A gateway for capacity development

# Capacity.ORG

ISSUE 29 | SEPTEMBER 2006

# Monitoring & evaluation


**FEATURE**
**Embracing innovative practice**
David Watson explains the importance of recent M&E approaches

**TOOLS AND METHODS**
**Participatory video**
Chris Lunch describes how communities are using video to capture and interpret stories of significant change

**PRACTICE**
**The managing for impact approach**
Jim Woodhill and Mine Pabari show how to put M&E at the centre of learning and management processes

**INTERVIEW**
**The African Evaluation Association**
Oumoul Khayri Ba Tall explains how evaluations can contribute to development

**PRACTICE**
**Outcome mapping in Ecuador**
Kaia Ambrose demonstrates how to engage a range of stakeholders in M&E

**GUEST COLUMN**
**Scientific capacity for development**
Mohamed H.A. Hassan explains sustainable development must be science based

CONTENTS

MAILBOX 2
Reactions from the field
*Kumi Naidoo, Achille Biffumbu, Odeh Al Jayyousi*

EDITORIAL 3
Capacity for M&E: Moving beyond results-based management
*Zenda Ofir and Evelijne Bruning*

FEATURE 4
Embracing innovative practice: Monitoring and evaluating capacity and capacity development
*David Watson*

TOOLS AND METHODS 7
Participatory video for M&E: Experiences with the MSC approach
*Chris Lunch*

PRACTICE 8
The managing for impact approach: M&E for learning and participation
*Jim Woodhill and Mine Pabari*

PRACTICE 9
Sharing local governance M&E tools: West Africa shows the way
*Sonia Le Bay and Christiane Loquai*

INTERVIEW 10
Fostering African M&E expertise: The African Evaluation Association
*Oumoul Khayri Ba Tall*

POLICY 11
Strengthening systems for results-based M&E: The BRAVA programme in Brazil
*Kathy Lindert, Yasuhiko Matsuda and Pedro Olinto*

PRACTICE 12
Enhancing learning in the M&E process: Outcome mapping in Ecuador
*Kaia Ambrose*

PRACTICE 14
Building a shared vision for change: Lessons from the South African LandCare programme
*Theo Nabben*

RESOURCES 15

GUEST COLUMN 16
Scientific capacity for development: The way forward
*Mohamed H.A. Hassan*

# Reactions from the field

**Capacity.org asked a number of experts to react to the statement: 'leadership corrupts'.**

### Tango in the dark

Like a dance, leadership is a delicate but simple relationship that depends on entangled, reciprocal movements shaped by expectation, timing, rhythm and, perhaps most important, transparency. By definition, the leader in a dance or in governance cannot hide his steps or keep secret her choreography and still lead effectively. When leaders fashion success with positive achievements, without acknowledging or reflecting on stumbles and failures, leadership corrupts. When leaders perpetuate the false notion that 'the answers' necessarily rest with themselves, leadership corrupts. Courageous leadership is transparent; strong leadership is itself guided by those being led; and wise leadership poses the right questions rather than propagating 'the answer'. It is courage, strength and wisdom that empower successful leadership to tango, even in the dark.

*Kumi Naidoo (kumi@civicus.org)*
*Secretary-General, CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation, Johannesburg, South Africa*

### What is ot said

The notion of leadership is always masked by what is not said. When I examine it through the experiences of development projects and organisations in the Congolese context, I realise that it is marred by many weaknesses. It seems to me legitimate to say that leadership does not come for free. Confounded often by power, at a certain level, it becomes *ipso facto* the subject of 'win–win' deals and promises; in brief, nothing comes for nothing.

Comparing the cleavages that characterise even the structures of certain development organisations and projects, I ask myself what in the end differentiates the problems of political leadership – in the true sense of the words – from those that affect development organisations and projects.

In principle, the merit of leadership must be the consequence of competences or, rather, the capacities that make up those that unfortunately use dark paths of material and moral corruption in order to claim themselves the defenders of the interests of their 'base'. This is just as true in 'modern' societies as it is in communities with oral traditions such as the Pygmies with whom I work.

Thus, ultimately, one should not truly speak about 'free' leadership, but rather their interests, whether immediate or remote.

*Achille Biffumbu (achille@cidopy.org)*
*Centre d'information et de documentation Pygmées (CIDOPY, www.cidopy.org), Goma, DR Congo*

### Leadership: Perspectives from ecology and Islam

The context for nurturing leaders can be viewed as the environment that provides enough nutrients, light, air and water to produce organic leadership that is immune to corruption. It is a simple lesson from ecology. The metaphor of a swamp (no oxygen flow) versus a river is what describes the state of corruption. It is the healthy ecosystem that supports life.

To address and transform this state of 'mental drought' (lack of water and nutrients), contamination (lack of oxygen) and the inability to produce energy (lack of sun and photosynthesis), we need to build the capacity of people who will be able to rehabilitate their enabling environment (habitat). This implies living and celebrating the duality or the 'compound state' of sight (*Bassar*) and insight.

This requires that we promote innovation (*Ijtihad*), feedback mechanisms (*Shura*), and renewal processes. The fundamental requirement for all this is to evolve and reform a new consciousness of the individual. The inner self of individuals (*Dameer*) must be nourished first, then all goodness will follow.

*Dr Odeh Al Jayyousi (odeh.al.jayyousi@iucn.org)*
*Regional Director, West/Central Asia and North Africa (WESCANA), IUCN, Amman, Jordan*

To read this letter in full, visit www.capacity.org

**Future issues**

Future issues of Capacity.org will focus on the following themes: decentralisation and service delivery (issue 30), incentives and motivation (issue 31) and fragile states (issue 32). If you would like to contribute to any of these issues, please contact us at editor@capacity.org

*Cover photo: Reinout van den Bergh*

# Capacity for M&E: moving beyond results-based management

Measuring the results and outcomes of our work is part and parcel of the work we do. One reason is that we have to report to our directors and our donors what it is we actually achieve. If a project or programme is based on results-based management (RBM), the methodology allows us to do a results-based evaluation. In other words, we use the results as the starting point for the evaluation, and then determine to what extent the programme has achieved them.

There are a lot of cynics who ask 'whose results are they anyway?' So we do not just blindly determine how well progress has been made towards the results, or whether they have been achieved, but also in what context they have been established, whether they are still valid after the programme has run for several years, or whether 'adaptive management' principles have been followed, and so on.

Many will argue that such a results-based approach to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a good thing. For one thing, because receiving countries have struggled with accountability – and many donors added to their difficulties by simply throwing money at the poor without demanding accountability for what they produce. All we had to prove was that we 'did things'. Focusing on results forces us to ensure that we achieve what we set out to do and, if not, we should be able to provide good reasons to explain why not. Evaluation helps us achieve that and build that kind of culture. Results do matter. This is why many of us welcome RBM – but only if the results are in fact 'country-owned' or 'programme-owned', and only if the question of why those results were achieved (or not) is explicitly addressed. Those who commission evaluations should always build these aspects into their terms of reference.

However, if you put your ear to the ground, there are practitioners out there who complain about the reductionist nature of such externally oriented M&E exercises. Some feel that this form of monitoring and evaluating our work does not really tell us whether any capacity development of our partners and clients in the field has actually taken place. That such an external process does not contribute to capacity building. Or they might say that it does not provide us with information that can be used to measure or assess changes in capacity over time.

This issue of *Capacity.org* offers an overview of the different methods and techniques that add new dimensions to results-based M&E. Some allow, for example, the observation of changes over a longer period of time, and offer ways to make such changes more tangible. Other innovative forms of M&E can themselves contribute to capacity building. In this issue, practitioners who have developed such methods describe and explain how they have used them. So that perhaps you too can apply them if you want. Let us know how it goes.

*Zenda Ofir*
*zenda@evalnet.co.za*
*Evaluation specialist, Evalnet, Johannesburg, South Africa*

*Evelijne Bruning*
*editor@capacity.org*
*Editor-in-chief, Capacity.org*

## ORGANISATIONS, NETWORKS AND INITIATIVES

This section offers a selection of organisations, networks and initiatives concerned with capacity development. A more extensive list can be found at www.capacity.org.

**MandE News**
This comprehensive news service focuses on M&E methods relevant to projects and programmes with social development objectives. Edited by Rick Davies, whose blog 'Rick on the Road' (http://mandenews.blogspot.com) offers reflections on the M&E of aid projects, programmes and policies, and the development of organisational capacity.
**www.mandenews.org**

**Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP)**
This international interagency forum is working to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian action, by sharing lessons, identifying common problems, and building consensus on approaches. ALNAP's 'products' include a generic evaluation checklist and a database of evaluation reports.
**www.alnap.org**

**Digital Resources for Evaluators**
This site offers a collection of resources for evaluators, including communities of evaluators; education and training in evaluation; governments, agencies, foundations and organisations; companies and consultants; evaluation reports and documents; instruments, data, surveys, statistics and software; and links.
**www.resources4evaluators.info**

**International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS)**
IDEAS is a global network of development practitioners and evaluators committed to capacity building, networking, applying innovative methodological approaches, and sharing knowledge, especially in developing countries and countries in transition.
**www.ideas-int.org**

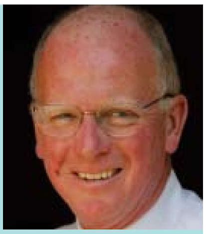
**International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE)**
The IOCE is a coalition of regional and national evaluation organisations around the world that is building evaluation leadership and capacity in developing countries, fostering the cross-fertilisation of evaluation theory and practice, and assisting the evaluation profession to take a global approach to the identification and solution of problems.
**www.ioce.net**

**OECD DAC Evaluation Resource Centre (DEReC)**
Managed by the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, DEReC is an online resource centre that offers access to evaluation reports and guidelines published by the Network's 30 bilateral and multilateral members. DEReC is a one-stop shop where Network members, NGOs, civil society and other organisations, researchers and the wider evaluation community can access key publications and reports.
**www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation**

**Performance Assessment Resource Centre (parc)**
Parc supports international efforts to improve performance assessment in development practice, in order to improve the quality, effectiveness and sustainability of poverty-focused interventions. The Centre provides training, a library and other resources to support governments, aid agencies, project managers and consultants in both the South and the North.
**www.parcinfo.org**

Monitoring and evaluating capacity and capacity development

# Embracing innovative practice



Many years of experience in the field had led David Watson to question the value of monitoring and evaluation. Recently, however, the emergence of a range of innovative M&E approaches has given him new hope. Here he explains why.

David Watson
david.watson71@
btinternet.com
Governance consultant
and ECDPM Associate

Regrettably, most monitoring and evaluation (M&E), especially of capacity development, has been expensive, inconsequential and futile. At least, that is what my practical experience in planning, designing, managing, monitoring and evaluating development policies and activities had led me to conclude. It rarely seemed to result in effective management responses in the form of changed practices. It was even more rarely accompanied by collective reflection and learning among stakeholders. M&E seemed to be 'something the donor needed to do', since donors understandably have to justify their development aid expenditures. Too often, the corollary was that national counterparts had limited or no involvement (or interest) in such monitoring and evaluation activities. Arguably, this pattern was inevitable given the resource imbalances and consequent unequal power relationships between donors and recipients in the development 'business'.

On a more positive note, however, my recent odyssey though the literature, and some remarkable descriptions of innovative, capacity-enhancing M&E practice, has left me feeling much more encouraged. The problems I observed have been widely recognised, and at least some donor agencies and practitioners are addressing them. The articles in this issue of *Capacity.org* present insights into some of these innovative practices, and hopefully will encourage readers to explore further those approaches to monitoring that themselves stimulate capacity development.

*Formal approaches have an important role to play.*

Reinout van den Bergh

## Defining capacity

One of the major challenges in any discussion of capacity-related monitoring is that 'capacity' is a poorly understood concept. It is not yet a well defined area of development practice among the members of the various professions involved in development agencies – donors, multilateral development banks and NGOs. Nor is there a generally accepted definition of 'capacity' in the literature.

A recent study by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) has defined capacity as 'that emergent combination of attributes, assets, capabilities and relationships that enables a human system to perform, survive and self-renew' (see box). Based on 18 case studies of organisations and networks around the world, the study concludes that there are *multiple* dimensions of 'capacity'. The clear implication is that we need to recognise and acknowledge all of these dimensions in capacity building efforts, and to cater for them in approaches to the M&E of capacity.

## Dimensions of capacity

Until now, the enhancement of an organisation's capacity to *perform* (i.e. to deliver development results) has been seen as the main – often the only – purpose of capacity building efforts. Results-based management (RBM) approaches, including the 'log frame', are therefore often still used to assess the need for, and to design in detail, capacity building projects. These approaches posit a 'linear' connection between the various aspects of capacity building initiatives: from the provision of inputs (technical assistance and equipment, for example) to the delivery of outputs (such as more able, competent individuals or service units), which, based on certain assumptions, lead to the achievement of purposes (improved service delivery) and ultimately goals (improved health in a population).

In the ECDPM study, however, scrutiny of the case studies and the literature revealed other capacities that are also clearly crucial in making organisations, networks or sectors successful and sustainable. For example, a successful organisation must have the capability to *act,* to *organise itself,* and to *influence* others. Such an organisation relates productively to *other players* in the context in which it functions, and has some *legitimacy* in the eyes of those other players. The organisation's capability to *adapt and self-renew* is essential, and is bound up in the ability to master change within itself or among other players, and to adopt new ideas. The case studies also revealed another capability of the successful organisations – their ability to achieve a degree of *coherence,* including the definition and maintenance of *core values* governing how the organisation operates.

## Systems thinking

These abilities, qualities and capacities of successful organisations, networks or systems resonate closely with a body of management literature which, I must confess, I was not familiar with until recently: systems thinking, and complexity theory in particular. These are essentially perspectives rather than all-embracing theories, and are concerned with trying to understand the behaviour of organisations (and individuals) in complex, interactive, 'messy' multi-organisational settings, such as the health sector of a country. According to these perspectives, capacity development is a process that is *not* linear (in contrast with the RBM approaches), but instead tends to be associated with multiple causes, solutions and effects, some of them unintended or essentially unpredictable. The attribution of particular outcomes to particular capacity-enhancing measures thus becomes difficult, if not impossible.

In many developing countries, the results of public sector capacity building measures have been unsatisfactory, despite the intensive design efforts and the large volumes of resources devoted to such initiatives over several decades. There are clearly difficult institutional and political contextual factors at work in public sector environments. But these challenges do not adequately explain the limited success.

Recent studies have also indicated significant capacity constraints within development agencies in managing, motivating and resourcing their M&E function, particularly for capacity building. Some observers have begun to explain the poor record with reference to the complex nature of 'capacity', and the apparent importance – revealed in the ECDPM case studies and much of the systems thinking literature – of the interactions and interdependency among individuals, work groups and organisations, and of 'feedback'. Margaret Wheatley's contributions are well worth reading in this regard. She believes that individual behaviour change can never be induced by measurement, but will only happen as a result of personal choices. Desirable behaviour, including committed, quality work, teamwork and learning, are more likely to emerge when people feel a shared sense of what they hope to achieve together.

## Capacity, change and performance

It is important to acknowledge, however, that formal RBM approaches to programme design and performance monitoring do have an important role to play, under well defined conditions (which, unfortunately, are rare in the public sector). These include cases where an organisation 'signs up' voluntarily to accept capacity development support; where stakeholders themselves are willing and able to assess the capacities they need, and can indeed define them unambiguously (this is often easier said than done in the public sector); where there are incentives to improve performance; and where leadership and 'ownership' of the organisation are firm and clear.

A number of ECDPM case studies, such as those of the Rwanda Revenue Authority and the Philippines–Canada Local Government Support Programme, offer positive examples of where these factors prevailed, and have contributed to successful capacity development outcomes using a RBM framework.

Several other ECDPM case studies – of the COEP network (Brazil), the ENACT programme (Jamaica) and the regional organisation IUCN in Asia – provide encouraging insights with regard to monitoring. They illustrate how positive impacts on capacity were achieved when the organisations were encouraged to learn lessons from their own experiences, and evolved approaches to developing their own capacity accordingly, consistent with the 'systems thinking' school. Those cases also note how the donors were supportive of the organisations in ways that responded to the uncertainties they faced. The donors in these cases demonstrated flexibility. In one case, the donor abandoned a RBM framework in favour of a more process-oriented approach to monitoring progress and capacity development. In another, the donor hired an NGO not as a source of expert inputs, but simply for its ability to help a network of community development organisations learn from their experiences.

## Innovative approaches

It is also heartening to read about some of the innovative approaches to monitoring of capacity development that have been applied over the past few years, many of them by large international NGOs. These include ActionAid's Accountability, Learning and Planning System (ALPS), Rick Davies' 'most significant change' technique, and IDRC's Outcome Mapping.

These approaches have characteristics that are aligned with systems thinking. They involve structured interactions among stakeholders. They are not

### Capacity, change and performance

Study on Capacity, Change and Performance

What does capacity look like? How does capacity develop? What are the driving forces behind successful capacity development? Does better capacity necessarily lead to better performance? What can outsiders do to support capacity development?

These are the kinds of questions that this major study, led by ECDPM under the aegis of the OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet), is trying to answer. The study aims to improve understanding of the relationships among capacity, change and performance, and to develop practical guidance for policy makers and practitioners. The study has examined 18 cases of organisations and networks around the world in order to understand how capacity has developed, from the perspective of those involved in the change process.

As part of the study, ECDPM has compiled an inventory of approaches to M&E of capacity and capacity development; see www.ecdpm.org/mapping_capacity.

The case study reports, theme papers and other documents can be found at www.ecdpm.org/capacitystudy. The final report on the study will be published in late 2006.

### Links

ActionAid www.actionaid.org

Appreciative Inquiry http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/intro

Care International www.care.org/index.asp

Christian Aid www.christian-aid.org.uk

Clear Horizon www.clearhorizon.com.au

European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) www.ecdpm.org

Pelican Initiative www.dgroups.org/groups/pelican/

exclusively concerned with quantitative measurement but with creating consensus on what constitute qualitative improvements that will contribute to the broad goals of the systems involved. They are based on day-to-day experiences and emerging themes, rather than on predetermined indicators of progress. They use 'work stories' as a means of 'making sense' out of what is happening, and what effects are emerging. They tend to demystify 'M&E' and allow even the most vulnerable stakeholders or beneficiaries to have a voice in periodic reflection, and thereby actually nurture capacities for critical analysis, debate and decision taking. They also appear to be able to contribute enormously to *learning*, and thus contribute directly to organisational (and individual) capacity development. These approaches have also been proved to be practical. The Pelican online discussion forum has recently featured syntheses of debates on recent advances in thinking on evaluation, learning and organisational capacity development, with contributions from Christian Aid and Care International. ECDPM has recently compiled an inventory of approaches to M&E of capacity and capacity development.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion, however, that in providing capacity-enhancing support, donors generally face a dilemma. On the one hand, they need to be able to demonstrate results of their aid programmes to their political masters, and to their national audit agency 'watchdogs'. Therefore they tend to have to use RBM programme design and management tools. On the other hand, however, the evidence from a number of recent studies and evaluations indicates that these RBM approaches (with some exceptions) are not supportive of the broader definitions of capacity, or of the interactions and learning that will contribute to capacity development in the longer term.

*The capacity development process is not linear, but tends to be associated with multiple causes, solutions and effects.*

Roel Burgler

## Accountability

Hence, *accountability* emerges as an important driver in both systems thinking and RBM approaches. It is possible to draw a distinction between 'exogenous' and 'endogenous' accountability. Exogenous accountability describes what 'recipient' governments and organisations have to donor governments or lending agencies, which are in turn driven by their own audit and political accountabilities. Endogenous accountability refers to a system or organisation that is accountable to its own clients, local politicians, members, or users of its services.

The evidence appears to indicate that assistance modalities and the innovative informal monitoring mechanisms which are based on systems thinking tend to be more supportive of endogenous accountability mechanisms. In turn, these mechanisms are more effective in encouraging better performance and greater 'ownership' than the formal, control-oriented RBM monitoring mechanisms that are applied by donors to serve their own 'exogenous' accountability, ultimately to the audit bodies in developed countries.

## Building capacities to deliver

Thus there are promising indications that approaches to monitoring that encourage stakeholder participation, interaction, self-assessment, critical reflection and, ultimately, collective learning, tend to build capacities to deliver. Such approaches also enable organisations to reorganise themselves, to innovate, to adapt, and to relate better to other players. They encourage organisations to attain greater coherence and bring values to bear in the manner in which they 'do business'. In other words, these approaches help to build the more 'rounded' dimensions of capacity that were displayed by the successful organisations featured in the ECDPM case studies.

There is also evidence that while donors face a critical accountability dilemma in their capacity building programmes, they are progressively becoming more amenable to supporting endogenous accountability and monitoring mechanisms through the innovative approaches to M&E presented in this issue of *Capacity.org*. <

David Watson is the author of several cases conducted for the ECDPM study, and of the theme paper, *M&E of Capacity and Capacity Development*. In that paper he reviews the literature, and examines innovative approaches to monitoring and evaluating public sector and NGO capacity and capacity development from both RBM and systems thinking perspectives.

A longer version of this article, with notes and references, can be found at www.capacity.org.

### Further reading

T.A. Abma (2003) Learning by telling: Storytelling workshops as an organizational learning intervention, *Management Learning*, 34(2): 221.

ActionAid International (2006) *Alps: Accountability, Learning and Planning System*

C. Bennet et al. (2004) *The PISA Action Guide: Community-Driven Tools for Data Collection and Decision Making*, PACT.

J. Chapman (2002) *Systems Failure: Why Governments Must Learn to Think Differently*. Demos.

A. Hauge (2002) Accountability: to what end? *UNDP Development Policy Journal*, 2: 73.

J. Horstman (2004), in L. Groves and R. Hinton, eds, *Inclusive Aid: Changing Power and Relationships in International Development*, Earthscan, p.51.

P. Morgan (2006) *The Concept of Capacity* (draft), ECDPM.

UNDP (2006) *Capacity Assessment Practice Note.*

UNDP Evaluation Office (2002) *Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results.*

D. Watson (2006) *Monitoring and Evaluation of Capacity and Capacity Development*, ECDPM Discussion Paper 58B. www.ecdpm.org/dp58b

M. Wheatley and M. Kellner-Rogers (1999) 'What do we measure and why?' *J. Strategic Resource Management.*

Experiences with the MSC approach

# Participatory video for monitoring and evaluation

**Participatory video lends itself well to project monitoring and evaluation. Chris Lunch, director of Insight, describes how communities are using video to capture and interpret stories of significant change.**

Chris Lunch
clunch@insightshare.org
Insight, Oxford, UK

Participatory video is an iterative process whereby communities use video to document innovations and ideas, or to focus on issues that affect their lives. Community members attend workshops where, using a variety of participatory techniques, they learn how to analyse and review their situation, and how to plan, direct and film their own short video messages. The process of making a film together stimulates the community members to 'visualise' what they are doing and to consider how they could do things better. The participants immediately review and discuss material that they and others have filmed before selecting key moments to share with the wider community at regular village screenings.

This local viewing of film material as a project progresses lies at the heart of the process. It achieves several positive outcomes at the same time – it opens up communication channels, promotes dialogue, and sets in motion a dynamic exchange of ideas. It can also contribute to building consensus within the community. It is therefore not surprising that participatory video lends itself so well to monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Indeed, it could be argued that the methodology, which moves progressively from action to analysis, means that M&E is integral to the process.

Participatory video can be used for M&E in several ways. It can be used to document the process itself, capturing the experiences of individuals and groups as they use the tools. When used for M&E as the work progresses, participatory video can help to strengthen local control over the direction of a project. Finally, on completion of a project, it can be used to record the participants' assessments of what they have achieved, and their perceptions of the project in general.

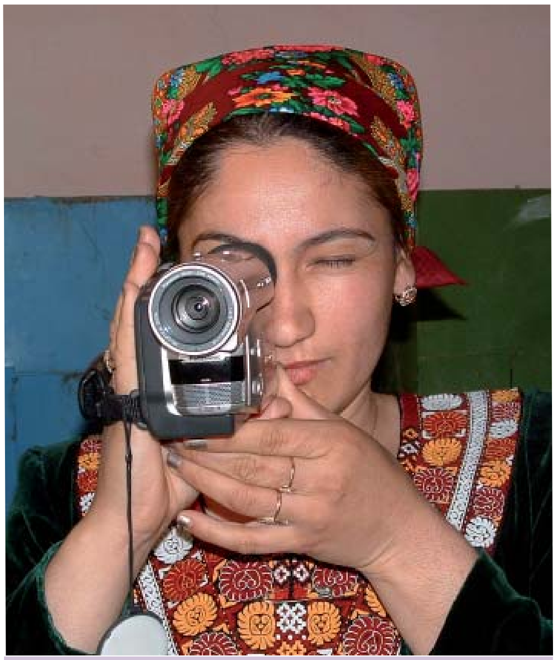
## A tool for M&E

Insight's initial experiences with participatory video highlighted two challenges. How could we formalise its obvious potential as an M&E tool and develop a more systematic approach? How could we add a quantifiable element? On both these questions, Rick Davies' 'most significant change' (MSC) technique offered a promising way forward.

Unlike conventional monitoring, MSC is primarily a qualitative approach that involves the collection and participatory interpretation of stories of significant change. We quickly saw how video could help this innovative M&E technique go even further in its ability to convey 'a rich picture'. Once captured on video, the stories are accessible to all audiences, including children and the illiterate. Ultimately, video can help to link the MSC stories more closely to the localities and the people they come from, as well as strengthen local control over their diffusion. It also avoids situations where project staff end up speaking on behalf of communities, using language and media that in many cases are incomprehensible to the people themselves.

With minimal training anyone can use a video camera, allowing people to tell their own MSC stories in a familiar context. The process of filming is fun, and the result can be played back and reviewed immediately. Above all, participatory video empowers communities to take control of projects from conception through all stages of implementation, and in the process promotes cooperation, self-confidence and the capacity for community action. <

Insight



**Solar power = community power**

In this Insight project in Turkmenistan, community members are using video to record important meetings. Women, who traditionally do not attend such meetings, can now watch the discussions in their own homes and provide feedback, also via video. The films are then screened in the village in the evening, ensuring that the women's opinions are heard. Participatory video is also used for community evaluations, in which the villagers film and interview each other in their own homes, with no project staff present. Villagers, especially the women, are much more likely to speak their minds in this way.

Over the years Insight has built up a video archive of opinions and feedback on the changes that have taken place as a result of the project. In many ways it is a live record of the participatory process in action.
www.insightshare.org/case_study_turkmenistan.html

**Links**

Insight is a UK/France based organisation pioneering the use of participatory video as a tool for empowering individuals and communities. www.insightshare.org

For examples of the videos produced by communities around the world, visit www.insightshare.org/video.html

A longer version of this article can be found at www.capacity.org

**Further reading**

Nick and Chris Lunch (2006) *Insights into Participatory Video: A Handbook for the Field*. Insight.

C. Lunch (2006) Participatory video as a documentation tool, *LEISA Magazine*, 22(1): 31.

C. Lunch, *Combining Participatory Video with the 'Most Significant Change' Approach*. Case study of an evaluation at a workshop hosted by the Institute of Development Studies, UK, November 2005.

R. Davies and J. Dart (2005) *The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique: A Guide to Its Use*, MandE.

C. Lunch (2004) *Participatory Video: Rural People Document their Knowledge and Innovations*, IK Notes 71, World Bank.

M&E for learning and participation

# The managing for impact approach


**Jim Woodhill**
jim.woodhill@wur.nl
Wageningen International Programme for Capacity Development and Institutional Change, Wageningen, the Netherlands

**Mine Pabari**
mpabari@swiftkenya.com
Regional consultant, Strengthening Managing for Impact Programme (SMIP), Kenya

**There are increasing calls for new M&E approaches that encourage learning and participation. The authors explain how the managing for impact approach places M&E at the centre of learning and management processes.**

Unfortunately, top-down approaches to monitoring and evaluation (M&E), focusing on the needs of donors and based on quantitative indicators, remain deeply entrenched in development circles. To shift this mindset, and to institutionalise learning-oriented practices, major investments in capacity development are needed. M&E that focuses on learning and participation requires management support, the engagement of all involved in implementation and, most important, a more flexible attitude among donors.

One initiative to develop a new approach to M&E is the Strengthening Managing for Impact Programme (SMIP). This is a partnership between the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Wageningen International's Programme for Capacity Development and Institutional Change, and training institutions in East and Southern Africa. The partners are working with regional M&E services to support 'new paradigm' approaches to M&E, and to develop expertise that can be drawn upon by other organisations and projects.

## Managing for impact

At the heart of the 'managing for impact' approach are *people*. This is in contrast with conventional approaches, where M&E often involves systematically following a series of steps for accountability purposes. The idea is that all those involved in a development initiative – communities, implementers, managers and donors – must be part of a learning alliance that seeks to achieve the greatest possible positive impact. Common sense perhaps, but the reality is that much development work has involved the unquestioning implementation of activities with little reflection on what those activities add up to in terms of outcomes and impact.

As an example of how managing for impact works in practice, the programme is working with the Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP) in Swaziland. The project had been struggling to develop the required log frame in a way that made sense to all participants. By facilitating dialogue and critical reflection, we were able to assist those involved to review the intended improvements, cause–effect relationships and underlying assumptions. Consequently, they revised the project's objectives in a way that reflected their own views of what the project intended to achieve, and how. This led to a much deeper understanding of how to involve everyone in tracking progress.

## Four tasks

The approach acknowledges that managing a development intervention involves four interlinked tasks:

- *Guiding the strategy* – assessing whether an initiative is heading towards its goals (impacts) and, if not, quickly adjusting the strategy or even the objectives.
- *Ensuring effective operations* – managing financial, physical and human resources to ensure that the outputs are achieved.
- *Creating a learning environment* – establishing relationships with all involved in order to build trust, stimulate innovation, and foster commitment.
- *Establishing information gathering and management mechanisms* – ensuring that systems are in place to provide the information needed, and encourage learning.

The success of this approach depends on the 'people processes' that ensure that the necessary information is gathered, sound decisions are taken, and individuals give their best. M&E can be seen as the key information gathering, analysis and sharing function that informs each of these tasks. However, information is only useful if it is shared and discussed, enabling reflection and learning, rather than used for control and compliance. Learning events that can contribute to the process include partner meetings, informal discussions, participatory planning workshops and impact assessments, as well as performance appraisals and rewards for good performance.

To ensure that learning drives the process, it must be recognised that change is the result of coordination, integration and the commitment of all actors. Consequently, the challenge of managing for impact goes beyond ensuring the delivery of outputs – it also includes influencing relationships and the actions of others. Efforts must also be made to distinguish between problems caused by poor implementation and those arising from incorrect assumptions about the intervention strategy.

'Managing for impact' views M&E from an holistic perspective, and places it at the centre of the learning and management processes that are necessary for any group or organisation to adapt to change and succeed in their ambitions. <

*Information is only useful if it is shared and discussed, enabling reflection and learning.*

Reinout van den Bergh

**Links**

Wageningen International resource portals:
Multi-stakeholder processes: http://portals.wi.wur.nl/msp
Participatory planning monitoring and evaluation: http://portals.wi.wur.nl/ppme

WI Programme for Capacity Development and Institutional Change
www.wi.wur.nl/UK/services

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
www.ifad.org

**Further reading**

IFAD (2002) *Managing for Impact in Rural Development: A Guide for Project M&E.* www.ifad.org/evaluation

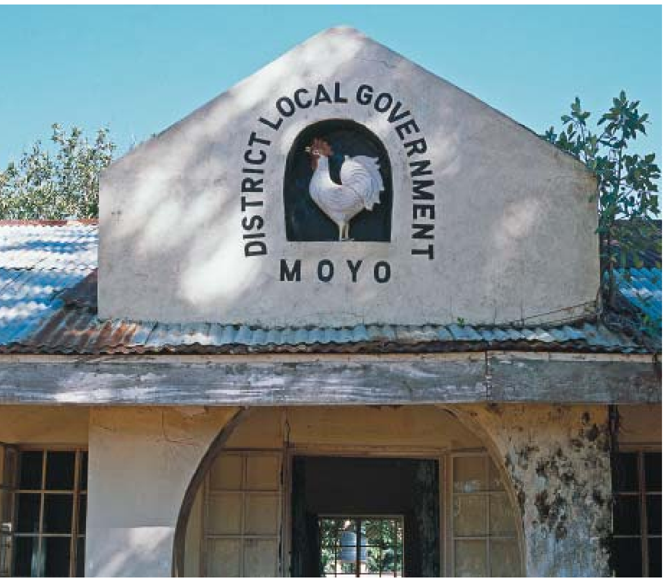
R. Margoluis and N. Salafsky (1998) *Measures of Success: Designing, Managing and Monitoring Conservation and Development Projects*, Island Press.

J. Woodhill (2006) M&E as learning: Rethinking the dominant paradigm, in J. de Graaff et al. (eds) *Monitoring and Evaluation of Soil Conservation and Watershed Development Projects*, Science Publishers.

West Africa shows the way

# Sharing local governance M&E tools

The members of REDL, a network of organisations working in the field of local governance in West Africa, are documenting and sharing M&E experiences and lessons learned. Now no one has to reinvent the wheel.




Reinout van den Bergh

*Warning: there could be a proliferation of donor-driven efforts to develop M&E tools for assessing local governance*

Some time ago, a number of development organisations in Mali discovered that they had been testing their own approaches and tools for building the monitoring and evaluation capacities of local governments and other actors. Enquiries in neighbouring countries pointed to several interesting experiences in the field. But none of these efforts had been documented, analysed or published, and so had tended to pass largely unnoticed in regional and international debates. This also meant that lessons learned in one area were not available to others facing similar challenges, so that they were having to reinvent the wheel.

The Réseau de réflexion et d'echanges sur le développement local (REDL) is a Mali-based network of 12 development organisations and programmes working in the field of decentralisation and local governance. Together with the Malian Ministry of Local Government and Territorial Administration (MATCL), SNV and ECDPM, the network decided to initiate a process to identify and document experiences with M&E tools and approaches, and to disseminate good practices and lessons learned. We also decided to carry out the work ourselves, rather than hiring outside experts to do it for us.

## Case studies

In early 2006 the members prepared 11 case studies describing a wide range of experiences, including self-evaluation tools for local governments, multi-stakeholder approaches to establishing baselines, geographical information systems for local governments and service providers, as well as the use of participatory M&E for assessing the impacts of external assistance. All of these case studies will be published online and in print. The resulting inventory illustrated that most of the tools and approaches identified had multiple aims and purposes. Besides building the M&E capacity of actors in local governance, they also aimed to promote dialogue, collaboration and trust among these actors or to increase the accountability of local governments.

In May 2006, the network organised a seminar in the capital Bamako to discuss the outcomes. The seminar attracted over 100 participants from regional and local governments, civil society, the private sector, national institutions and development organisations in six West African countries, most of whom had been involved in developing and testing the tools and approaches.

## Assessing local governance

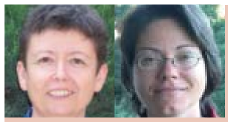
During the meeting local government officials commented that they need to show results and to prove that the resources they receive from central government and donors are being used to strengthen democratic governance and promote local development. The participating mayors and chief executives requested that they too have access to 'user friendly' tools and approaches adapted to the needs and capacities of municipalities in rural areas. But participants from all levels of government and development organisations warned of the proliferation of donor-driven efforts to develop M&E tools for assessing local governance, and called on their central governments to take on a coordinating role.

The positive results of these joint efforts are already apparent. A tool initially developed for self-evaluation of local governments in Mali, for example, has been adapted to the needs of municipalities in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. All users have been eager to learn from the experiences in neighbouring countries, and the adaptations and innovations they have introduced.

## Multi-stakeholder processes

Other cases presented at the seminar illustrated that investing in multi-stakeholder processes for joint monitoring of public service delivery does more than strengthen the capacities of local actors to generate, analyse and use statistical data that they need to provide or demand better services. Such investments can also help to increase the willingness of local actors to work together, thus creating the conditions necessary for the further transfer of competencies and resources for basic service provision to the local level.

In the coming months, the network members will address other questions raised at the seminar, such as how to keep the process going and consolidate the case study teams into a community of practice. They will also discuss how to ensure that the inventory, its conclusions and recommendations have a real impact on policy making and M&E practice in West Africa. <



Sonia Le Bay
slebay@snvworld.org
SNV Mali/Réseau de reflexion et d'echanges sur le developpement local (REDL), Bamako, Mali

Christiane Loquai
cl@ecdpm.org
European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), Maastricht, the Netherlands

**Links**

Réseau de reflexion et d'echanges sur le developpement local (REDL) members include the Programme d'appui aux collectivités territoriales (PACT-GTZ/DED), Participatory Governance Programme (PGP), SNV Mali, Helvetas, Intercooperation, AFVP, Care International, AEN, SUCO, GRDR and IUED. www.snvmali.org/actus/redlinfo.pdf

SNV Mali, 'Actualités' section: the inventory, case studies (forthcoming) and other documents. www.snvmali.org/actus/actualite.html

European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM): M&E support to decentralisation and local governance www.ecdpm.org

Pelican Initiative online discussion platform. www.dgroups.org/groups/pelican

**Further reading**

S. Diarra et al. (2004) *Decentralisation in Mali: Putting policy into practice*, KIT Bulletin 362.www.snvmali.org/publications/snvanglais362.pdf

The African Evaluation Association

# Fostering African M&E expertise

Oumoul Khayri Ba Tall Chair of the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA), and Secretary of the Association mauritanienne de suivi-évaluation (AMSE), Nouakchott, Mauritania

Oumoul Ba Tal is chair of the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA). She believes that evaluations can contribute to development, provided they go beyond the level of individual projects and programmes.

Interview by Martine van der Horn

### Can evaluations contribute to sustainable development?

Evaluations can only play an effective role in the development of a nation if they are carefully designed to serve the goals of development. For me, that means that evaluations must be nationally owned, and they must address issues and questions that are in line with local development needs and priorities. Also, they should be applied at the policy level, rather than at the level of individual programmes or projects at which most evaluations are currently conducted. Last, but not least, evaluations should contribute to decision-making processes, and serve as instruments for holding policy makers accountable for their choices.

### What is the role of national associations in strengthening evaluation capacity?

As secretary of AMSE, the Mauritanian evaluation association, I believe that national associations can play an important role in promoting M&E at different levels of society, and in building capacity. They can explain the benefits to all stakeholders, as long as they simplify the language and use communication strategies that will be effective in reaching decision makers, programme managers and the users of evaluations, both actual and potential.

Due to their diverse constituencies – which include practitioners and non-practitioners with different academic and professional backgrounds and levels of practical experience, and various interest groups – the national associations can also serve as valuable forums for discussion. They can also contribute to the development of the evaluation function and the professionalism of evaluators in their countries, in line with international trends in the field. Since we are calling for national ownership and locally driven evaluations, we have to enhance our own capacities and contribute to the development of evaluation worldwide.

### What added value does an Africa-wide association offer?

The association provides exposure for African experts, who are more likely to gain international evaluation experience and thus improve their skills. AfrEA is also working to strengthen the 'voice' of African practitioners, so that they can demonstrate to their governments and stakeholders that evaluation can be an effective strategy for leveraging individual and national development efforts. Moreover, AfrEA can help to launch programmes, involving several countries, to establish standards for evaluation across Africa. If every country had to do this on its own it would be a tremendous waste of resources.

AfrEA is facilitating the building of a body of 'African expertise' that in turn will attract attention and the resources needed for training, for the development of new tools and methods, and to enable members to attend international meetings. It is also contributing to efforts to focus evaluation research and practice on the needs of indigenous communities.

### What further efforts are needed to build the evaluation capacity in Africa?

The association is now working to strengthen its own organisational structure, through what we call the 'formalisation' of AfrEA. Lots of proposals are being considered. As an informal organisation we have been effective in delivering value in terms of capacity building activities and projects. But for the future, having formal legal status would bring other benefits, including the ability to enter into contracts. It would also allow a longer-term perspective, encouraging institutional learning and contributing to the sustainability of the organisation.

Most of all, AfrEA needs 'champions' who are dedicated, understand the challenges, and can provide effective leadership and guidance for others. We must practise what we preach – we must behave as we teach others to do, in terms of the management of the association and its activities. <

#### Links

International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET) www.ipdet.org

Nigerien Monitoring and Evaluation Network (Réseau nigérien de suivi et évaluation, RéNSE) www.pnud.ne/rense

Evaluation dans l'espace francophonie www.evaluation.francophonie.org

International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation www.ioce.net

South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA) www.samea.org.za

UN Evaluation Forum www.uneval.org

UNDP Southern Africa Capacity Initiative (SACI) www.undp-saci.co.za

#### Further reading

A.O. Hauge and K. Mackay (2004) *Monitoring and Evaluation for Results: Lessons from Uganda.* Capacity Development Brief 3, World Bank. www.worldbank.org/capacity

L. Morra-Imas and R.C. Rist (2006) *The Capacity to Evaluate: Why Countries Need It.* Capacity Development Brief 17, World Bank. www.worldbank.org/capacity

#### The African Evaluation Association (AfrEA)


**AfrEA** is an umbrella organisation for 18 national M&E associations across Africa, and supports individuals in countries where national bodies do not exist. As part of its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacity, the association serves as a discussion forum for evaluators and other development stakeholders.

Since 1999 AfrEA has organised three international conferences. The fourth AfrEA conference will be held in Niamey, Niger, 15–21 January 2007, hosted by the Réseau nigérien de suivi et évaluation (RéNSE), Niger's M&E network. For further information, visit www.afrea.org

The BRAVA programme in Brazil

# Strengthening systems for results-based M&E

The World Bank's BRAVA programme is assisting the government of Brazil in the development of systems for results-based M&E. Strengthening these systems from both the top down and the bottom up can have considerable demonstration effects.

Ron Gilling Lineair

*Efforts to promote M&E should work with the country's own systems and structures, rather than trying to create new ones*

In 2005, the World Bank launched *Brasil Avaliaçao* (BRAVA), a modest technical assistance initiative to help the government of Brazil strengthen country systems for monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The programme also hopes to promote a culture of M&E in order to provide feedback on the performance of key programmes, to promote accountability, and to inform government spending decisions.

The BRAVA has adopted an innovative approach to promote M&E from the top down and bottom up, by supporting activities at both the institutional and programme levels.

At the *institutional* level, the BRAVA programme is supporting the institutionalisation of M&E across government, as well as the development of sustainable country systems for results-based M&E. This involves clarifying responsibilities for coordination and implementation, establishing incentives for line ministries to carry out robust M&E, and developing solid quality standards that will encourage the utilisation and dissemination of M&E information.

Many Brazilian agencies are involved in M&E and have some mandate for different aspects of M&E oversight. So far, the BRAVA has focused on identifying and strengthening the role of key 'champions' of M&E, through activities such as providing technical support to the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Monitoring and Evaluation, which coordinates the government's policy and systems for M&E of federal programmes, and conducting institutional assessments of M&E systems in line ministries.

At the *programme* level, the BRAVA's technical support for M&E activities emphasises the full results chain. For 'monitoring', the results chain includes the monitoring of inputs (financial indicators), processes (oversight and controls), and outputs and intermediate results (key success indicators). For 'evaluation', the results chain includes both implementation and impact. Activities to date have focused on the design of overall M&E systems, log frames and impact evaluations for several key strategic programmes.

## Emerging lessons

Although the BRAVA programme is still evolving, some important lessons have already emerged.

Above all, efforts to promote M&E should work with the country's *own* systems and institutional structures, rather than trying to create new ones. Support to emerging champions for M&E has resulted in greater ownership, the diffusion of impact throughout the various ministries and programmes, and increased capacities. M&E support should be demand-driven, and should involve senior officials. Ultimately, the goal of 'BRAVA-type' programmes should be to transfer the functions and capacities to key M&E champions in the government.

As noted above, strengthening M&E systems from both the top down and the bottom up can produce considerable synergies and demonstration effects. Within the Ministry of Social Development, for example, the BRAVA is supporting programme-specific evaluations, as well as institutional M&E assessments, that have had important cross-fertilisation effects both for our work within the Ministry and for our assistance to other line ministries and central agencies.

## The right mix of tools

It is important to take a broad view of M&E, and to adapt common-sense tools tailored to the situation of each institution or programme. With some programmes, a full-fledged impact evaluation is needed to demonstrate impacts. With others, experimental evaluations are not feasible (and perhaps not cost-effective), in which case priority is given to implementation evaluations or log frame exercises to identify tractable indicators for monitoring purposes. In many cases, a range of instruments can be used in a mutually reinforcing way. Thorough discussions with the institutions and programme managers concerned can help diagnose objectives and the feasibility of tailoring the right mix of M&E tools to each situation.

A steering committee, with representatives of key central agencies and line ministries, can enhance the prioritisation of BRAVA-type activities at both programme and institutional levels. Steering committee meetings can also serve to promote dialogue about M&E initiatives and champions across the various agencies. As such, they often help to create an M&E policy community that can ensure the cross-fertilisation of experiences.

A number of other countries in Latin America and beyond are now looking to replicate and adapt BRAVA-type M&E support initiatives, and to build on the valuable lessons learned in Brazil. <

Kathy Lindert
klindert@worldbank.org
Yasuhiko Matsuda
ymatsuda@worldbank.org
Pedro Olinto
polinto@worldbank.org
World Bank,
Washington, DC, USA

**Links**

World Bank IEG, Evaluation Capacity Development (ECD) www.worldbank.org/ieg/ecd

World Bank: Impact Evaluation www.worldbank.org/impactevaluation

World Bank Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) www.worldbank.org/oed

World Bank Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) www.worldbank.org/participationM&E

World Bank Poverty Monitoring www.worldbank.org/povertymonitoring

**Further reading**

K. Mackay (2006) *Institutionalization of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems to Improve Public Sector Management,* ECD Working Paper 15, World Bank.

E. May et al., eds (2006) *Towards the Institutionalization of Monitoring and Evaluation in Latin America and the Caribbean.* IBRD/World Bank.

World Bank (2004) *Monitoring and Evaluation: Some Tools, Methods and Approaches,* 2nd edn, World Bank IEG.

Outcome mapping in Ecuador

# Enhancing learning in the M&E process

Kaia Ambrose
kaia_ambrose@yahoo.ca
International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Ceja Andina Project, Corporación EcoPar, Quito, Ecuador

**The Ceja Andina project has shown that with Outcome Mapping it is possible to engage a wide range of stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation that can satisfy the need for accountability as well as learning about the process of change.**

The Ceja Andina project is working to ensure the sustainability of agriculture and forest biodiversity in the Andes of northern Ecuador. Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and implemented by Corporación EcoPar, an Ecuadorian research NGO, the project works with a diverse range of stakeholders, from farmer research groups to local municipalities. Together, they aim to develop knowledge, capacities and social learning to support community-based natural resource management.

Before commencing, the Ceja Andina project team members and stakeholders came together to discuss the monitoring and evaluation objectives. All participants in the project were conscious of the need to engage in some form of accountability exercise, but also wanted to place high priority on collective and individual learning. We began by examining the purpose of doing M&E through open and facilitated discussions involving the project team and its 'boundary partners' – individuals, groups and/or organisations with whom the project works in order to influence and support changes in behaviour.

## The purpose of M&E

Was M&E necessary to ensure accountability? If so, to whom? Or was it intended to encourage learning processes, at the group, organisational and/or individual levels? It was agreed that the objective of M&E was not to produce voluminous reports recording all the things the project had done to 'achieve impact', but rather to identify and analyse the changes taking place in groups and individuals involved in the project, what worked and what didn't, and how the project could continually improve.

The project defined success not just as the achievement of material goals such as an increase in the number of trees planted, watershed management plans developed, improved water quality, or reduced soil erosion. Even more important were the complex and progressive changes in the behaviour of the actors involved, on whom such material changes depend. Collective learning came through an analysis of how those changes were shaped, and what changes each individual or group (including the project team) has the power to influence. What the project wanted to examine was in fact the changes – especially behavioural changes – that were taking place, and not simply to make a claim to them. As a group, we required a methodology and a set of tools that would allow us to tell a story demonstrating the richness of the changes going on behind the scenes, and not just those at centre stage. Outcome Mapping (OM) proved to be such a methodology.

Best used as a facilitated participatory and inclusive process, OM helps a programme, or project team, to identify those actors with whom it wants to work, what changes it expects to see (outcomes), and the strategies it can use to support those changes. An essential aspect of OM is that 'outcomes' are defined as changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities or actions of the people, groups and organisations that are within the project's ability to influence.

## Organising ourselves

In order to learn from change, and to learn together by celebrating successes and examining failures, the project team, together with our boundary partners, decided at the outset that the M&E process should be a participatory one. We hoped that the process would provide a space for social learning and creative dialogue, bringing together the different perceptions, experiences and actions of boundary partners and other stakeholders in the development of the region. We also envisaged that this common space would work with this diversity to encourage discussion and negotiation, resulting in a common vision and shared priorities, as well as plans for concerted action based on the recognition of the interdependence of all the actors involved.

In our efforts to keep with this goal, we developed participatory planning sessions, where the project facilitated negotiation and concerted action among boundary and strategic partners. We also organised and facilitated two-day monitoring workshops with our boundary partners, held every six months, that allowed us to explore 'what happened' and who had contributed to it. Not only did these sessions allow us to monitor and assess the different contributions. They also helped us to plan modifications and improvements with a focus on 'sharing the workload' among the boundary and strategic partners. That we had reached consensus on a common vision at the start of the project helped us to maintain this complementarity, as this became a reference point to guide strategy formulation and actions, and against which we were then able to track performance.

### Outcome Mapping

Outcome Mapping (OM) is a methodology for planning, monitoring and evaluating development initiatives. OM comprises three stages – intentional design, outcome and performance monitoring, and evaluation planning – and offers a variety of tools that can help projects of programmes to 'map out' the changes they intend to support, in order to better understand the processes of change, improve effectiveness in achieving results, and ensure accountability while engaging in multi-stakeholder learning. The 'map' is co-created, examined and analysed by project teams and other actors – part of the journey towards achieving outcomes becomes the creation of the map itself.

**Links**

Corporación EcoPar
www.ecuapymes.com/ecopar

International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Outcome Mapping
www.idrc.ca/en/ev-26586-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)
www.iap2.org/index.cfm

International Institute for Facilitation and Consensus (IIFAC) www.iifac.org

Latin American Center for Outcome Mapping (LACOM)
www.mapeodealcances.net

Outcome Mapping Learning Community
www.outcomemapping.ca

Resource Centres for Participatory Learning and Action (RCPLA)
www.rcpla.org

Ceja Andina project team


*Outcome Mapping can be replicated in a diverse range of settings and contexts.*

## Discoveries about OM

Outcome Mapping did not answer all of our M&E queries. In fact, in its application it created even more questions, which in turn resulted in fruitful reflection and dialogue on monitoring and evaluation in general. Some of the main points that emerged from that dialogue are sketched out in the following.

OM is not a panacea. It does not replace the log frame approach (LFA). However, by discussing the usefulness of OM and LFA, and identifying the gaps in the two approaches, we were able to determine when it was best to use one or the other. We also began to explore other complementary tools and methodologies. For example, the log frame approach can be useful in outlining the broad scope or reach of the project, and the 'change in state' that the project is aiming to achieve. By complementing this approach with OM, a project can put its plans 'under the microscope' and look at what really causes such changes in state, or changes in the behaviour of different actors. The project then has the opportunity to plan, examine, analyse and adjust its strategies to support those changes in behaviour, before trying to account for changes in state. Besides the log frame approach, there are many other complementary tools and methodologies that can help to strengthen the OM process. For example, when using the monitoring journals in OM, some practitioners have found it useful to bring in the 'most significant change' methodology.

Outcome Mapping is only as good as the facilitation that is used to apply it. Indeed, effective facilitation is imperative for its success. An external facilitator is not always necessary. The Ceja Andina project implemented OM with internal facilitation, although other projects and programmes have found external facilitators useful for OM training, intentional design workshops, and to provide assistance during the monitoring and evaluation. OM, especially when it aims to create collective learning processes, must be guided by someone who can dedicate time to it, and who also has a solid background in facilitation. Adequate resources must be planned for and dedicated to this process.

OM can be replicated in a diverse range of settings and contexts, but an understanding of OM's central concepts – behavioural change, contribution and not attribution, finding the balance between accountability and learning – is vital. With these key concepts guiding the process, OM can still be flexible enough to meet the monitoring and evaluation needs of a programme or project. It inspires and encourages creativity, so that the likelihood of endogenous change processes being created is high.

At a broader level, there must be further exploration of how OM and the learning that emerges from it can contribute to policy processes, civil society strengthening, advocacy and good governance.

## Accountability and learning

If a programme, project or organisation is truly interested in achieving a balance between accountability and learning, this will require judicious choices about what needs be monitored and evaluated. For the Ceja Andina project, the richness of the information produced during the OM process presented us with the challenge of deciding what information it was 'necessary' to collect for accountability purposes, and what data needed to be analysed to contribute to learning.

Developing a detailed and well thought out monitoring and evaluation plan (with corresponding resources, including budgets and human resources), as well as planning, organising and facilitating the monitoring workshops, helped to streamline the M&E processes using OM, and to make them more effective learning opportunities.

As our writing and reporting skills improved, many practical tasks became simpler and more transparent. In our reporting to IDRC, we were able to honestly 'tell the story' of what had happened, including whether or not the strategies we had developed had contributed to outcomes, and what other strategies (set by other stakeholders, including our boundary partners) had contributed as well. The process was iterative but successful, judging from the positive feedback received from our partners and stakeholders, as well as from IDRC.

## Diverse perspectives

For all the stakeholders in the Ceja Andina project, taking on and implementing OM was a valuable and creative experience. It helped to develop the capacities not only of the project team, but of its partners as well. Through participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation, these partners were able to exercise and therefore increase their capacities for critical analysis, social learning, team building and negotiation, and constructing consensus. The project team, through the use of OM, incremented their capacity to facilitate the process. It also pushed the team to look at this particular initiative from diverse perspectives, particularly those related to behavioural change.

The results of using this approach, and the capacities produced because of the high level of engagement of all parties involved in the process, has led the Ceja Andina project to conclude that Outcome Mapping is a methodology that is tremendously conducive to achieving learning with and accountability to multiple stakeholders. <

### Further reading


S. Earl et al. (2001) *Outcome Mapping: Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs,* IDRC. www.idrc.ca/en/ev-9330-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

B.M. Kibel, *Focusing on spirit: The journey mapping approach.* www.capacity.org

S. Montague et al. (undated) *Using Circles to Tell the Performance Story.* www.pmn.net/library/library.htm

T. Smutylo (2005) *Outcome Mapping: A Method for Tracking Behavioural Changes in Development Programs,* ILAC Brief 7, CGIAR. www.cgiar-ilac.org/downloads/Brief7Proof2.pdf

Outcome Mapping Users' Workshop, Lima, Peru, October 2004. www.idrc.ca/en/ev-67180-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Lessons from the South African LandCare programme

# Building a shared vision for change

Theo Nabben
tnabben@agric.wa.gov.au
Former National LandCare facilitator, Institutional Strengthening Departments of Agriculture (ISDA) project, South Africa

In promoting a community-based approach to natural resources management, the ISDA project has learned that influential 'champions' are essential for building an agreed vision for change, and for getting the changes to stick.

In 1997 the South African government initiated the National LandCare Programme within the Department of Agriculture. LandCare is a community-based approach to natural resources management, supported by the government in partnership with a variety of groups. The key principles of LandCare are to promote the use of participatory approaches and ensure effective community involvement in the design, initiation and management of projects.

Within the programme, the Institutional Strengthening Departments of Agriculture (ISDA) project aimed at building the capacity of the staff of national and provincial Departments of Agriculture to implement and manage the LandCare programme in a participatory manner. Initially the project focused on training, but later adopted a broader approach to capacity development in order to ensure the sustainability of the interventions.

The ISDA project had to face a number of major challenges and constraints, including confusion over the differences between LandCare and traditional soil conservation approaches, as well as annual project-based funding, limited resources, the Department's hierarchical and bureaucratic structures, and the multiplicity of duties among staff. Nevertheless we set out to achieve change, and to get the changes to stick.

## A shared understanding

At the outset, ISDA needed to generate pressure for change, develop a shared vision of the changes required, build sufficient capacity, and decide on some actionable first steps. Given the constraints, it was important for ISDA to develop a shared understanding of LandCare among the key players. One way to do this was to ensure that the departmental staff involved in the programme could see for themselves and discuss the elements of a successful LandCare project.

Despite the rhetoric about LandCare, many of the staff had no first-hand experience with the community-based approach. They therefore struggled to see how it could work in practice, and doubted that it could really happen. Reading and talking about LandCare was one thing but, as the saying goes, seeing is believing.

So we organised a number of local, provincial and international LandCare 'look and learn' tours for departmental staff and other stakeholders. During these tours we used the LandCare Good Practice guidelines developed in earlier project assessments as a way to focus discussions, and to clarify what made a good LandCare project. The participants were encouraged to discuss each project in terms of the guidelines, and took part in group processes aimed at fostering their commitment to action as a result of the experiences and the insights gained during the tours. By visiting projects on the ground, the participants were able to see for themselves that community-based approaches were indeed possible, and were motivated to share them with communities back home.

## Champions

We then developed the idea of using 'champions' to make sure there was a core group of staff and community members who were sufficiently exposed and were both motivated and confident to explain to others what LandCare entails. Among these champions we also included senior managers, since management support may be needed to facilitate the development of structures, internal processes and cultural conditions that would effectively challenge the traditional 'top-down' approach that often devalues participatory approaches.

Nevertheless, we found it difficult to get past the initial flush of enthusiasm and move on to encourage greater uptake of initiatives supporting the community-led philosophy. We probably did not have enough influential champions. Greater efforts should have been made earlier in the project to target and follow up with ministers, heads of department, NGOs, research organisations and community movements. Such key individuals might have provided greater leverage for ISDA's efforts and enhanced the institutional uptake and sustainability of LandCare as a broad-based movement.

The lessons from ISDA suggest that cultural change requires high-level support and interventions at various levels in order to build an agreed vision for change and to support capacity development. <

The ISDA project in South Africa, 2001–4, was funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). A longer version of this article can be found at www.capacity.org.

*Reading and talking about LandCare was one thing but, as the saying goes, seeing is believing.*

Reinout van den Bergh

### Links

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
www.ausaid.gov.au

Landcare International
www.landcareinternational.net

Lwatshatsimu Landcare projects: Landcare International Group Award 2006, nominee profiles
www.landcareinternational.net

National Department of Agriculture, LandCare South Africa
www.nda.agric.za/docs/Landcarepage/landcare.htm

Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), Cooperative venture for capacity building in rural Australia
www.rirdc.gov.au/capacity-building

### Further reading

R. Cacioppe (1998) Getting change to stick, *HR Monthly* 20: 22.

R. Holt (2004) *Towards Sustainable Landcare Practices in South Africa: Caring for our Land, Caring for our People.* Department of Agriculture, South Africa.

## PUBLICATIONS

This section offers a selection of publications related to capacity development. A more extensive list can be found at www.capacity.org.

### Facilitating Innovation for Development: A RAAKS resource box

P.G.H. Engel and M.L. Salomon, KIT/CTA/Stoas, 2002, 200 pp
RAAKS (rapid appraisal of agricultural knowledge systems) is a participatory method that facilitates networking and communication processes for generating knowledge and innovation. The set includes a book, *The Social Organization of Innovation*, and a CD-ROM containing practical 'tools'.
ISBN 9068321447
**www.kit.nl/publishers/html/book.asp?BookID=118**

### A Results-Oriented Approach to Capacity Change

N. Boesen and O. Therkildsen, Danida, 2005
This paper aims to improve understanding of what the 'capacity' of organisations means, and the potential constraints and options for changing and enhancing capacity. Hopefully, it will contribute to a consensus on how capacity development works in practice, and provide a tool for capacity development support to all Danida-funded activities.
**www.evaluation.dk**

### Lessons Learned on the Use of Power and Drivers of Change Analyses in Development Co-operation: Final Report

OECD-DAC Network on Governance (GovNet), 2005
Based on studies conducted in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Kenya, and Tanzania, this review compares different donor approaches to conducting Power and Drivers of Change analyses. It looks at what is being done with the findings, in order to learn lessons for future work, and offers recommendations for this type of work.
**www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/doc82.pdf**

### The Use and Abuse of the Logical Framework Approach

O. Bakewell and A. Garbutt, Sida, 2005, 34 pp
Many NGOs are unhappy with the log frame approach, and see it as an imposition from donors. This report suggests that a major problem with the approach is its insistence on stakeholders reaching consensus on the overall plan for the whole project. Instead, it may be more useful if stakeholders agree only on the goal and initial activities. The emphasis should then be on monitoring the impacts of the work, and changing direction accordingly.
**www.sida.se**

### Donorship, Ownership and Partnership: Issues arising from four Sida studies of Donor-Recipient Relations

Gus Edgren, Sida Studies in Evaluation 03/03, 2003
This paper examines the effects on ownership of the aid relationship, leadership and management, stakeholder participation and multiple donor situations. It concludes that 'national ownership is an elusive quality that must be deliberately strived for by both partners … and requires careful analysis and monitoring, and above all, patience and sensitivity by all participants in the dialogue'.
**www.sida.se**

### Organizational Assessment: A Framework for Improving Performance

C. Lusthaus et al., IDRC/IADB, 2002, 210 pp
Strengthening institutions has become the key to improving the effectiveness of development assistance. The authors examine all aspects of organisational performance, and review the methodological issues involved in carrying out an assessment, ranging from the choice and framing of questions to data collection and analysis, and the reporting of results.
ISBN 0-88936-998-4
**www.idrc.ca/en/ev-23987-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html**

## ORGANISATIONS, NETWORKS AND INITIATIVES

This section offers a selection of organisations, networks and initiatives concerned with capacity development. A more extensive list can be found at www.capacity.org.

### Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Managing for Development Results (MfDR) is a management approach that seeks to improve the planning, monitoring and evaluation of operations in order to achieve and sustain intended development results. The ADB is implementing an MfDR Action Plan that rests on three pillars: country capacity, institutional effectiveness and global partnerships.
**www.adb.org/mfdr**

### Enterprise Development Impact Assessment Information Service (EDIAIS)

EDIAIS was established in 2001 on behalf of DFID by Women In Sustainable Enterprise (WISE) and the Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM, Manchester University) to address issues involved in the design of impact assessment methodologies, including quantitative statistical methods, and qualitative and participatory approaches. The site includes an impact assessment toolbox and many case studies.
**www.enterprise-impact.org.uk**

### FAO-EU Food Security Information for Action Programme

This initiative, funded by the EU and implemented by FAO, aims to enhance national capacities to generate, manage and use food security information for more effective policies and programmes. Phase II, which started in April 2005, will adapt the information systems and tools developed in phase I to specific country requirements.
**www.foodsecinfoaction.org**

### Three-Cs.net

This is a platform on evaluating coordination, complementarity and coherence in the EU's development cooperation policies and operations. This website offers access to the six final reports from the 3Cs evaluation initiative and other key resources on the 3Cs and monitoring and evaluation.
**www.three-cs.net**

### ODI/DFID: PRSP Monitoring and Synthesis Project

This project is intended to keep DFID staff informed about about a wide variety of PRSP work. The PRSP team at ODI collate information on the PRSP process from a variety of sources and provide updates, topic notes, and in-depth analysis on key issues around PRSPs.
**www.odi.org.uk/prspsynthesis**

### UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC)

The WCMC provides biodiversity information for policy and action to conserve the living world. In partnership with the public and private sectors, the Centre has launched 'Project Proteus' to develop a knowledge management system that will provide access to biodiversity information and analytical services.
**www.unep-wcmc.org**

### UNRISD: Public Sector Reform and Crisis-Ridden States

This project (2000–4) examined public sector reforms in developing and transition countries, especially those exposed to protracted economic and political crises. Current development policies accept the need for an effective state in regulating development and managing conflicts associated with processes of democratisation and adjustment.
**www.unrisd.org**

Scientific capacity for development

# The way forward

Mohamed H.A. Hassan
Executive Director, Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS), Trieste, Italy

In the 1970s and early 1980s, many developing countries invested substantial amounts in education and research. Some academic centres reached promising levels of scientific excellence. The University of Khartoum in Sudan, for example, was one of the best universities in the developing world. Unfortunately, those investments were not maintained long enough to allow these countries to develop and sustain a culture of excellence in scientific research and education linked to the needs of society.

Today, it is recognised that harnessing scientific knowledge, especially in frontier areas of technology and innovation, and applying that knowledge to address critical problems, are perhaps the most important challenges facing all nations, and developing nations in particular.

This 'renewed' way of thinking, however, leaves one question unanswered. If governments across the developing world are again to embrace scientific capacity as a key aspect of their strategy for economic growth, how should they go about melding home-grown science to development? The surprising answer is that there are many ways to do so, and some developing nations are already taking the lead.

## Science-based development

China's successful strategy for science-based development, for example, has focused on the role of the government in Chinese society. A set of government-led plans for investment in science has helped fuel an average annual GDP growth rate of nearly 10% over the past decade. India has also relied on broad government policies and programmes but, at the same time, has tapped into its English-speaking university-educated population to gain prominence in the IT sector. South Africa has taken advantage of the infrastructure left behind after the welcome demise of apartheid to build the strongest economy and scientific enterprise in Africa. Brazil, meanwhile, faced with a weak higher education system, decided to invest in individual scientists and research groups. In the process, Brazil has strengthened its scientific institutions, which are now poised to work for the economy.

There are many ways in which developing nations can build and then use their scientific capacity to fuel economic growth. Those nations that have pursued the most successful science-based development strategies have gauged their capabilities, and then devised long-term plans to enhance their strengths and overcome their weaknesses.

We may not have adequate educational institutions at home, officials in China said, but we can send our students abroad and then entice them back with good working conditions and attractive pay. Our scientific infrastructure may leave much to be desired, Indian officials observed, but we have an educated, English-speaking workforce. We don't have strong universities, officials in Brazil reasoned, but we can devise a reward-based system for capacity building focusing on individuals. We have been victimised by apartheid's oppression and violence, South African officials noted, but that should not prevent us utilising the facilities left behind to help create a more prosperous society for all our citizens.

## Government commitment

So what does this say about scientific capacity and economic development? First, the marriage between the two has never been stronger. A growing number of developing countries are now proving that investment in science pays, not just for science, but also for society. Second, these efforts can take place in a broad range of political settings.

The keys to success are long-term government commitment and a willingness to give people the freedom to introduce effective policies and programmes. While China's political system may be very different from those in Japan or the United States, the internal management of its scientific enterprise, with its emphasis on competition and reward for results, is not.

Finally, developing nations can compete in the knowledge-based global marketplace, but only if they invest in education and training, and provide career opportunities for their most productive citizens.

Given current trends, science-based sustainable development is not just a strategy worth considering, it's the only one worth following. <

*Capacity.org*, issue 29, September 2006
Capacity.org is published quarterly in English, French and Spanish with an accompanying web magazine (www.capacity.org) and email newsletter. Each issue focuses on a specific theme relevant to capacity development in international cooperation, with articles, interviews and a guest column, and annotated links to related web resources, publications and events.

*Capacity.org* is available free of charge for practitioners and policy makers in international development cooperation.
To subscribe visit **www.capacity.org**.
Issue 30 will be available in early 2007.



Publishers: European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), SNV Netherlands Development Organisation and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
*Capacity.org* was founded by ECDPM in 1999.

ISSN 1571-7496