living:
GNP per capita, or the $1 per day formula.

Measurement of Quality of Life:
Calvert-Henderson list: various indicators around:
o   Education
o   Income
o   Employment
o   Infrastructure
o   Energy
o   National Security
o   Environment
o   Public Safety
o   Health
o   Recreation
o   Human Rights
o   Shelter

Some cities and local communities have developed their own indicators of quality of life. Others have used already existing quality of life indicators to measure and monitor changes in social, economic and environmental conditions, and to develop holistic responses to such changes (see for example, cities in New Zealand www.bigcities.govt.nz/About_the_Project/index.htm).

Ecological Footprints
The ecological footprint of a person, community or nation measures the total area required to produce the food and fibre consumed, absorb the waste produced and provide the space for infrastructure. A number of communities have used ecological footprints to explore their own impact on the planet – see for example: Sonoma County (USA) http://www.sustainablesonoma.org/projects/footprintreport/scfpweb.pdf

How can community development engage with the environment?
There are a number of ways in which communities can organise around and engage with issues of environment and sustainability:
• Prevention – building the community and its environment in order to prevent environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity;
• Protection and Conservation – communities working to protect and conserve habitats, green spaces, environmentally sensitive areas and thereby improve the local quality of life for all.
• Management and Stewardship – Community-based processes to ensure the long-term health and well-being of natural resources – for example, co-management of natural resources, such as forests and areas of ocean.
• Rehabilitation and Recovery – communities working towards rehabilitating or recovering degraded environments, biodiversity or natural habitats.

As is highlighted in some of the case studies, there is much critique of community-based environmental initiatives that are merely old processes dressed in new clothing. 'Community-based' processes which remain top-down, or which are merely a front for state reductions in expenditure on environmental issues are not and should not be accepted as authentic community development processes. It is essential that any rhetoric about community development in environmental work and sustainability be grounded in the realities of the people who live and work in the environments they are protecting, conserving, managing or rehabilitating, and that people are involved in all dimensions of the work – from planning to implementing and evaluating.

British Columbia Community Forest Association is a unique group of rural forest based BC communities engaged in small scale forest management. They are essentially Community Economic Development organisationss with rights to manage and harvest timber on crown land. They work with a triple bottom line and unlike major forest corporations all employment is local and any benefits/profits stay in the community, leveraging projects such as wireless internet, recreation enhancement, education and training opportunities.   www.bccfa.ca

Sustainable South Bronx is a community organisation based in the Bronx area of New York City, which promotes "environmental justice through innovative, economically sustainable projects that are informed by the needs of the community". Founded by a local resident, the organisation also "addresses land-use, energy, transportation, water and waste policy, and education in order to advance the environmental and economic rebirth of the South Bronx to inspire solutions in areas like it across the nation and the globe". http://www.ssbx.org/

Case Studies

The following case studies refer to community development practice which is focussed on the environment and/or sustainability. The case studies raise some interesting practical questions about environment and sustainability that are examined in the next section.

Table Two: Case Studies

No.	CASE STUDY	COUNTRY/ REGION	BRIEF OVERVIEW (in relation to environment/sustainability)
1.	The Friendship Foundation: A Youth Run Environmental and Rights Organisation	India	Explores some of the challenges of community forest management processes – especially when these are delivered in a top-down manner. Advocates for the valuing of traditional knowledge in forest management.
2.	Learning from the Community: Developing a Grassroots Environmental Education curriculum in the Philippines	Philippines	Explores the development of a community-centred environmental education curriculum. Focuses on a critical approach to environmental capacity-building in local communities.
3.	Networking and Capacity Building in the Rwenzori Region	Uganda	Briefly explores some of the successes and challenges of regional networks engaging in environmental advocacy.
4.	Encouraging Women's Participation in the Rehabilitation of Common Lands in the Aravalli Hills	India	Examines a community process which links economic and environmental sustainability in village communities.
5.	Mahila Umang Samiti	India	Illustrates the link between environmental, economic and social sustainability.
6.	The People's Initiative for Food Security in Rajasthan	India	Explores the issue of food security and links it clearly to the environment. Poor people are often marginalised to the most inhospitable land and their livelihoods on this land cannot be sustainable if there is not substantial efforts for ecological recovery.
7.	The MAP Initiative	Peru/Brazil/Bolivia (Amazon Region)	A transnational, regional approach to balancing economic and ecological sustainability.

Important issues/questions/perspectives about Environment/Sustainability raised in the case studies

- Balancing conservation/environmental goals with livelihood goals can involve a great deal of tension.
- The uniqueness of biological regions must be considered in environmental and livelihood work – what works in one place with one environment and one group of people, may not work in others.
- Community development centred on sustainability must work with and build from the knowledge and strengths of communities.
- The sense of ownership amongst community members is important in

We will now briefly explore one of the issues raised in the case studies.
Catalysts of Participation: Exogenous and Endogenous Development.

Catalysts of Participation: Exogenous and Endogenous Development

Case study 4 speaks of the differences between 'exogenous' and 'endogenous' community development. Increasingly, participation is being advocated as an essential dimension of community development focussed on environmental issues   – and most government and government-funded initiatives require a dimension of participation in their conditions. This brings up the question of where participation is initiated. In very simple terms, participation can be initiated **endogenously** (starting from the internal resources within a community, ie. **community initiated**) or **exogenously** (starting from resources located external to a community, ie. **externally initiated**, usually by a state body, a funded organisation or a corporate entity), and very often there is a combination of the two. These processes are not necessarily mutually exclusive – they may sometimes be endogenous (such as where community members identify particular issues which need attention and then rally around to address those issues using only the resources within the group); and that at a later stage there may be exogenous layers added to the process (such as if those issues are also identified by external bodies such as NGOs or government departments, who then initiate processes to engage with the local community in order to address those issues). However, in terms of developing participatory, community-based environmental actions and processes, it is important to consider starting points and how they affect the basis and sustainability of community participation.

The dominant models used to promote development are not based on endogenous development principles or practices. Rather, they are based on exogenous development approaches – approaches premised on the notion that the key to enhancing community development is to maximise external inputs such as government funding. Certainly, this has resulted in short-term gains for many communities but this has not been without its problems. It is usually already more 'prosperous' communities who gain most benefits from exogenous development; and over-reliance on high levels of external input (especially in terms of finances) can result in dependency, instability and, ultimately, lack of sustainability. The corollary of these difficulties is that exogenous development is most problematic for marginalised communities (those communities which are non-coastal, remote, inaccessible, in more difficult environments and with sparse populations) which are already most disadvantaged in terms of service provision.

Compounding this problematic feature of exogenous development is the fact that in such models, 'experts' from outside the actual communities are often the drivers of the processes which are imposed on communities to 'improve' their environmental, economic and social well-being. This leads to two negative consequences: first, that often the unique characteristics of particular localities (in terms of environments, demographics, cultures, and existing social infrastructures) are not taken into consideration and what occurs is a mono-solution to what is interpreted as 'the problem'; second, such processes can actually exacerbate the disadvantages of more peripheral areas, particularly where there is high-level degradation and seemingly intractable ecological damage, increasing the likelihood that they become (or remain) poor, both economically and ecologically.

If we take some of the lessons learnt from community development, we can begin to explore possibilities and dangers of building participation from both exogenous and endogenous positions. Table two outlines some of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats inherent in building participation from both these positions. It should be noted that each has both strengths and weaknesses – and both can generate positive actions as well as have negative consequences.

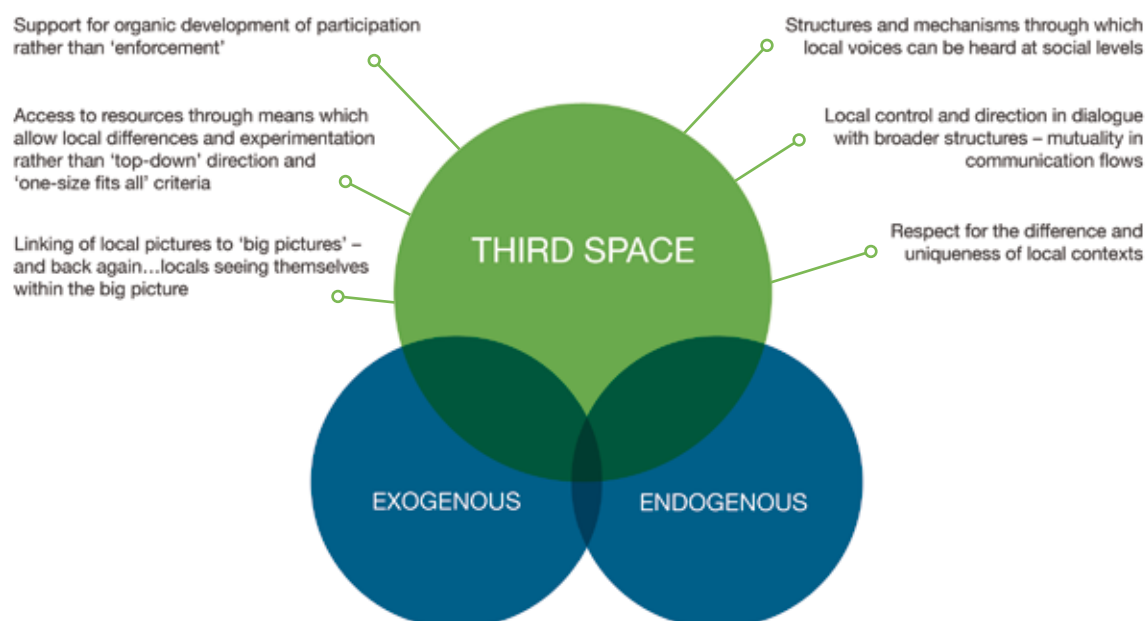|	ENDOGENOUS (COMMUNITY INITIATED) (participation and action agendas initiated from the inside: usually from the community sphere)	EXOGENOUS (EXTERNALLY INITIATED) (participation and action agendas initiated externally: usually from the social sphere)
Strengths	Energy/motivation for participation is grounded from within experiences of community members, therefore energy is more sustainable. Participation is more likely to develop organically, through relationships and internally generated connections, therefore multidimensional relationships and commitments to groups are more likely to develop. Participation is often built around small, concrete and local realities and geared towards unique local context that people can relate to, therefore commitment to action can be more visible and personally relevant.	Access to a 'big picture' on which to build participation -- vision of need for participation: access to a 'global' analysis. Access to resources in the form of information and finances. Access to social and political decision-making mechanisms. Access to a range of technical expertise.
Weaknesses	Group skills and capacities can be variable. Therefore there can be greater possibilities for in-group difficulties and instabilities. Access to resources can be limited, with resource deficiencies extending to information, technologies, finances, and expertise. People in community groups can have difficulties linking actions to a 'big picture' and to seeing how small, local actions can make a difference. Community groups can have difficulties feeding into decision-making and/or broader political processes, or negotiating spaces for doing so.	'Big picture' can crowd out/squash local realities, with a tendency towards 'one size fits all' approaches which denies local uniqueness and difference. Greater likelihood for difficulties in working in a participatory manner throughout processes; greater tendencies towards tokenistic participation and 'lower-level' participatory strategies. Role-based work allocation can mean that community processes are approached technically and not relationally, therefore 'partnerships' between social structures and particular communities can be impersonal and unstable.
Opportunities	Potential for greater sustainability in participatory processes for biodiversity recovery. Potential for locally relevant, contextually concrete vehicles for action. Potential for diversity of involvement and vehicles for 'cultural mechanisms of change' and base development of social movements for biodiversity recovery.	Potential for linking local actions into a bigger picture analysis. Potential for development of 'clearing-houses' for sharing learnings across social sphere and across community spheres. Potentials for supporting and resourcing programmes and experiments.
Threats	Vulnerability to parochialism and isolation both from other community actions and from broader processes and analyses. Vulnerability to individual power plays from within group, and lack of access to external mechanisms for resolving disputes and difficulties. Vulnerability of individual members to burn out, particularly if certain members are the 'group glue' or the motivators over long periods of time.	Vulnerability to political shifts and therefore short-termism. Vulnerability to role shifts/restructuring/ organisational realignment, and therefore frequent personnel movement, meaning 'partnership' difficulties.

When participation is enshrined in policy (be this governmental or NGO policy), there can arise a tension between genuine and tokenistic participation - the latter being the sort of participation which you have when you have to have participation. The dangers inherent in imposing participatory processes from within policy is something which is increasingly being experienced in development projects, the standard funding applications for which now specify very clearly the desirability of participatory process, particularly, gender sensitive participation. Yet, the experience on the ground overwhelmingly indicates that mandatory participatory frameworks for projects very often lead to tokenism, and manipulation.

One of the tensions associated with endogenous development and participation centres on the human resources needed to engage in participatory processes. That is, endogenously generated participation is much more likely to occur amongst people who already have some resources, in the form of strong social networks and relationships between community members, capacities to interpret information, and financial resourcing. Therefore, endogenous development is much more likely to occur in stronger communities, more educated communities, and better resourced communities and less likely to occur where community ties are weak, in communities where people are less educated, and in communities which are less resourced. There is also evidence to suggest that generating participation is easier in less degraded areas, and thus much more difficult to build around highly degraded areas, particularly where 'solutions' are technically difficult and/or costly.

At the community level (especially in societies 'addicted' to exogenous development) there is often an expressed lack of confidence in the potential of community-based initiatives to be self reliant and/or self-sustaining without external input. This is reinforced by frequent references from the political realm regarding the need for participation to be 'incentified'. Interestingly, at an international level, it is now well known that financial incentives (despite being effective in the short term) do not stimulate a culture of participation or protection – rather, they are increasingly expensive, and build a culture of expectation and, often, indifference to the 'real' aims of the programmes involved. This is not to suggest that community participation should not be funded. Rather, the development of movements of change cannot be founded on the expectations of financial incentives alone – broadscale cultural development and cultural change is rarely, if ever, based solely on incentives which benefit individuals.

With the tensions inherent in both exogenous and endogenous development, there is a need for a 'third space' to emerge which can hold and build on the strengths of each while also reducing the weaknesses inherent in each.

Support for organic development of participation rather than 'enforcement'

Access to resources through means which allow local differences and experimentation rather than 'top-down' direction and 'one-size fits all' criteria

Linking of local pictures to 'big pictures' – and back again…locals seeing themselves within the big picture

Structures and mechanisms through which local voices can be heard at social levels

Local control and direction in dialogue with broader structures – mutuality in communication flows

Respect for the difference and uniqueness of local contexts

THIRD SPACE

EXOGENOUS   ENDOGENOUS

Ideas for starting conversations about Environment/Sustainability **– please add your own!**

- What does 'sustainability' mean to you? What aspects of your work does it relate to?
- In what way does environment/sustainability relate to your work? How would you rate its importance in your work?
- What reactions do you have to the two quotes listed at the start of this chapter?
- Looking down the list of definitions of sustainability, do any of them appeal to you more than others? In what way? Do you disagree with any of them? Do you have others to add?
- Do you have any stories to share about how the links between the environment, economy and society / community are played out or have been played out in your experiences?
- How realistic do you think a practical balance between the three dimensions is?
- What does sustainability mean in relation to community development?
- How do you think you could use the quality of life and ecological footprint measures?
- Do you have any stories to share in relation to community development and environmental conservation, management or rehabilitation?
- What responses do you have to the case studies?
- What could be learnt from the case studies that may be applicable to your own work or practice? What differences in context/ practice would change the work?
- What themes or ideas or questions emerged out of these case studies for you?
- What are your thoughts about exogenous and endogenous development processes – especially in relation to environment and sustainability?
  Do you have any stories to share about either exogenous or endogenous development?
  What are your thoughts about the possibilities for a third space between the two?
- ......

Further Resources:

Books/Printed Articles:

Agrawal, A. and Gibson, C. (eds) (2001) **Communities and the Environment: Ethnicity, Gender and the State in Community-Based Conservation**, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick.

Agrawal, A. and Gibson, C. (2001) *Introduction: The Role of Community in Natural Resource Management*, in Agrawal, A. and Gibson, C. (eds) **Communities and the Environment: Ethnicity, Gender and the State in Community-Based Conservation**, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick.

Hopkins, A. (2005) **Groundswell: Stories of Saving Places, Finding Community**, The Trust for Public Land, SanFrancisco.

Kirkby, J., O'Keefe, P. and Timberlake, L. (1995) **The Earthscan Reader in Sustainable Development**, Earthscan Publications, London.

McIntosh, A. (2002) **Soil and Soul: People Versus Corporate Power**, Aurum Press, London.

Web Articles:

History of Sustainable Development:
The International Institute for Sustainable Development has developed a comprehensive timeline of sustainable development which is helpful for workshops and community education. It is available at the following web location:
http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2002/sd_timeline2002.pdf

An Introduction to Sustainable Community Development is available at the following website:
http://www.communitiesbychoice.org/CbyC_Intro_Booklet.pdf

A WWF guide for local authorities and communities about the ecological footprint is available at:
http://www.gdrc.org/uem/footprints/wwf-ecologicalfootprints.pdf

A global movement of connecting Indigenous peoples and forest management has some very interesting literature and links about community-based forest management:
http://www.gccbfm.org/

Henderson-Calvert Quality of Life Indicators:
http://www.hazelhenderson.com/index.html

…"Policy response is frequently dominated by a political response which, supported by a hostile media, labels refugees and asylum seekers as economic migrants without any sense of the trauma and difficulties that they have faced as displaced people. The impacts of international migration are considerable, but sensitive and careful consideration of how to respond to these impacts and to the needs of different categories of migrant has been drowned out both by a sense of panic amongst 'receiving' governments, and by a growing tendency towards hostility to refugees, fed by Islamophobia in the wake of the events of September 11 (in the USA) ."
(Craig and Lovel, 2005, p131)

Here is my room.
Oblivion is corroded and silence has grown old.
Enter with candles;
This room is a lair carved from the breast of darkness.
Walk very slowly or you may frighten the dust and the spiders.

Near my broken cup ... a bundle of papers:
Between covers a lifetime is scattered.
Take them, they contain my youth.
Read them, don't deny me immortality.
Publish them, don't let me die!

This is a poem written by Syrian poet Umar Abu Rishah which recently inspired an Australian musician and artist, Linsey Pollak to write a musical performance based on the poetry of refugees in Australia (it was also set to images depicting despair and hope amidst Australia's draconian refugee policies).

Refugees
and Migration

Refugees and Migration

Overview

Migration and the growing number of refugees are major policy issues in many countries and there are increasing resources being channeled into community development with migrants and refugees. There are now many millions of refugees around the world who have been displaced because of conflicts, wars, environmental disaster and economic hardship. In addition, there are increasing numbers of internally displaced people and migrant workers.

Background

There are many different reasons why people migrate or seek asylum – each of which brings particular challenges. For some, the reasons for migration or seeking asylum can involve escaping from political, cultural, or religious persecution, war or conflict, discrimination or extreme hardship. For these people the experience of building a new life in a new country can involve many challenges. It may necessitate dealing with trauma, finding work in new areas, and dealing with cultural stress and changed family relationships. Increasingly it is being recognised that these challenges are not necessarily best dealt with using Western counselling and individualised responses, but may necessitate community-based approaches such as community development (see for example some of the references in the 'more resources' section below.

Understanding some differences in law

The experience of migration – and particularly of forced migration such as experienced by refugees and asylum-seekers can never be understood by looking at legal definitions. However many determinations about people's futures are made on the basis of how their stories 'fit' these definitions. The challenge in working with people who have experienced forced migration and have sought asylum is to see, hear and build from the stories beyond these definitions.

The United Nations has specific definitions for each of the following groups of people:

Refugee
Under international law refugees are people who:
• are outside their country of nationality or habitual residence;
• have a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political affiliation; and
• are unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of their own country, or to return there, for fear of persecution.
• are not war criminals or people who have committed serious non-political crimes.

Asylum Seeker
People who have lodged a claim for consideration as refugees, but who have not yet been deemed legally to be refugees.

Migrant

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrants, a migrant is a person who has migrated away from his/her country of origin, " where the decision to migrate is taken freely by the individual concerned, for reasons of 'personal convenience' and without intervention of an external compelling factor." This definition seems to refer predominantly to skilled migrants or business migrants or people who migrate for family reunion. But it does not necessarily take into account that people may still be compelled to leave their country even if they are not technically 'refugees'. Such groups may include:

- migrant workers (see below)
- forced migrants who may also have experienced persecution, or those who are escaping economic hardship, or environmental or social disaster, or who have been displaced by processes such as economic development.
- migrants without documents.

Internally displaced people

"are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border".

Migrant workers

The UN Convention on the Rights of Migrants defines a migrant worker as a "person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national."

Gary Craig and Hermione Lovel, in a recent special edition of the Community Development Journal (April 2005) highlighted some of the work undertaken by Hermione Lovel in Manchester (UK) in which seven participation needs were identified in working with refugees from armed conflict. Participation by refugees was important in the following areas:

- The identification of needs;
- The mobilisation of resources;
- The identification of intervention options;
- The decision-making on choice of intervention;
- The delivery of the action/intervention;
- The development of skills;
- The identification and measuring process and end-point outcomes.

There have been a number of research reports and books written lately about the effectiveness of participatory, community-based approaches to working with refugees from conflict zones and/or experiencing trauma (see for example, Miller and Rasco, 2004; Foundation House, 2005). From a scan of various literature sources we have identified some important themes in working with migrants and refugee communities:

- The need to work with people in the contexts of their families and communities;
- The need for culturally appropriate approaches and methodologies;
- The importance of working from people's strengths, assets and resilience;
- Understanding that healing can focus on more than psychological issues…it can be based in obtaining employment, undertaking meaningful activities, building social networks, finding new social roles, mastering aspects of the new environment, achieving basic necessities of life. Healing can take place in community-based processes rather than individualised treatments;

- Community development in this arena can span preventative work, community building, healing work and advocacy.
- Working with families in community development processes can be important because of the rapid intergenerational changes that can take place through migration, and the possibility of intergenerational conflict.
- The importance of building community networks, organisations and structures that are culturally specific.

The box to the right outlines one Australian organisation's recovery framework which was developed through a community development programmeme with Sudanese refugees.

- **Recovery Goal 1**
  Restore safety, enhance control and reduce the disabling effects of fear and anxiety
- **Recovery Goal 2**
  Restore attachments and connection to others who can offer emotional support and care
- **Recovery Goal 3**
  Restore meaning, trust, a sense of justice and purpose to life
- **Recovery Goal 4**
  Restore dignity and value, including reducing shame and guilt

Source: Foundation House, (2005) Coming together: Two cultures, one life
Community Development with Sudanese Refugees: A Case Study, Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture, Melbourne

Foundation House in Melbourne, Australia, has developed the following 'Community Development Recovery Framework'.
The four recovery goals surround the recovery processes.

Community Development Recovery Processes
o   Build relationships with others
o   Affirm common identity, values and sense of belonging
o   Increase knowledge and skills to enhance settlement
o   Strengthen community structures
o   Develop leadership roles
o   Harness community skills and resources
o   Identify communal goals to attain economic and emotional security
o   Initiate and manage communal actions to achieve identified goals

Case Studies

The following case studies refer to community development practice with migrants and refugees. They raise some interesting practical questions about this work which are examined in the next section. Unfortunately there were not many case studies submitted that referred to work with refugees and migrants. For more information about community development with refugees we would suggest that you consult the Special Edition of the Community Development Journal on working with refugees (see reference in the 'more resources' box below).

Table Four: Case Studies that focus on Refugees and Other Migrants

No.	CASE STUDY	COUNTRY/ REGION	BRIEF OVERVIEW (in relation to CD with refugees and migrants)
6.	A Centre for the Children of Migrant Workers	Sri Lanka	An overview of a centre for the children of migrant workers. Raises the issues and impacts of migrant workers. Presents the difficulties for children particularly.
9.	Sweet Freedom and the Scattered People: Creative Action	Australia	The story of how a small community organisation in Brisbane worked with a group of refugee claimants to create a compilation of songs which spoke of their experiences. The impacts of the work spread from the participants themselves to the broader

Important issues/questions/perspectives about working with refugees and migrants raised in the case studies

- Working with refugees, migrants and their families requires an understanding of both the community-based services that are required, and the potentials for engaging with people 'developmentally' – that is, working with people in communities or groups to develop the goals and aspirations that they identify for themselves. Understanding the differences between these two approaches (and the needs for both) is important.
- The need to work at different levels – case study six highlights the importance of work that could prevent women needing to leave their children behind to find work (for example, focusing on building local sustainable livelihood options). Case study nine highlights work that builds on the capabilities of refugee claimants, and then leverages broader change through these capabilities in building understanding and educating a wider audience of the life experiences of the participants.
- The power of community cultural development – working from the cultural base of a community, focusing on people's capacities rather than their limitations, and encouraging people to tell and share their stories offers powerful ways in which people can express themselves and connect with others around common and diverse experiences.

We will now briefly explore two issues raised in the case studies.
- *Differences between Service Delivery and Developmental approaches;*
- *Community Cultural Development for Building Communities.*

Differences between Service Delivery and Developmental approaches

Case study six explores some of the important services that are required by the children of migrant workers. It highlights one of the key issues that confronts community workers when needs are great and resources are few. This is the difference between approaches of 'service delivery' and 'developmental' approaches. In service delivery approaches, a need is identified, and funding, expertise and resources are sought to build a service around meeting that need. This is important work in meeting the needs of a group of people. Developmental work, on the other hand, starts from a different base. It starts with the resources of the people who are experiencing the issue or need, and builds participatory processes whereby the people participate in designing, implementing and evaluating methods of addressing their need or issue. Of course, we need both types of responses, depending on the situation. For example, if I have an urgent medical condition that needs to be addressed I would not want to engage in a developmental approach in order to address it. However, as some of the other case studies highlight, neither would I want 'experts' to make decisions about my home, family or community without my very active participation. Of course, too, there are times when we need to do both service delivery and developmental work from the same organisation. The table below sets out the key differences between developmental logics and service-delivery approaches. You will note that there is only a faint line between the two so that we are not pitting them against one another, nor suggesting that one is more important than the other. However, we

do suggest that it is vitally important to be clear about the differences between the two. If we are not clear then we risk subsuming the power of local people, acting together, jointly co-producing their futures, under non-participatory, expert-driven processes. If we are not increasingly clear about what we are doing, then there is a great risk that we will lose what is at the core of developmental – people participation…and not just participating in other people's agendas, but people realising their own agendas.

Another view of 'Developmental' approaches: *"…developmental practice is a conscious, facilitative approach to social transformation. Effective developmental practice respectfully accompanies and supports people and their organisations, communities and movements, in their own efforts to realise their aspirations, make their choices and access their fair share of resources. And in so doing adding their contribution, more fully and equitably, to shaping an interdependent world for present and future generations."*

(CDRA, South Africa: www.cdra.org.za)

Table Five: Developmental and Service-Delivery Approaches.

	DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACHES	SERVICE-DELIVERY APPROACHES
Starting Point	Start with people, context and building relationships.	Start with ideas, models and innovations.
Aim / Focus	To work with people in communities to build on their resources, and to work towards their own vision of development.	To deliver appropriate and effective services to people to meet their basic needs and ensure a healthy standard of living.
Reach	Context-specific processes from which others can learn, but which are unique to the people and places who develop them.	Roll-out approaches – finding models which can be 'rolled-out' or replicated (with adaptations) across different communities.
Locus of Control	Centred internally – on what community members can do together now, and building from there towards their goals and aspirations. Bottom-Up Approach	Centred externally – on what external players (government, business, NGOs) can do for community members to improve services. Top-down Approach
Ownership	Emphasis on building local ownership – of processes, assets and resources, and reducing dependence on external resources wherever possible. Models and approaches and processes are owned by community members.	Emphasis on continued external ownership – organisations are granted monies to deliver the services from external sources. Models and approaches and processes are owned by individual or 'institutional' experts.
Outcomes	Process is as important as outcomes. Outcomes / successes determined by the people involved. Qualitative and quantitative changes are recognised.	Programmes often 'outcome-driven'. Process is secondary to attaining objective, externally generated outcomes. Quantitative changes are privileged.
Timeframes	Work at the pace of the people involved.	Pace often externally (pre)determined.
Scale of enterprises and economic entities	Human scale. Scale which allows people to relate and participate. Once entities become too big for people to engage, new Organisations should be born from the original. Better to build networks of smaller Organisations than one big organization.	Economies of Scale. Bigger entities are more efficient and more effectively competitive. Organisations/entities should aim to maximise their size to ensure efficiency and competitiveness.

Source: Unpublished work by Ingrid Burkett and Anthony Kelly

Community Cultural Development for Building Communities

Although the authors of case study nine have not referred to their practice as 'community cultural development', the case study highlights the important role that arts (music, performance, visual art) can play in creating change at community level. In working with a diverse range of people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, and a group who frequently experience social and cultural exclusion in the 'host' countries, processes which build on people's strengths, experiences and their own stories can create confidence, skills and networks of support. As case study ten highlighted, this can also be a means to showcase people's talents and strengths to a broader audience and therefore build bridges of connection between diverse people. According to an international anthology of community cultural development, the principles which underpin this work are as follows:

• Active participation in cultural life is an essential goal of community cultural development;
• All cultures are essentially equal, and society should not promote any one as superior to the others;
• Diversity is a social asset, part of the cultural commonwealth requiring protection and nourishment;
• Culture is an effective crucible for social transformation, one that can be less polarising and create deeper connections than other social-change arenas;
• Cultural expression is a means of emancipation, not the primary end in itself; the process is as important as the product;
• Culture is a dynamic, protean whole, and there is no value in creating artificial boundaries within it;
• Artists have roles as agents of transformation that are more socially valuable than mainstream art-world roles – and certainly equal in legitimacy.

(Sources: Adams and Goldbard, 2002;p10).

There is a long and strong history of using cultural tools and processes to create lasting change around the world - some other cultural processes that may be of interest in working with refugees and migrants include:

• Use of sports and interactive games: see for example, http://www.righttoplay.com/;
• Theatre of the oppressed: created by Augusto Boal in Brazil, see references for some of his books in the 'more resources' below;
• People's or community theatre – see for example, Van Erven, 2001;
• Circus skills – one of the articles in the special edition of Community Development Journal on Refugees speaks of the use of circus skills with young refugees;
• Story-telling and oral history projects – (see for example Clark, 2002;
• Mural painting – painting stories into large-scale public murals. See for example, Cockcroft et al, 1998;
• Folk craft and art processes – retaining and re-inventing traditional arts and crafts of a country or a region;
• Music – contemporary and traditional -as a means to create change. See for example Practical Action's work in Kassala (Africa) - http://www.itdg.org/?id=region_sudan_peace_building

"I believe art has a purpose. To use an Horatian term: Art has: Dulce—sweetness or pleasure; Utile—usefulness. I believe in the social status of art. Art must talk to us. It must be used to advance the cause of humanity. It is human to create. There are many theories that kick against this: formalism, art for art's sake, surrealism, etc. I believe that if art has any sake at all, it is human. I am a humanist. The content is as important as the work. A work of art is not a technical jargon. Cleanth Brooks refers to a poem as "a well -wrought Urn." But that talks about appearance per se. A container without content is empty. As concerned, committed artists, the basis of all art is justice".

Niyi Osundare, Nigerian poet, available at:
http://www.westafricareview.com/vol4.1/ogoanah-osundare.html

Ideas for starting conversations about working with refugees and migrants

– please add your own!

- What is your experience of migration and/or refugees? Do you have any stories you would share about migration and/or refugee issues?
- What sorts of issues and challenges exist for migrants and refugees in your context? What role does / can community development play in responding to these issues?
- What is your experience of how community development could provide an approach to working with refugees or migrants?
- What legal issues exist for refugees in your country / context?
- In what ways do you think participation is important in relation to working with refugees and asylum seekers?
- Can you think of other themes to add to our list of important dimensions of community work with refugees and migrants? Are there major things that are missing from this list?
- What are your thoughts about the 'Community Development Recovery Framework' produced by Foundation House in Australia? Does it have any relevance to your work? If so, how? If not, what do you think could be changed/added to make it more relevant?
- What responses do you have to the case studies?
- What could be learnt from the case studies that may be applicable to your own work or practice? What differences in context/ practice would change the work?
- What themes or ideas or questions emerged out of these case studies for you?
- What responses do you have to the idea that service delivery and developmental approaches are different?
- What questions or suggestions do you have about the table outlining the differences?
- Do you have examples or stories that outline the differences?
- How would you define a 'developmental approach' to community development?
- What is your experience of community cultural development?
- What examples could you add to the expressions of community cultural development outlined?
- In what ways do you think community cultural development could be used in working with refugees and migrants?
- ……

Further Resources

Books/Printed Articles:

The special edition of the **Community Development Journal** on **Community Development with Refugees** was published in April, 2005 (vol. 40, no. 2).

Adams, D. and Goldbard, A. (2002) **Community, Culture and Globalisation, Rockefeller Foundation**, New York. This publication is available free of charge from the Rockefeller foundation http://www.rockfound.org/ArtsAndCulture/Announcement/136

Boal, A. (1979) *The Theatre of the Oppressed*. Urizen Books, New York -Republished by Routledge Press in New York/London in 1982.

Boal, A. (1992) *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. Routledge Press. New York.

Boal, A. (1995) *The Rainbow of Desire*, Routledge Press, New York

Cockcroft, E., Weber, J. and Cockcroft, J. (1998) *Towards a People's Art: The Contemporary Mural Movement*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Miller, K. and Rasco, L. (2004) *The Mental Health of Refugees: Ecological Approaches to Healing and Adaptation*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey.

Van Erven, E. (2001) *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*, Routledge, New York

Web Articles:

Foundation House, in Melbourne, Australia has produced a booklet about community development with a group of Sudanese refugees. It contains the framework cited above. It is available at: http://www.survivorsvic.org.au/pub_comingtogether.htm

An Australian radio programme called Peace by Artful Means, exploring the use of music and other art forms as a means of peace-building can be heard or downloaded from http://www.abc.net.au/rn/encounter/default.htm

"**Ours is a holistic**, integrative and ecological perspective and vision. We recognise and respect the diversity and the interconnectedness of all phenomena; we realise that people on this planet are more alike than different in our common goals – peace, justice, dignity, a safe future for our children, a healthy planet and healthy environment for all living beings. As feminists we believe the personal is political; hence for us, peace also means personal transformation, inner peace. For us, peace must begin within each one of us, in our homes, organisations and communities and then move onwards to encompass our countries and the world. For us the other names of peace are diversity, dialogue, justice, democracy, transparency, human rights, caring, nurturing, love. For us other faces of peace are enough and healthy food, health, education, clean environment. For us peace is creativity, hope and trust. We know that there are millions of women in different parts of the world working fearlessly and ceaselessly for this holistic vision of peace. … Creating peace requires a culture of peace practiced by millions in our daily life."
Kamla Bhasin, (2005) Project Coordinator for South Asia: 1000 Peace Women Across the Globe, **www.1000peacewomen.org**

Women and Children

"**Children and youth** are seldom involved in the construction of their environment. They are considered too inexperienced, too unrealistic, too unqualified. Yet their fresh perspectives may be exactly what is needed to see clearly into the realm of new possibilities."
Pierre Sane, Assistant Director General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO, in the foreword to Driskell (2002).

Women and Children

Overview

Women, children and young people have faced barriers to their participation in mainstream development processes around the world. Yet women have played a crucial role in social change over centuries – a role that is often overlooked or ignored in accounts of struggle and justice. In addition it is clear that the impacts of development processes that benefit few at the cost of many also disproportionately impact on women and children, as the following author highlights:

research by academics, policymakers, and various UN agencies overwhelmingly shows that women and children have suffered disproportionately as a result of global economic restructuring
(Desai, 2002;p32)

Although their impact is often hidden, women and young people are organising around the world to address the impacts of this and other development processes, just as they are raising awareness of the issues confronting them and their communities, standing up on local, regional, national and international political stages to press for changes and building real alternatives in their communities which promote justice and peace.

This theme is a particularly broad one – incorporating two massive arenas – working with women and working with children and young people. Clearly, as in all the themes, we can only open up further dialogue about the themes rather than providing any comprehensive analysis of the topics.

Background

In the case studies that were collected around these themes, there was more of a focus on community development with women than with young people and children (though two case studies focus on this theme). The case studies were, of course, not only about work with women and young people, but rather, were about women and young people working on issues of sustainability, governance, capacity building and so on. As background to these case studies we will discuss two arenas relevant to many of the case studies focused on working with women. These include Self Help Groups (SHGs) and microfinance. We will also briefly look at participation of young people in community development.

Self-Help Groups
Self-Help Groups (SHGs), which go under different names in different contexts, are often small women's groups in which various issues that affect women, their families and communities are discussed, and actions addressing those issues are debated, organised and implemented. They are not based on the 'therapeutic' goals with which many self-help groups were based in the 1970s/1980s in the global North. Rather, Self-Help Groups could be termed 'People's Organisations' – they are a mechanism whereby people can participate in creating their futures through a local, semi-formal structure. People's Organisations provide a structure through which people can meet together, address common issues, support one another, build confidence, develop group activities and engage in what can be seen as 'micro-political' processes. People's Organisations are possibly the most grass-roots democratic forms. The groups are usually small – between 10 and 20 people, who meet

at specified times, and are often gender-specific (though not always). It is interesting that such groups are very often key to many development initiatives in the global South, whereas in the global North there is often a more formalised view of processes and to a large extent the real participatory nature of a People's Organisation has been lost in the push to formalise organisational 'projects'. Although some of the impetus for forming People's Organisations in the global North has been overshadowed by formalised welfare structures, there is much to be said for smaller, participatory self-help structures as spaces where people can engage in meaningful exchanges in the process of making a difference to their own lives and their communities. There is renewed interest in the global North in ways that people can participate more fully in determining their futures (as can be seen with the increased reinterest in workers cooperatives and local enterprises). Much could be learnt from colleagues in the global South as to how to reconstitute truly participatory change processes in the form of such small, but potentially extremely powerful, organised groupings of people.

In some of the case studies these Self Help Groups undertake savings and loans processes or microfinance (discussed in the next section), develop microenterprises, engage in political actions, develop child care programmes, undertake natural resource management and act as the crucible in which capacity building takes place. Some People's Organisations are part of broader networks or federations, in which representatives of many People's Organisations come together to develop ways to address common issues at a broader level (see for example case studies 4, 7 and 8).

"…but my mother raised me to tangle with the big boys,
to pull out my thumb
and make friends with my voice.
that's my weapon of choice"
                    Alix Olsen, activist poet (2004;p.87)

Microfinance
Microfinance is the provision of small loans, acceptance of small savings deposits, provision of insurance and other financial services such as "bill-payment and money-transfer facilities, (and) financial literacy training" to which poor people do not readily have access (Rogaly and Fisher, 1999;1). In many ways it has become an umbrella term which now covers notions of 'microcredit', 'microbanking', 'microinsurance' and 'microenterprise', which represented less integrated approaches with a similar intent, that is, providing access to various financial services for people who otherwise have little access to these services through mainstream commercial banks and institutions.

In the past decade microfinance has been touted as a means for poverty alleviation, even eradication, all over the world – not just in the global South, but also increasingly in the global North. Although the practical and ideological origins of microfinance are very varied, certain aspects of microfinance schemes (or certain approaches to microfinance) do align quite closely with neoliberal economic agendas, which emphasise more market-oriented approaches to social problems. Thus, we have seen, in recent years, an explosion of interest in microfinance as a "new anti-poverty formula" (Rogaly, 1996), particularly in the international development scene. International donors, NGOs and the development industry generally, clamouring to develop microfinance programmes. Politically the formula has been talked-up' at local and national levels.   Much has been written and said about the empowering potential of microfinance – particularly for women. With access to credit for the purposes of starting small enterprises, and through saving small amounts of their income, women are said to be able to move themselves and their families out of poverty. This is certainly revealed as an outcome in the case studies below. However, research has also demonstrated that it is not necessarily microfinance in and of itself that is empowering women, but the broader influences and outcomes of the women's groups of which microfinance is only one aspect (see box below).

Since the MicroCredit Summit of 1997, a plethora of literature, research, case studies and web-based discussion has emerged about microfinance – not all of it as glowing about the viability of this as an 'anti-poverty formula'. Further, the variety of microfinance approaches have been somewhat overshadowed by the pervasiveness of certain models of microfinance – certainly there are many more people who will have heard about initiatives such as the 'Grameen Bank' but not of other microfinance initiatives either in the South or the North. Thus, in a somewhat ironic twist, models of microfinance which have been developed in the global South have been exported to the North, with arguments made, that given the globalisation of poverty, models such as this could work equally well in alleviating poverty in the so-called 'developed world'. As always, there is some truth to this, but there are also big provisos and challenges – which makes sense given the disastrous legacies which have been left behind when 'development' models are uncritically exported from the North to alleviate poverty in the South.

Microfinance is new in name only – mechanisms for small scale savings, loans and financial assistance are really as old as notions of banking and moneylending. It is the case though, that formal approaches to addressing poverty centring on access to credit experienced a 'revival' in the 1960s and 1970s to such an extent that the name 'microfinance' became an umbrella for a variety of strategies focused on small-scale credit, savings, banking, enterprise and insurance activities.

Microfinance seems to have had multiple sites of development, and has taken many different forms in different contexts. What is interesting, is that particular forms (particularly those based on the Grameen Bank model) seem to have become popularised in the last two decades, and these forms have been exported throughout the world, replicated in many places with varying degrees of success, and largely from these models have come the basic benchmarks from which definitions and measurements of the success of microfinance projects are derived. Despite this, however, if one traces the history of microfinance, different points of origin emerge – this difference is particularly obvious between the development of initiatives in the global South and the global North (see figure below) (Johnson, 1998). Yet even within the North and the South there are different origins and different expressions of microfinance. Thus, for example, the ways in which microfinance has developed in Bangladesh and Malawi vary considerably. Similarly, although some of the policy contexts in the global North have developed along similar lines (especially in terms of succumbing to neoliberal economic visions of the world), experiences of microfinance initiatives in these contexts also vary across different groups of people. Experiences amongst urban, rural, indigenous, migrant and refugee communities share some similarities but also generate very different insights into the viability of microfinance as a strategy for addressing poverty. Even within particular microfinance projects, the origins of initiating microfinance strategies can be complex – for example, workers may have begun a project with an intent related to experimenting with alternative means of engaging in economic activities, whereas funders may have funded the project because they saw it as a good market oriented approach to responding to social problems.

Origins of Microfinance in the global south
- Local, indigenous models of saving, and distributing monies – eg. ROSCAs;
- Practices arising from self-reliance perspectives with a focus on working in informal economic sectors;
- Household level loan systems – developed post WWII as development strategies;
- Development of banking with the poor;
- Neo-liberal approaches to economic development – primacy of the market as a forum for enhancing development.

Origins of Microfinance in the global north
- Mutuals, friendly societies, community banking traditions – microfinance from this perspective is an old idea dressed in new clothing;
- Alternative economics – critiques of mainstream economics, with a focus on local economies;
- Third Way thinking (and it's predecessors) – 'market oriented responses to social problems' – has meant that microfinance has received a great deal of attention and funding in the US, the UK and more recently, Australia as a strategy for poverty alleviation, within the context of policies of 'private-public partnerships.

Empowering Women?

"In recent years, there have been a growing number of studies that have examined the 'actual' impacts of microfinance particularly for women that have also concluded that access to microfinance services in and of itself is not an accurate indicator of empowerment. These studies have further highlighted the complexity of empowerment in relation to microfinance – with the following areas regularly referred to as representing those which require consideration in the determination of empowerment:

- Who controls the loans? Numbers of studies have suggested that women may be the borrowers, but that men often control the loans without taking responsibility for repayments;

- What levels of participation are involved? Studies have shown that increased participation in the microfinance organisation increases confidence, enhances participation in household decision-making, increases awareness of social and political issues, and increases cross-generational educational investment – particularly for girl children;

- What are the wholistic financial impacts of debt? There is some evidence that pressures to repay microcredit debts has led to borrowers lending from moneylenders in order to pay back debts from NGO microfinance initiatives;

- What is the potential for financial independence under conditions of microfinance? There is increasing evidence that savings (through which people build up resources which can be used to support themselves and/or can be used to support internally sustainable collective loans programmes), and insurance programmes are essential elements for promoting financial independence, and therefore for enhancing possibilities for empowerment;

- What are the broader developmental and social objectives of microfinance? Though the evidence is somewhat mixed, there are good indications that purely 'service oriented' microfinance initiatives in which women are constructed as 'passive recipients of the service' has much less potential to engage multiple dimensions of empowerment than processes in which microfinance is only a part of a broader developmental engagement with people;

Despite the complex relationship which many studies have demonstrated between microfinance and empowerment, it remains the case, however, that many assumptions are made in programmeme designs and evaluations which do not take into account complexity, and indeed assume a simple link between access to services and empowerment".

An extract from: Burkett (2003)
Globalised Microfinance: Economic

Community Development with Children and Young People

Youth is a difficult concept to define clearly – the UN suggests people are only 'youths' until the age of 18, whereas many others stretch this to 25 or even 30. On the other end of the continuum, many commentators suggest that 'childhood' finishes at 13, when youth begins – but this is all a matter of definition. In any case, there has been comparatively little written about community development with children and young people given how important young people are to the future of our communities, and the contribution they are making to the well-being of many communities around the world. Of course there is much that has been written under the umbrella of 'youth work', but little of this crosses over and impacts on broader community development literature.

In mainstream media, portrayals of young people are often negative - focusing on issues such as drugs, gangs, alcohol, pregnancy and so forth. They focus on the negative impact of young people on communities, and young people's deficits and problems. Yet, the contributions that young people are making to their communities, their strengths, and their positive influences on communities are frequently dismissed or overlooked. Further, as one commentator recently suggested: (young people) are rarely encouraged to participate in defining solutions to problems they are identified as causing. (Munford and Sanders, 2005).

In the UK, Australia and other countries there are now policy directions that include youth participation as an important component of inclusive government from local to national levels, and which encourage the active participation of young people in decision-making in a variety of organisations. How these policies are enacted can vary significantly, however, as 'participation' is a broad concept (as will be seen in a later chapter). Gill Westhorp, an Australian Youth Worker, has highlighted the range of participation practices that can involve young people – as outlined below:

Table Six: Participation Practices Involving Young People

AD-HOC INPUT	STRUCTURED CONSULTATION	INFLUENCE	DELEGATION	NEGOTIATION	CONTROL
Young people are asked about or informed about decisions affecting them.	Young people are directly consulted about issues affecting them	Young people have an advisory role for a programme – they can influence processes.	Particular tasks in a programme are delegated to young people.	Young people are included in all negotiations about the shape of a programme.	Young people are in control of the decision-making in relation to planning, implementation and evaluation of the programme.

Source: Gill Westhorp, South Australian Youth Sector Training Council, in Australian Youth Foundation web publication on youth participation and partnerships (see resources box below).

There are increasing numbers of papers which outline guidelines for successful youth participation. These can be helpful, but recipes for participation can not ensure that the cake is cooked well! The main aim of such guidelines is to improve adult's awareness that including young people can be helpful both to broader community development processes and for the development of the young people themselves.

Case Studies

The following case studies refer to community development practice with women and children. The case studies raise some interesting practical questions about such work which are examined in the next section. There are many case studies that refer to working with women.

Table Seven: Case Studies that focus on Women and Children

No.	CASE STUDY	COUNTRY/ REGION	BRIEF OVERVIEW (in relation to working with women and children)
1	The Friendship Foundation: A Youth Run Environmental and Rights Organisation	India	Reflections from a youth-run environmental and rights organisation. Some very insightful and honest reflections about the challenges of this work.
4	Encouraging Women's Participation in the Rehabilitation of Common Lands in the Aravalli Hills	India	Explores the role of women in Natural Resource Management, and in local governance structures. A holistic view of the roles of a Self Help Group.
5	International Youth Parliament: Action Learning with Young People	International	An overview of an international network of young people working for change within their own communities.
6	A Centre for the Children of Migrant Workers	Sri Lanka	A case study focused on the work of a residential centre that supports girl-children of mothers who have become migrant workers.
7	Mahila Umang Samiti	India	Explores the role of Self Help Groups in strengthening their economic base, consolidating their social status and leveraging broader change. Numbers of women of this SHG have gone on to be elected to local government roles.
8	KRC: Microfinance as a Channel for Participatory Governance	Uganda	A comprehensive overview of a microfinance programme that has a focus on empowerment of women.
11	The Need for Organising: Self-Help Groups as Local Governance Bodies	India	The story of the beginnings of a piece of work with women fish-dryers/sellers. Tells of an initial dialogue with a mother and daughter as they clean fish for drying.
13	Woza Moya (Come the Spirit)	South Africa	The story of an organisation that is increasingly prioritising children. Includes some poignant insights into the roles of women and men in the organisation's work.
14	The People's Initiative for Food Security in Rajasthan	India	An overview of a food security programme which includes the story of how a tribal woman leader participated in creating a positive future for a village – including the children and young people.
15	A Revolving Loan Fund	East Timor	The story of how a number of women's groups developed and implemented a revolving loan fund.

Important issues/questions/perspectives about working with women and children raised in the case studies

- The inequality of the social position of women in development – they face a double or triple burden of work, have poorer access to health care and education, face discrimination and violence in the home and society and are economically poorer and more vulnerable. They also have a foundational role to play in terms of the development of families, communities and societies.
- Young people are often marginalised from decision-making processes, despite the fact that many local, national and international decisions have a great impact on the lives of young people. The long-term success of youth-led initiatives can depend on support for young people.
- The importance of building a 'culture of participation' rather than what could be seen as a 'tick-box' or 'add women (or young people) and stir' strategy in which the agenda is pre-set and then women or young people are sought for participation so that it can be described as a 'gender inclusive' or a 'youth inclusive' project.
- Women and children have universal and inalienable rights to participate in development – it is important that those rights can be realised in households, communities, nations and internationally.
- The need to ensure that any gains made in terms of the rights of women and young people are not just written in law and policy, but are actually enacted on the ground – in households, in communities and in the broader social context.
- One of the important ways in which women's position can change in society is for women to develop leadership skills and take on leadership roles.
- An important dimension of building women and young people's leadership skills is the building of confidence – especially in environments where they have previously not participated actively in decision-making processes.
- Women's groups and Self-Help Groups can be important mechanisms to bring women together, work with them to build their confidence and economic base and create a space for broader actions.
- In community development we need to build on women's knowledge, skills and strengths. In order for work with young people to be successful, young people need to participate fully in designing and implementing work, and take lead roles in the work itself.
- Increasing women's economic power increases their social status and challenges patriarchal roles.
- The role of men in gender work – men are often portrayed as perpetrators or as the benefactors of mainstream development programmes, but what is the role of men in community development processes in the long-term?
- The priority of working with children and young people, who represent the future of the work.
- The issues that face women and young people are incredibly complex – and there is a need to address them holistically rather than in 'silos' or in simplistic terms.

We will now briefly explore one of the many issues raised in the case studies.

Rights of Women and Young People: A Rights-Based Approach to Community Development

One of the most effective principles of the women's movement over many decades has been that 'the personal is political'. It put a structural analysis around women's personal concerns and linked women's local struggles to an international movement. Some authors suggest that structural analyses and radical approaches to community development are increasingly being replaced by more inward-looking approaches rather than maintaining a focus on the broader economic, political and social structures that impact on communities (see for example, Eric Shragge, 2003). Shragge argues that community development needs to, once again, discuss notions of power, injustice, and inequality (he refers to this work as 'community organising' as opposed to what he argues is a more

consensus-building process of community development).   At a time when neo-liberal agendas, global economic restructuring and processes of globalisation are bringing into sharp relief issues of injustice and inequality, perhaps there is a need for greater debate and discussion in community development circles about how to address this in local and international settings.

An addition to this debate may be a focus on 'rights' as the basis for re-politicising community development processes. Such a focus takes as its point of reference a structural analysis that makes systems accountable for the structural impacts of economic restructuring. A rights-based approach to community development takes it's starting point as the various international and local human rights structures that have evolved out of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but, as the following excerpt highlights, grounds these in the realities of people's local lives.

"In contrast to many traditional human rights groups that place the content of international laws at the heart of their rights work, we start with an understanding of rights as a political process in which people translate their needs and aspirations for a better life into demands and enforceable commitments by states. Framing both demands and human needs in terms of rights lends credibility to a struggle for justice and gives people's claims greater political weight and legitimacy. Understanding oneself as the subject of rights is a part of developing a critical consciousness and an ability to act that involves self-discovery, learning, collective awareness and analysis."
Lisa VeneKlasen et al, Rights-Based Approaches and Beyond. Linking Rights and Participation: Challenges of Current Thinking and Action, IDS and Just Associates, Washington, 2004.

Rights Based Approaches to development have grown out of:
• The articulation of the 'Right to Development' (UN Declaration of 1986) which positioned a clear link between human rights and development, and emphasised a collective duty of all states to realise an international environment that was just and equitable;
• The realisation that addressing poverty, exclusion and oppression requires explorations of the intersecting responsibilities of civil society, States and non-State players;
• A recognition that 'welfare' and 'needs' centred approaches to community development do not necessarily address the structural and power inequities inherent in many local and international development issues;
• A recognition that economic, social and cultural rights must sit alongside civil and political rights if goals of 'development' are to be realised – indeed, all rights are considered indivisible, inter-related and inter-dependent;
• A shift from a technical to a political interpretation of 'development', which in the case of 'community development' has meant that we've turned full-circle, and will probably keep spinning for a while to come!

The practice that emerges out of a Rights-Based Approach is not necessarily the same as the structural and radical approaches to community development of the 1970s and 1980s. Rather, it is a much more swampy arena – where the players are not only states, but also transnational corporations and quasi-government bodies. Further, the methodologies are not only centred on protest and traditional campaigning, but may also involve hard-nosed negotiation, people-centred action research, engagement with entities that are deemed to be abusing people's rights, and use of communications technologies and media. It centres on the community sector and NGO's and stands standing much more fully in the 'third space' between the state and the market, fearlessly engaging, critiquing and demanding change from these other sectors. It also requires a return to openly and unequivocal discussion about issues of poverty, inequality, and injustice – and acknowledgment of the structural barriers and systems that create and recreate such issues. Such a shift would bring the women's movement slogan 'the personal is political' back to the fore in community development work

A Summary of the Major Conventions and Declarations Specifically Related to the Rights of Women:

• United Nations Charter
• Universal Declaration of Human Rights
• International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
• International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
• Convention on the Rights of the Child
• Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
• Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women

A Summary of all relevant excerpts can be found at: http://www1.umn. edu/humanrts/instree/women/engl-wmn.html

> The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989. It is one of the most widely ratified of the UN human rights treaties. The key principles of the Convention are:
> o   the right to survival and development
> o   respect for the best interests of the child as a primary consideration
> o   the right of all children to express their views freely on all matters affecting them
> o   the right of all children to enjoy all the rights of the Convention without discrimination of any kind.

Ideas for starting conversations about working with women and children – please add your own!

• What are your experiences of community development with women and/or young people? Do you have any stories about your own experiences that you could share?
• How do you see the role of women over the centuries and around the world in relation to social change and community development?
• How do you see the role of children and young people over the centuries and around the world in relation to social change and community development?
• Do you know any stories, songs, or poems about women's local and global struggles – or the struggles of young people?
• How do you define the categories of 'children' and 'young people' – and what do you think these definitions mean for the practice of community development?
• What are your thoughts about the idea and practice of Self Help Groups and People's Organisations?
• What principles of this work could be applied to your current context? What factors from your own context would need to be taken into account?
• What is your experience with microfinance?
• What are your thoughts about the possibilities for microfinance with women and/or young people in relation to community development?
• What historical versions of microfinance do you or your family have connections to? What relevance do you think these historical expressions of microfinance have in community development today?
• How have you worked with young people in relation to community development?

- What important principles, guidelines and values are important in working with children and young people in community development?
- Were there particular parts of the case studies that you appreciated or disagreed with or wanted to know more about? What were these?
- Were there issues/questions or perspectives that you think were raised in the case studies that are not listed in our analysis?
- What could be learnt from the case studies that may be applicable to your own work or practice? What differences in context or practice would change the work?
- What is your understanding of Rights Based Approaches to community development?
- In what ways do you think this is similar to or different from other approaches to community development?
- What, if anything, do you think is added to community development through this approach? How do you think a Rights Based Approach to community development could work in practice?
- ……

Further Resources:

Books/ Printed Articles:

Burkett, I. (2003) 'Globalised Microfinance: Economic Empowerment or Just Debt?' Unpublished paper.

Driskoll, D. (2002) *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth*: A Manual for Participation, UNESCO Publishing, Geneva.

Johnson, S. (1998) 'Microfinance North and South: Contrasting Current Debates', **Journal of International Development**, vol. 10, no. 6

Kelly, A. and Burkett, I. (forthcoming) *With Love and a Sense of Necessity: A Methodology of Development Practice.*

Naples, N. and Desai, M. (eds) (2002) *Women's Activism and Globalisation: Linking Local Struggles and Transnational Politics*, Routledge Press, New York.

Olsen, A. (2004) *Independence Meal: The Ingredients: Spoken Word Poetry* by Alix Olson, Subtle Sister Productions.

Oxfam International Youth Parliament, (2006) *Journeys for Change: Case Studies and Conversations within the Oxfam International Youth Parliament Network*, Oxfam Australia. For more information see www.iyp.oxfam.org or write to info@iyp.oxfam.org

Rogaly, B. (1996) Microfinance Evangelism, 'destitute women' and the hard-selling of a new anti-poverty formula, **Development in Practice**, vol. 6, no. 1

Rogaly, B., Fisher, T., and Mayo, E. (1999) *Poverty, Social Exclusion and Microfinance in Britain*, Oxfam, Oxford.

The Association 1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005, (2005) 1000 Peace Women Across the Globe, Kontrast Books, Zurich

Web Articles:

Australian Youth Foundation, Youth Partnership and Participation, available at:
http://4hccsprojects.com/publicadventures/documents/youthpart.pdf#search=%22Youth%20particip ation%20and%20partnerships%20Australia%22

Veneklasen, L, Miller, V. Clark, C. and Reilly, M. (2004) Rights-Based Approaches And Beyond Linking Rights And Participation:Challenges Of Current Thinking And Action
IDS and Just Associates, Washington. Available at:
http://www.justassociates.org/Rights%20based%20approaches%20and%20beyond.pdf

..."it is important to remember that capacity building is a multi-directional, multi-dimensional process and not…'a one-way street'. This means that external agents need to focus on enhancing the quality of existing and potential relationships within civil society, not just increasing the number of local organisations or implementing 'partners'. Essentially, agencies must recognize their own capacities and limitations before deciding how best to build the capacities of others…"
Eade, 1997

Capacity Building
and Training

"We all know the classic development cliche… give a man a fish, feed him for a day; teach him how to fish, feed him for a lifetime. This is a laudable sentiment but it becomes more complex on two counts. The first we have known for sometime—it does not help to teach people to fish when they are denied equal access to the resource base…. But the second complexity is more intractable. What if those of us who claim to do the fishing do not know how to fish? This is not at all far-fetched. Can we – as NGOs, as donors, as governmental extension services – honestly claim to have achieved that much capacity in our own organisations, we who strive to teach others? Have we really mastered what we teach, have we been able to organize ourselves sufficiently to achieve meaningful impact?"
CDRA1995;2

Capacity Building and Training

Overview

Capacity building is a frequently overused concept that is often confused with training. This chapter explores some of the history of capacity building, current uses of the notion under neo-liberal policy regimes, and then explores what it may mean in the context of community development.

Background

The actual defining of the notion of 'capacity building' is difficult, and though there are a multitude of definitions, many of them are contradictory and some need to be read multiple times so that we can grasp their meaning! Capacity building achieved international prominence in the mid 1990s – it has been used to refer to individuals, communities, groups, organisations, institutions and societies. Internationally, it has been defined in relation to 'development', and many of the definitions of capacity building speak about increasing or strengthening people's abilities to perform, harness, achieve, solve, deal with and understand their functions, needs, potentials and problems, and to do so efficiently and effectively. It is often talked about in terms of strengthening the abilities of organisations and institutions in the 'economically poorer countries' by providing them with resources, skills and knowledge developed by organisations and institutions in 'economically richer countries'.

Some suggest that 'capacity building' has some colonial intents – that it is often a synonym for 'training', and presents people and communities as 'passive' recipients of knowledge, information and education.

But its origins are really quite the antithesis of a colonial intent. They lie in the work of Paulo Freire, and in the work of scholars and activists who have critiqued colonial 'development' approaches. These origins stress the importance of:
1. Grounding any interventions in the knowledge and experiences of people who are the focus of any interventions;
2. Recognising that people have capacities, strengths and abilities to do the best they can in the environment in which they live, and with the resources which they have – and these are not static, and can change and grow over time;
3. Recognising that people have the right and the ability to define and act in relation to their own priorities, and to develop skills, and gather the knowledge, information and resources that can enhance the achievement of their goals.

Under this sort of vision of capacity building the onus is shifted onto the community development workers to develop the capacity to:
- Engage with people and communities where they are at a given point in time;
- Develop relationships with people so that we can listen to their experiences, and value their knowledge;
- Acknowledge people's strengths and existing capacities, and hear their visions for change (which may be different from our own);
- Work with people rather than for them, working from the agendas which they present;
- Learn from people.

A Short Story: "Government officials came to our village with a new plan to help us. They come with a focus. So, a government officer has come and said to us that she can help us with our poverty if we only take on a family planning programme – she wants us to limit the number of children we have. And we think, yes, we can see if we could have less children then things might be better for us. But then we ask, 'yes, but if we limit the number of children we have to two, then can you guarantee that these two will survive?' And she says, 'well that's up to another government department – health of children is the responsibility of the Health Department, I only am from the Family Planning Department'. And so we cannot say yes to family planning – too many children die here and leave their parents alone – maybe they need to be taught about how to work with us and with our reality"
(Woman in a village in Gujurat, India July 2001)

And of course, all this takes time, energy, skill – it does not always lead to neat outcomes, or even reach intended outcomes, and it can be very difficult.

Another important part of the development of 'capacity building' centres on the work of the economist Amartya Sen (1999), who argued that poverty is about a lack or failure capabilities to function in society. From this perspective the objective of community development would be to enhance people's capabilities to be or do different things, thereby increasing people's life choices, their freedoms and their quality of life. Following on from Sen, the UNDP formed the idea of 'human development' that defined poverty as "the denial of opportunities and choices…to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and the respect of others".

> Amartya Sen defined poverty as a lack or failure to function in society.
>
> Other ways in which poverty has been defined include:
> * Lack of income;
> * Inability to engage in consumption;
> * Exclusion from rights associated with citizenship (economic, political, social and cultural);
> * Ill-being;
> * Vulnerability;
> * Lack of wealth and assets;
> * Relative deprivation;
> * Inability to meet basic needs;
> * Unsustainability of livelihood.
>
> Question:
> How does our definition of poverty change the ways in which we work in community development? How does it change the objectives/visions of our work?

We should also, however, be aware that the contexts in which 'capacity building' is now used in relation to community development are increasingly dominated by managerialism and market approaches to social 'problems'.

In the newer versions of capacity building, often seen in funding agreements and policy statements, community capacity building has developed in a number of different ways –
* It has been used to refer to the development of capabilities of communities to deal with or manage change;
* It has been used widely to refer to development of abilities of communities, government agencies and business to work together for change;
* It has been used to refer to processes which aim to strengthen communities 'from within' and thereby help communities to engage in 'community-led' development.

Community capacity building has been used widely in community circles, in government circles, in environmental work, in urban renewal and in rural revitalisation work.

Sometimes capacities in these contexts refer to physical aspects of communities – the financial resources, the infrastructure, the physical assets that exist in a community. Other times capacities refer to the capabilities of people living in communities – their strengths, knowledge, skills, talents. And at other times, capacities are used to refer to the 'social capital' of community – the networks

that hold the community together, and the ways in which community members link in with one another, and the community links with governments, businesses and other communities. The first two of these interpretations of capacity are often the dominant foci of community capacity building processes – perhaps because it is much 'easier' to build capacities which we can 'see' and measure or which can have direct influences on peoples individual and community development.

From a critical perspective, some of the 'newer' definitions of capacity building are centred on helping communities to 'fit' better into the rapidly changing environment – such definitions talk about helping people to 'cope' with change, manage change, sustain development, or be more resilient to change. Some of these visions of capacity building start from a reactive stance – and are emptied of some of the more overtly political agendas which terms such as 'empowerment' were built on. Further, there are many definitions that still view communities as 'passive' and 'static' – and which
- focus on building communities' ability to receive, hold and absorb resources and information,
- build up their ability to perform or produce according to indicators developed outside the community, and
- build their abilities to cope with change and realise their potential for growth and development.

Capacity building has also been used in ways which further managerial goals rather than people-centred goals. For example, in relation to organisational capacity building capacity building increasingly refers to the "ability of organisations to implement and manage projects, to exercise financial and product accountability…to employ and train staff competent to undertake specific tasks and report on their work in ways which are acceptable to their donors" (Kaplan, 1999; p12). Though some of this may be very important, an alternative view which emphasises people rather than systems could also be put forward – for example: organisational capacity building is about "building robust and sustainable organisations which are capable of sovereign focus and direction, of strategizing and innovation, or responding with flexibility and adaptability to changing circumstances, and of acting decisively to impact on, and change, their circumstances and social context" (Kaplan, 1999).

In enacting capacity building many of our case studies highlight the need to see communities as active, moving entities; in which a diverse, contradictory, and complex range of players co-exist. People, organisations, groups, and institutions, which have a multitude of strengths, assets, stories, and issues; and which face a range of constraints – personal, interpersonal and structural which restrict the expression and realisation of these strengths.

In interpreting capacity-building, there is a need to be aware of what ideological assumptions underlie various definitions. What are we building towards if we are merely enhancing a community's capacities to accept more and more change, growth and management? What happens to the increasing numbers of people who just simply will not 'fit' this context? And where does people's capacity to organise and challenge oppression or exploitation come into this?

There are some things that we can also keep hold of from the origins of capacity building:
- Relationships with people are crucial if we are to work with them, recognise their capacities and hear their agendas for change;
- Everyone's capacities will be challenged when we work with people – and we will all have build our capacities;
- Building capacities is a process rather than a product, and it is only a part of working with communities.

Case Studies

The following case studies refer to community development practice which includes capacity building. The case studies raise some interesting practical questions about capacity building which are examined in the next section. There are many case studies that refer to capacity building. This should not be surprising in that capacity building is now an integral part of many local and international development practice, policy and funding frameworks.

Table Eight: Case Studies that Focus on Capacity Building

No.	CASE STUDY	COUNTRY/ REGION	BRIEF OVERVIEW (in relation to capacity building)
1	The Friendship Foundation: A Youth Run Environmental and Rights Organisation	India	A worker's reflections on learning in the context of a community-based forest management programme.
2	Learning from the Community: Developing a Grassroots Environmental Education curriculum in the Philippines	Philippines	The former coordinator of a community-based environment centre reflects on learning, training and organising in the context of community development.
3	Networking and Capacity Building in the Rwenzori Region	Uganda	Reflections about what capacity building means in an organisation – it is much more than training!
5	International Youth Parliament: Action Learning with Young People	International/ Australia	Reflections on an international capacity development and exchange network who use face-to-face as well as electronic means to communicate and exchange capacities.
7	Mahila Umang Samiti	India	The story of a community who built personal and institutional capacities in response to environmental degradation and loss of livelihood.
10	Sharing Strengths	Canada	An exploration of how a couple of community development workers define and enact their definition of capacity building.
12	An Independent Citizen's Commission	Slovakia	In response to an unconsultative local government, a community organizing centre initiated a citizens commission and built the capacity of residents to air their views about local development.
13	Woza Moya (Come the Spirit)	South Africa	A local community organisation builds it's own and it's constituent's capacities in the face of drought, political warfare and the devastation of HIV/Aids.
14	The People's Initiative for Food Security in Rajasthan	India	An overview of work undertaken to address food insecurity in a number of communities. Using capacity-building the work builds people's confidence to address the impacts of poverty and food shortages.
15	A Revolving Loan Fund	East Timor	Exploring capacity building in the context of women's groups wanting to develop income-generating activities.

Important issues/questions/perspectives about capacity-building raised in the case studies

- It is hard to clearly and consistently define capacity building – we need to be able to articulate what it means to us and hear what it means to others.
- It is important to value and build on endogenous and traditional knowledge rather than assuming that expert or external knowledge will provide solutions – sometimes not recognising the strengths and knowledge of a community is part of the problem.
- Capacity-building is not the same thing as training. Capacity-building can involve training, but it is only one dimension of a multidimensional process.
- There are linkages between community organising, group development, institutional strengthening and capacity building. When people have links to participatory structures, then capacity building can strengthen people's effectiveness in reaching their goals.
- Time is important – taking the time to build strong relationships with community members, learning at the pace of the people, and timing any external 'inputs' such as training or resources is an important aspect of capacity building.
- Capacity building is a two way street – it involves partnership in learning and reciprocity.
- Participation and creating the change we seek in our communities is a great way of building our capacities – without it often being termed 'capacity-building'!

We will now briefly explore a few of the issues raised in the case studies:
- *What is 'capacity-building' in the context of community development?*
- *The 'timing' of capacity-building in developmental work*
- *The mutuality of capacity-building*

What is 'capacity-building' in the context of community development?

Case Study 10 includes a definition of capacity building:
"Community capacity building is a process that aims to increase a community's ability to work together to meet its goals and needs. Capacity building works to enhance the strengths a community already has. Capacity is built from:
- *Commitment – the will to act;*
- *Resources – including both financial and other resources; and*
- *Skills, talents and expertise*

Adapted from the Community Foundation of Canada, 1999.

In practical terms, capacity building means helping communities build their knowledge and skills, therefore increasing their ability to take their community in the direction they want to go". See Case Study 10.

Bringing together the literature lights and the issues raised in the case studies we could pose another definition of capacity-building to add to this one.

Capacity-Building with individuals and communities:
Capacity-building happens in the context of relationships with people – it is not an activity that can be 'done to' people or communities. When relationships with and between people have been built, and there is a context in which people have decided to move forward with one or more agendas, then capacity-building means promoting and enacting four inter-related activities:
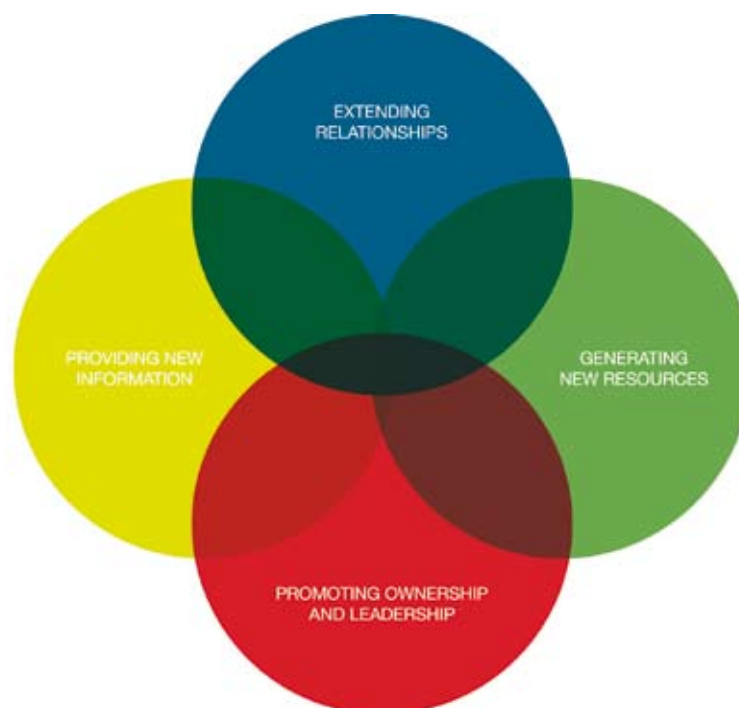
Extending Relationships:
This involves building up supportive networks and webs of support and extending the range and reach of people's relationship repertoires. Examples of this which are raised in the research are exposure visits to other organisations, federations and networks of relationships and regional gatherings/conferences.

Providing New Information:
Information and training is in a form which relates to people's realities rather than in objective, abstract forms. Trainings build on and from people's existing skills and knowledge and encourage active participation.

Generating New Resources:
This is the most difficult of the aspects of capacity-building to manage (see below) and it is crucial that resources are generated in the context of the relationship otherwise they can become the reason for and the focus of the relationship. The generation of resources needs to be life-giving not just life-saving.

Promoting Ownership and Leadership:
This is about engaging people in decision-making processes – many of the case studies show people participating in decisions at every stage. That way there is increased confidence, increased ownership and increased leadership development.

Sources: Case Studies as outlined above, and Kelly, A. and Burkett, I. (forthcoming) With Love and A Sense of Necessity: A Methodology of Development Practice.

Organisational Capacity-Building

Allan Kaplan from the Community Development Resource Association in South Africa has developed a very helpful framework for understanding the elements of organisational capacity-building. He suggests that all too often capacity building is limited to the tangible and easy 'inputs' that we can inject into organisations to ensure that they are more effectively able to deliver the 'outputs'. In contrast to this perspective on capacity-building, Kaplan presents a framework in which he suggests that an organisation 'with capacity' has characteristics that can not so easily be 'inserted' or even readily identified by a casual observer, but which are critical to their developmental effectiveness. Kaplan presents his framework in this way:

"From our work with organisations - which is our starting point - we ascertained a number of elements which must be present and coherent for an organisation to be said to have capacity, or to be effective. These are - arranged sequentially in a hierarchy of importance (with the most important first, the least important last) - the following:

- A *conceptual framework* which reflects the organisation's understanding of the world;
- An organisational 'attitude' which incorporates the confidence to act in and on the world in a way that the organisation believes can be effective and have an impact, and an acceptance of responsibility for the social and physical conditions 'out there';
- Clear organisational *vision and strategy*, and sense of purpose and will, which flows out of the understanding and responsibility mentioned previously;
- Defined and differentiated organisational *structures and procedures* which reflect and support vision and strategy;
- Relevant *individual skills, abilities and competencies*;
- Sufficient and appropriate *material resources*".

The fact that Kaplan has placed what are often considered the crucial elements of organisational capacity at the bottom of the hierarchy is something that requires a great deal more personal reflection and collective discussion.

You may wish to read Kaplan's whole article, called 'The Developing Of Capacity' in which he outlines the framework in more depth. You can find the article and website address listed in the more resources section below.

The mutuality of capacity-building

A number of case studies (notably numbers 1, 2, and 10) speak about the mutuality of capacity-building, with the authors speaking of how they too have built their capacities and learnt from the members communities they have worked with. In these cases the authors were open to mutual capacity building and reversals of learnings. Robert Chambers, a well known development practitioner and teacher suggests the following exercise to remind ourselves of the mutuality of capacity-building and to enhance our "awareness of the difference between professionals' and local people's knowledge" Chambers, 2002;111.

He sets this out in what is commonly known as the 'Johari Window':

	What they know	What they don't know
What they know		
What they don't know		

Source: Chambers, R. (2002) Participatory Workshops, Earthscan, London, p. 111

We can explore the potential for mutual capacity building by filling this box in for a particular situation in which we work. Sometimes it can helpful to share this with others who may know the particular situation and discuss the results.

The 'timing' of capacity-building in developmental work

A number of people in the case studies raised the point that relationship building and therefore capacity building takes time, and that it needs to move at the pace of the people involved – not the pace of the funders, workers or organisational agendas. This will necessarily involve tensions for community development workers because they often sit at the interface of people in communities and the organisations, donors, grant-makers and so on. There are two points which can be raised in relation to timing.

First, it is a bit of a myth that community development takes much longer than other methods of practice. This is only the case if we look at individual projects. If we take into account the time it takes to resolve issues raised by lack of participation, or lack of ownership by local people or fixing issues that can arise when solutions are imposed on people, then community development does not really take longer. Of course we cannot idealise community development and suggest that it will always lead to better outcomes. But we can argue that the time it takes to build solid relationships, to hear what people have to say and to learn about people's experiences of their communities, is time well spent if capacity building is going to be truly effective. In this way we can ensure that (as case study 3 points out) communities are not seen as passive "recipients of development but as active participants in the process".

Second, the appropriate timing of capacity building is a key skill of a community development worker. This is about knowing and sensing when the relationships are well enough established, when the information will be most useful, when the resources will be most helpful and when community leadership is strong enough. Some of the case studies talked about the 'right timing' – and this is not an objective measure, but rather, something to be determined in the context of the relationship. If the community development worker brings financial resources, expertise or information into the community before a relationship is established, then the risk is that the resources will define the nature of the relationship rather than the other way around. Further, and importantly, the worker will not know what resources and assets are present in the community – so their own resources may actually swamp already existing processes in a community.

Dialogue and Relationship

Tools, resources, information, training

Ideas for starting conversations about capacity building – please add your own!

- How would you define 'capacity-building'? Do you have stories to tell about your experiences of 'capacity-building'?
- We have briefly mentioned the work of Paulo Freire and Amartya Sen in relation to 'capacity-building' – who do you find inspiring in relation to this area? What are the stories behind why you find these people inspiring?
- What are your thoughts about the definitions of poverty presented in this section? What impact (if any!) do you think these definitions have on how we work in community development?
- People have different understandings of capacity-building…what various understandings do we have in this organisation?
- What experiences have you had with funding bodies in relation to capacity building?
- Were there particular parts of the case studies that you appreciated or disagreed with or wanted to know more about? What were these?
- Were there issues/questions or perspectives that you think were raised in the case studies that are not explored in our analysis?
- What could be learnt from the case studies that may be applicable to your own work or practice? What differences in context/ practice would change the work?
- What are your thoughts about the definitions of capacity building we have shared? Are there parts of them that you agree with, disagree with or would change?
- How do you see 'relationship' as part of related to capacity building? What are 'relationships' in community development? Do you have any stories to share about this?
- What do you see as the connection between training and capacity building? What are the differences?
- How do you see 'resources' as related to capacity-building?
- How does your organisation interpret organisational capacity-building?
- What are your thoughts about Allan Kaplan's framework for organisational capacity? How would you link it to your own organisation?
- How do you see capacity-building as mutual? What are your thoughts about the Johari window as a means of raising awareness about different kinds of knowledge?
- What experiences can you share that relate to the 'timing' of capacity building?
- ……

Further Resources:

Books:

Chambers, R. (2002) *Participatory Workshops*, Earthscan, London.

Eade, D. (1997) ***Capacity-Building: An Approach to People-Centred Development***, Oxfam, Oxford.

Freire, A.M.A and Macedo, D. (1998) The Paulo Freire Reader, Continuum Press, New York.

Sen, A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*, Anchor Books, New York

Web Articles:

Srikantia, P. and Fry, R. *Appreciative Capacity Building: A Self-Referential Technology of Organisational and Community Transformation*, available at:
http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/gem/srifryfinal.html

This article links appreciative enquiry with capacity building. It reports on a study examining capacity building in 15 international projects.

Kaplan, A. (1999) *The Developing of Capacity*, Community Development Resource Association, Cape Town, South Africa – available from:
http://www.cdra.org.za/articles/The%20Developing%20Of%20Capacity%20-%20by%20Allan%20Kaplan.htm

You may also like to visit other papers on the CDRA website – including:
Kaplan, A. & Soal, S. 1995. *Capacity Building - Myth or Reality?* **Institutional Development**, Vol.2, No.2.

There are many papers and interesting case studies available for free on this website.

There are many papers available as free downloads from INTRAC – the International NGO Training and Research Centre:
http://www.intrac.org/pages/praxisseries_publications.html

NGO Regulation
and Governance Issues

"**NGOs are prominent** at the international, regional, national, local, and community-based levels. They are in the streets and in the boardrooms. They are driven by paid professionals and unpaid volunteers. … the current global movement of empowered citizens making a difference is not top down and centralized. Rather, it emanates from individuals, the grassroots, and grasstops--leaders at the local level, and is diffuse

Cohen, J. 2004, p94-95.

NGO Regulation and Governance Issues

Overview

The role and influence of NGOs and civil society organisation has increased markedly over recent decades (along with the influence of corporations and businesses) as the influence of governments has supposedly declined.   Along with the increased numbers of NGOs, and their influence in policy circles, public debate, and in the international arena, has come an increased focus on their accountability, their democratic mandate and their ethical codes. This in turn has led to questions about the legal and regulatory framework in which NGOs practice, and how accountability (particularly of government funded NGOs) can be ensured. Interestingly, however, NGOs are also increasingly playing a role in ensuring that governments and corporations become more accountable to 'people-processes' and have developed many participatory mechanisms whereby people can have more say in the futures of their communities, their regions, nations and societies. This dual view of governance is seen clearly in the case studies – and it will be drawn out further in this section.

Background

A scan of the literature on NGO regulation and governance highlights that around the world NGOs are currently the subject of increased scrutiny and attempts to enhance their accountability and governing structures. There are two aspects to this:
1. Increased attempts to regulate NGOs further to ensure that the structures and systems used by NGOs cannot be used for ulterior purposes (and thereby furthering negative forces of corruption, terrorism and so on).
2. Greater focus on 'strengthening' NGOs, particularly from government bodies, to ensure that their processes and practices are accountable, transparent, effective and efficient.

In addition, in some countries (for example, United States and Australia) there have been what could only be termed 'attacks' on NGOs who are engaging in advocacy work which is critical of government policies or practices.

All this focus on NGO governance and the push for greater regulation has been linked to 'neoliberal' policies and the influence of 'public choice theory'. In simple terms neoliberalism is basically an economically driven political ideological framework that emphasises the primacy of the free-market and private enterprise, and promotes individualism and competition. Neoliberal policies centre on fiscal restraint, privatisation, trade liberalisation and free movement of capital, goods and services, public service reform, globalised financial codes and reduction in the economic role of the state. Public choice theory calls into question the advocacy role of NGOs and argues that they are essentially unaccountable bodies who interfere with market-based processes.

The impact of this increasingly global focus on the accountability of NGOs, whilst it could assist NGOs to focus a little more on their systems and processes, should also be seen in a broader context – as one author pointed out recently:

"Both NGOs and academics have frequently interpreted this attack on their 'accountability' and legitimacy as being about their internal governance arrangements. It is absolutely essential that NGOs have their houses in order and use robust, transparent and accountable arrangements in running their organisations. However, they may be mistaken if they believe that doing so will remove government criticism on the grounds of 'accountability'. Accusing NGOs of not being accountable is a statement of a political world view, a public choice paradigm, in which only elected representatives are accountable to the people. Restructuring and internal governance reforms by NGOs cannot change this paradigm."

Staples, 2006;p6-7

What is governance?
According to Chris Cornforth, governance is:

"the systems and processes concerned with ensuring the overall direction, supervision and accountability of an organisation."

Chris Cornforth, (2003) The Governance of Voluntary and Community Organisations: An Overview, Co-operatives UK.

The people responsible for governance in a community organisation are both 'elected' (onto a board, management committee, trust or other legally sanctioned body) and 'appointed' (as managers or staff). The organisation itself sits in a socio-legal context to which it is responsible in terms of upholding the laws governing the constitution of community organisations. The whole structure of authority could be depicted as follows:
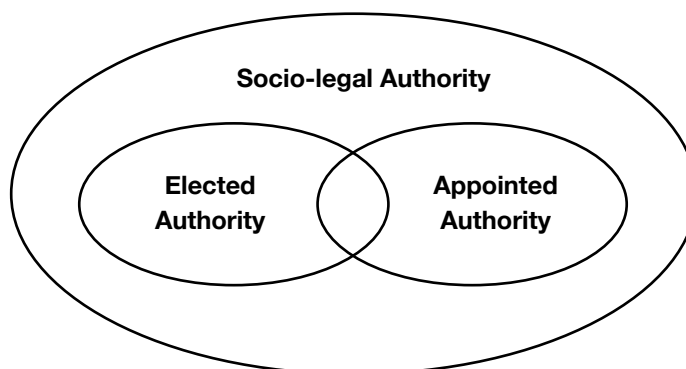
In some cultures and contexts there may be a third authority which sits alongside the elected and appointed authorities – that of the 'traditional' authority which may include elders or assigned leaders of a community (such as is the case in certain Indigenous communities).

Although specific duties differ according to national and local laws, generally speaking an elected authority is legally responsible for governing an organisation. In practice the elected authority is often responsible for framing the policy of an organisation, appointing staff, setting the strategic direction of the organisation, ensuring that the organisation is conforming to laws and meeting legal obligations.

The appointed authority is responsible for the day-to-day management of the operations of the organisation, and the implementation of the work.

While it is clearly in everyone's interests that NGOs are as accountable and transparent as possible, accountability can not become the central focus of NGOs – it needs to be balanced with ensuring that their core vision and mission are enacted.

Accountability to funders

Accountability to members and constituents

Accountability to regulators

Balancing accountability and empowerment

The focus on internal NGO governance is not the main concern of the authors of the case studies. Here the focus is much more on how developmental processes can create spaces for people-centred democracy. In other words, the authors of the case studies are interested in how NGOs can ensure that broader governance structures are accountable to their constituencies and are transparent enough that people can participate in decision-making that affects their lives. This has been termed 'participatory governance'. Examples of this abound in –

- People's Organisations – small groups of people who have joined together to create change in their communities or localities;
- Self Help Groups and Savings and Loans Circles – small groups who save and lend each other money, establish micro-enterprises and support each other to address the issues that face them;
- Neighbourhood and Village councils – addressing the issues facing communities in a democratic and accountable way;
- Participatory Budgeting – as seen in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where people can participate in decision-making about how the local government's budget is spent;
- Community Resource Groups – through which people can participate in managing natural resources on which they depend for their livelihood;
- Councils of the Commons, and other regional participatory groups who participate in the creation of a sustainable future in their communities and regions.

A study of such processes (Fung and Wright, 2001) suggested that there were three major principles on which participatory governance is based:

1. Practical orientation – the processes are generated around specific concerns and the structures focus on addressing those concerns through practical and deliberative actions.
2. Bottom-Up participation – the processes are characterised by direct participation of people affected by the concerns. They are not developed 'for' people but rather, are developed 'by' the people, either to address failures of existing structures, or to engage directly in decision-making processes about issues that affect their lives.
3. Deliberative solution generation – the participants engage in dialogue and debate about the concern and then decide on ways to move forward. This often involves intense debate and conflict – it is not always consensus oriented!

Case Studies

The following case studies refer to community development practice which relates to governance and NGO regulations. The case studies raise some interesting practical questions about governance which are examined in the next section. As previously mentioned, nearly all of the case studies refer to examples of 'participatory governance' rather than focusing on their own internal governance.

No.	CASE STUDY	COUNTRY/ REGION	BRIEF OVERVIEW (in relation to governance/NGO regulation)
3	Networking and Capacity Building in the Rwenzori Region	Uganda	An examination of the way people's organisations and community-based organisations can link to form networks that can take on advocacy at a regional level.
4	Encouraging Women's Participation in the Rehabilitation of Common Lands in the Aravalli Hills	India	Reflections on the position of women in local governance processes and the establishment of women's groups based on the principles of participatory governance.
8	KRC: Microfinance as a Channel for Participatory Governance	Uganda	Explores how regulatory policies, though perhaps well-meaning, do not necessarily taken into account impacts on the poorest members of society. Contrasts the impacts of large Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) and local Microfinance Associations (MFAs).
11	The Need for Organising – Self Help Groups as Local Governance Bodies	India	Examines the early stages of the formation of a Self-Help Group and the potential of such groups to create a space of 'participatory governance'.
12	An Independent Citizen's Commission	Slovakia	An example of 'participatory governance' in which an independent citizen's commission was established because the local government did not consult local people about development issues.
16	The MAP Initiative	South-Western Amazon Region	An example of the development of a 'trans-border collaboration in search of solutions for regional problems' – in effect constituting 'regional governance'.

Important issues/questions/perspectives about governance/NGO regulation raised in the case studies

- Participatory governance processes create a space for a 'collective voice' which can influence decision-making at local, regional, national and international levels;
- If organisations are to be truly accountable to their constituents then there is a need for funding relationships that are based on 'long-term partnership' rather than short-term 'results'. Partnership is important as a means for ensuring a balance of accountability between funders, regulators and constituents/members/beneficiaries of an organisation.
- There is a big difference between 'token' participation and actual participation of women in governance structures. While government legislation and policies ensuring women's participation

in various governance structures are important, there is also need for social change to ensure women's actual participation. In building 'real' participation, it is important to tap into people's energies (ie. what issues do people have the energy to participate in addressing?), build people's confidence, challenge discriminatory practices, and address the whole range of issues that prevent participation.
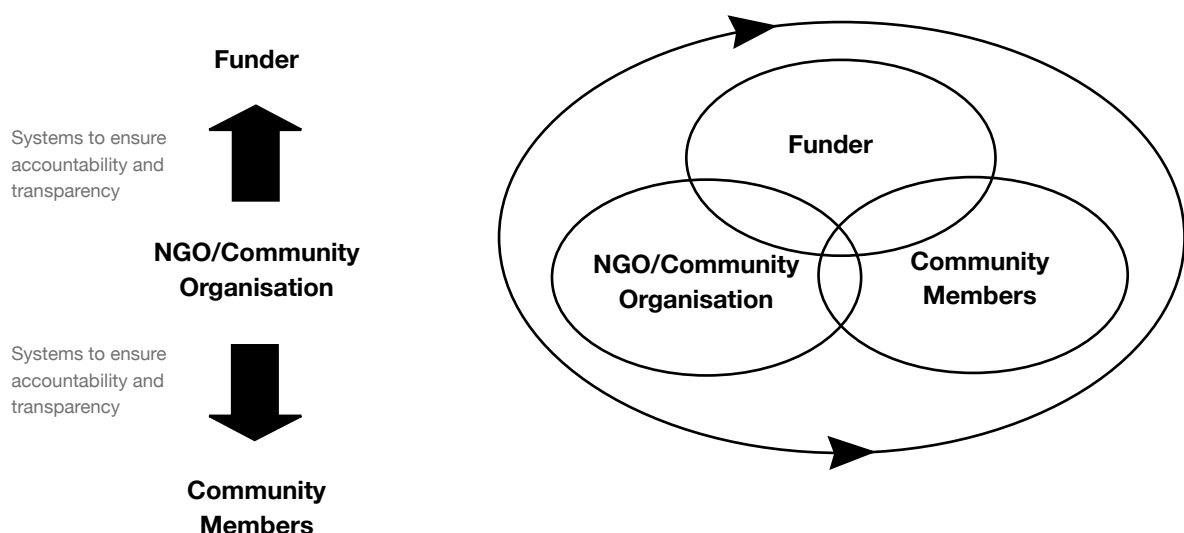
- NGOs need to find ways to collaborate about regulatory structures that are adversely affecting their abilities to do their core work and those that are regressive in nature, placing further barriers or adversely affecting people in poverty or those experiencing social exclusion.
- The development of NGO governance models and indicators of good governance needs to take into account an organisation's cultural and social context and the particular pressures that an organisation will face because of internal and /or external factors.
- Participatory governance needs to think about how to engage cross-sectorally – and include people from sectors that may not be in agreement with the community members. For example, in opposing private developments in a community, there can be great advantage in including the investors in forums to discuss how to respond.

We will now briefly explore two issues raised in the case studies in a little more detail:
- *Partnerships for Good Governance*
- *Participation in Governan*ce

Partnerships for Good Governance – is this an Oxymoron?

One of the case studies (Case Study 3) speaks of the need for 'partnerships' with funding bodies that are based on an understanding that the 'accountability' of an NGO is primarily to it's members, constituents or beneficiaries. Although it is important that NGOs are accountable for the money they receive and should be asked to demonstrate that it has not been used corruptly or unscrupulously, but to demand defined 'outcomes' over short timeframes is undermining the accountability an NGO has to its base and its community. A different way of approaching this is to build relationships with donors that are based in 'partnerships' rather than donor-recipient relationships. Is this possible? Yes - it is increasingly recognised that 'donor-recipient' relationships, though quite effective if the issues on which the NGO is working are relatively simple or based on service delivery, are not so effective when the issues that are being addressed are complex, entrenched or widespread. What is needed when situations are complex, is an ability to engage more deeply and to spend the time and resources to ensure that any changes are real, long-term, owned by the people involved and in which people have been active participants rather than passive recipients in the process.   Pictorially it may look like this:

Funder

Systems to ensure accountability and transparency

NGO/Community Organisation

Systems to ensure accountability and transparency

Community Members

Funder

NGO/Community Organisation

Community Members

This may seem a little idealistic, but there are partnerships that do work in this way – they are, as case study 3 suggests, rare, and they require much more work in terms of building relationships than the traditional donor-recipient relationships, but they can and do work. However, as with many concepts that sound good in theory but get corrupted in practice, in developing such partnerships we proceed with caution….

"Too often, imbalances in political strength, organisational capabilities and financial power lead to relationships that are neither even-handed nor characterised by reciprocity. This imbalance generates friction, reduces effectiveness, increases transaction costs and discredits the basic principle of development as cooperation. Moreover, calling relationships that perpetuate or hide such imbalances 'partnerships' further undermines the credibility of the system as a whole."

Fowler, 2000;p48.

Partnerships
A partnership is: a relationship between individuals or groups that is characterised by mutual cooperation and responsibility.

In reality a partnership is not a fixed reality but the sum of the way people relate to each other and will ebb and flow accordingly. Partnerships can be of various kinds that differ in importance and emphasis over time. Partnerships can be:
• Strategic – where they can result in mutually beneficial outcomes;
• Relational – when based on shared visions and goals; or
• Pragmatic – when they are concerned with sharing resources.
Whatever their form, partner relationships have a solidity and reliability about them.

Partnerships require:
• **RECIPROCITY:** an agenda that is possessed in common and a set of rights and obligations that is directed at all parties. The reciprocal relationship between the parties hinges on the quality of their interchange.
• **BALANCE** – between the rights and obligations borne by each party.
• **COMMUNICATION** – open, transparent, honest. Learning the languages of each party is crucial, as is developing learning communication strategies, and spending time in each others' contexts.

"For lenders and donors to strive for power over is counterproductive. Influence requires power with through collegiality, mutual trust, joint learning and collaboration. (Development) is about investing in relationships".

(Chambers, 2004;p29)

Participation in Governance
Most of the case studies speak of examples of participatory governance and of the various forms this takes, from self-help groups and women's groups, people's organisations, to citizen's commissions and cross-border regional bodies.

Participation can mean a great many things – and not all participation could be considered to enhance local democracy. Jules Pretty outlines a typology of participation that is helpful in understanding the range and characteristics of participation.

Typology of participation (from Pretty, 1995;p173)

	TYPOLOGY	CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH TYPE
1	Passive participation	People are informed of what is going to happen or has already happened. Information being shared belongs only to external professionals.
2	Participation in information getting	People participate by answering questions posed by researchers using questionnaire surveys or similar approaches. People's information is extracted; findings are usually neither shared not checked for accuracy.
3	Participation by consultation	People participate by being consulted and external agents listen to views. External agents define the problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. People do not usually share decision-making and professionals are not obligated to take on board people's views.
4	Participation from material incentives	People participate by providing resources (e.g. labour) in return for material incentives. People have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.
5	Functional participation	People participate by forming groups to make predetermined objectives related to the project. Such involvement does not tend to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have been made.
6	Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. 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 independent 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.

A central aspect of developmental work is to build a wide variety of structures that enable people to participate at different levels and in different ways. From committee meetings to regional networks and global people's institutions, community development workers are interested in how to build processes that are centred on participatory process.

There is a point in the size of a group when participation becomes too onerous – when speaking up is more like public speaking than participating in a group discussion; when decisions take too long; when those who are least powerful are less likely to voice an opinion. When the size of a group moves beyond the point where people can easily participate, for the group to remain effective often requires a move to a representational process.

Many People's Organisations have between 10 and 20 members. When groups get beyond this size there need to be additional measures put into place to ensure participation. Representational processes come into play when networks seek to bring local issues into regional, national or international forums – as with some of the federations and networks that were mentioned in the case studies.

Ideas for starting conversations about governance and NGO regulation – please add your own!

- Who are the NGO Regulatory bodies monitoring your work context? In what ways have they changed over the years?
- In what ways do you think governance of NGOs is important? What sorts of conflicts arise in your work setting around governance issues? What strategies do you use to resolve these issues?
- What stories could you share about increased regulation of NGOs?
- What strategies have you engaged with around strengthening the governance of the organisation/s that you are involved with?
- Do you have any stories to share about the impact of neoliberal policies on your work? Any examples of how public choice theory has been used in your context? Are these concepts ones you are familiar with – and if so, how?
- What accountability measures do you use in relation to your organisation's members or the community you work with?
- Do you have any experiences of where a 'traditional authority' has influenced an organisation?
- Do you find some of the accountability requirements a difficult balancing act? In what ways?
- What types of participatory governance structures do you have related to your work?
- What types of participatory governance structures have you experienced?
- What do you think of the ideals, principles and practices of participatory governance?
- What struck you as important in reading the case studies associated with this theme?
- Are there issues in the case studies or generally that you think we have missed about governance / regulation?
- What could be learnt from the case studies that may be applicable to your own work or practice? What differences in context/ practice would change the work?
- Do you have experiences with 'token participation' or other forms of quasi-participation?
- What is your experience of partnerships in terms of funding and regulation? Do you have any stories to share about partnerships?
- What are some of the challenges you face in relation to funding the work you are engaged in?
- What sorts of accountability requirements do you have in relation to your funding bodies?
- Can you relate to any of the participation types outlined by Jules Pretty? Do you have any stories to share about different types?
- What other types could you add to this typology of participation?
- What do you think are the relative merits of participatory and respresentative processes in terms of democratic people's structures?
- From your experience, what other things help to build participation?
  ……
  …..
  …..

What builds participation?

- Feelings of ownership;
- Feelings of control / ability to make a difference;
- Relationship / connection with others;
- Validation of importance of role; people's contribution /participation is valued and acknowledged by others;
- Belief in the importance of an issue – personal belief in and connection to the issue, this is particularly strong if there are personal experiences, costs/benefits;
- Belief in possibilities for change (important particularly in long term participation);
- Possibilities for building up personal skills and capacities;
- Incentives (personal, financial, indirect) – but these have usually only been shown to work in the short-term;
- Benefits for self, family and friends;
- Being personally asked to participate;
- 'Fun' factor – participation is mainly enjoyable (even if it is sometimes hard work).

Source: Burkett, 2002

Further Resources:

Books and printed articles:

Burkett, I. (2002) *Communities and participation in biodiversity recovery: working from the inside-out and the outside-in*, Keynote Presentation in Boyes, B. and Ducret, C. (eds) **Proceedings of the 2002 Southern Queensland Biodiversity Conference**, Southern Queensland Biodiversity Network, Gatton, pp. 120-135

Pretty, J. (1995) *Regenerating Agriculture: Policies and Practice for Sustainability and Self-Reliance*, Earthscan, London

Web Articles:

For more information about public choice theory and it's impact on NGOs the following article (though written for an Australian audience) outlines the basic tenets of the theory and gives examples of how it has been used in the Australian political environment:
Staples, J. (2006) NGOs **Out In the Cold: The Howard Government's Policy Towards NGOs**, Democratic Audit of Australia, Australian National University Discussion Paper 19/06.
Available at: http://arts.anu.edu.au/democraticaudit/papers/20060615_staples_ngos.pdf#search=%22staples%20out%20in%20the%20cold%22

Fung, A. and Wright, E.O. (2001) *Deepening Democracy: Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*, **Politics and Society**, vol. 29, no. 1, March, pp5-41 available at:
http://www.archonfung.net/papers/FungDeepDemocPS.pdf#search=%22fung%20deepening%20democracy%22

Fowler, A. (2000) Civil Society, **NGDOs and Social Development: Changing the Rules of the Game**, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Occasional Paper No. 1, January.
Available at: http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/(httpPublications)/F553495F06F98DCE80256B5E005C9DDC?OpenDocument

…it takes a lot of things to change the world: Anger and tenacity. Science and indignation. The quick initiative, the long reflection. The cold patience and the infinite perseverance. The understanding of the particular case and the understanding of the ensemble:

Only the lessons of reality can teach us to transform reality.

Bertrolt Brecht