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Challenges in planning and conducting development evaluation

From Capacity Building to Capacity Development

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Sophisticated methodology and/or simplistic theory of change

- Sophisticated methodology are not necessary close to the complexity of social and economic processes
- Socio-economical process or behaviours of people are multidimensional and interactive
- Social and economic processes, and especially human behaviors are not easy to describe by additive function
- The movement of billiard balls we can predict by additive function (all variables are controllable). There are too many uncontrollable variables, factors for precisely predict human behaviuor using linear causality .

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Interaction and meaning in social processes

- In social areas in addition to interaction it needs to be taken into account the meaning of behaviors in the context
- Example, shaking hands could have the meaning of welcome, apologies, agreement and so on
- Too sophisticated or not adjusted approach in evaluation and in the implementation process implies weak support.

Examples from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Poland

Afghanistan (1)

Empowering Marginalised GIrls in Afghanistan

This project was designed to increase access to and quality of basic education for 15,360 marginalised girls aged 6-19 in Faryab province

An estimated 90% of women in Faryab are illiterate. Afghan women is still among the lowest in the world.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Base line study, a longitudinal quasi-experimental design.

Barriers: Lack of separate education facilities; cultural-conservative attitudes proscribe support for girls'; economic-household poverty , lack of quality teaching; insecurity.

Selected Conclusions/Recommendations

Sustainability of the GEC(Girls' Education Challenge)needs to be considered from the very earliest stages of design and it needs to be consistently followed through.

Community Mobilisers pointed out the need for periodically organized working meetings with facilitation provided by experts on community development and community based participatory practices.

There is a urgent need to assess the number of teachers required.

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Afghanistan (2)

Kyrgyzstan (1)

Consulting Services to support implementation of the co-financing of the Village Investment Project (VIP-FfW) in Osh and Jalalabad oblasts

The Village Investment Project (VIP) was set up to address both the problems of rural poverty and service delivery, and to support the decentralization and social mobilization initiatives.

Micro-Project Component: Communities approved 1837 micro-projects, implementation of 1599 micro-projects has started, out of which 1007 MPs have works 50% completed, 265 micro-projects were successfully completed

The following three components of VIP are designed: (i) Capacity Building and Empowerment, (ii)Village Investments,(iii) Project Management

Selected Conclusions, Recommendations

More attention needs to be paid to the tools of monitoring and evaluation, including indicators of results, and with specific focus on the current level of experience and skills of local partners, ensuring a good match between their competencies and what they are expected to do.

The workload at the local level should be considered. The arrangement by which implementing organization at the local level oversees more than 230 projects with only one expert somewhat overburdens the workload of the expert.

Based on the gathered data there is a need to assess the number of specialists required for any particular micro-project.

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Kyrgyzstan (2)

Poland (1)

Revitalization Programs

The Municipal Revitalisation Programs or Revitalisation Programs are being developed to address the problems at five areas: social, economic, functional-spacial, technical, and environmental. The most important among them is social component.

The MRP/RP aims to contribute to the alleviation of poverty, unemployment and other problems at local level and to contribute to the improvement of citizens' life conditions in particularly severe units of municipality.

Selected Comments

Simplistic theory of change, linear models embedded in evaluation criteria.

More emphasis should be placed on understanding community development and capacity development processes in Polish municipality.

Simplistic theory of change is not effective in supplying the necessary support to program implementation through evaluation process.

More emphasis should be placed on the nature of factors, variables involved in socio-economic transformation and revitalization processes.

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Poland (2)

Shift – from Capacity Building to Capacity Development

- Throughout discussion since 2010 and ongoing debate, capacity development (CD) has been the key priority of development cooperation.
- CD is now an explicit and integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with their focus on implementation aspects; compared to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- CD represents a paradigmatic shift – from capacity building to capacity development - in the emphasis placed on capacity development, now considered as a vehicle for meeting the SDGs and for sustaining these achievements in the long term.

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Capacity Development and sustainability

Evidence from the country case studies highlights that capacity development is still often equated by donors and partner countries with human resource development. However, there is a growing realisation that the enhancement and sustainability of individual knowledge and skills depends crucially on the quality of the organisations and the enabling environment in which they operate.

Source: Supporting Capacity Development in PFM.A Practitioner's Guide. Vol. 1 (2011, p13).

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Capacity Development vs Capacity Building

- The concept of capacity building emphasizes that capacity is something that can be build from outside, for example by the team of experts from another country.
- Capacity building focuses only on the initial stages of building or creating capacity, assuming that there are no or little existing capacities.
- The concept of capacity development emphasizes that capacity is something that must grow from the inside, and it cannot be developed by outsiders.

Capacity development: a three stage process

1. Assessment - to understand what capacities exist, what capacities need to be developed and the context within which the need occurs.
2. Design - involves a series of decisions: who should be targeted, at what level, and how
3. Implementation - innumerable factors can impact implementation for the better or worse (relevance and adaptability of language, concepts and content to local culture and context).

Why capacity assessment is important?

Before beginning to develop capacities within internal intervention, practitioners need to identify and respect the existing skills, structures, institutional relationships and resources, to be able to work with these existing capacities.

Capacity assessment involves identifying and building upon existing capacities at each of the various levels, namely individual, organizational and institutional

The process of assessing current capacities is as important as the implementation of action plan later on. When it is done in a participatory way, the process of capacity assessment can itself build organizational capacity.

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Capacity Development in perspective

- The common goal of development projects through the years has been poverty alleviation and livelihood improvement for the local people.
- The paradigms have evolved over time, shifting from supply-driven technical assistance based on inputs toward demand-driven capacity development based on outcomes.

Capacity Development instead of Capacity Building

In recent years the CD sector has become aware of the need to base practice - starting with assessment - on clear theories of capacity and change.

Thank you for your attention

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