PARTICIPATORY PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

COURSE MANUAL

Elective Course – Diploma Program 2008 /
November 3-7 2008

Coady International Institute
St-Francis Xavier University
Antigonish-Nova Scotia
CANADA

Facilitator:
Lucie Goulet
PARTICIPATORY PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Course Outline

Module 1:

Introduction

Defining terminology
Project
Participation, participatory

Project management and Participatory development (intro)

On beneficiaries and stakeholders
2 main approaches to people’s participation in projects
What do project teams need to have?

Module 2:

Project Management methodology

A) Overview of Project Management processes
B) Overview of Project Management Knowledge areas
C) Overview of Project Life Cycle (PLC)

Overview of Participatory development philosophies and approaches

Rapid rural Appraisal (RRA)
Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)
Asset-based approaches (appreciative inquiry)
Participatory Action research

What are the learnings about participatory approaches?

Module 3:

Participatory Project Inception and Design

How to build on people’s wish for change (initiating)
How to ensure collective contributions
How to identify resources needed: existing skills and assets, external input (planning)

Key Elements of a Project Plan

Description / Confirmation / Tracking
Module 4:

Participatory Project Implementation

Keeping people’s agency at the heart of the action
Identifying risks, mitigating them

Managing the action while keeping participation

Managing resources: human, in-kind, financial
Some methodologies and tools
Communication, never enough said

Project Follow-up and monitoring

Strategies for ongoing participatory assessment
TrackingChanges, Confirming plan
When Change is needed: adjusting the course of action

Module 5:

Participatory Project Evaluation

Why do a Project evaluation?
Evaluate what and for whom: accountability vs learning
Revisiting the Change expected

Learning and communications

Learning what and for whom
How to frame and use the learning
Reporting and Communicating about the project
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Presentations, discussions and theory</th>
<th>AM: Introductions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Objective setting: sharing our expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Defining our terms: Project / Participatory/ Planning and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Experience sharing/problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM: Project management and Participatory development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Overview of Project Management and Project Life Cycle (PLC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Overview of Participatory development philosophies and approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- So how does that “fit” together??? (small group exercise)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Review of previous day. Means: Approaches to participatory project design; case study; sharing stories</th>
<th>AM: Participatory Project Inception and design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o How to build on people’s wish for change (initiating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o How to ensure collective contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o How to identify resources needed: existing skills and assets, external input (planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM: Key elements of a Project Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>o Description; Confirmation; Tracking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Constructing the action plan on existing assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Team exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Review of previous day Means: Tools and methodologies, case study and team exercise</th>
<th>AM: Participatory Project Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Keeping people’s agency at the heart of the action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Identifying risks, alleviating them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM: Managing the action while keeping participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>o Managing resources: human, in-kind, financial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Some tools, methodologies / case study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Tools presentation; role play and discussion</th>
<th>AM: Project Follow-up and monitoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Strategies for ongoing participatory assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Tracking Changes, Confirming plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o When Change is needed: adjusting the course of action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM: In situation during a monitoring visit (role play)</td>
<td></td>
<td>o Discussion – Checking in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Work on assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 5</th>
<th>Tools and methodologies, group work, discussion and exercise</th>
<th>AM: Participatory Project Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Why do a Project evaluation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Evaluate what and for whom: accountability vs learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Revisiting the Change expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM: Learning and communications</td>
<td></td>
<td>o How to frame and use the learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>o Reporting and Communicating about the project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Evaluation
Module 1

Defining Terminology:

**PROJECT** **vs** **PROGRAM** **vs** **OPERATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>OPERATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIME - LINE</td>
<td>Limited in time with a beginning and an end</td>
<td>Spread over a large timeframe, longer than project</td>
<td>Ongoing, daily and unbound in time limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>One Objective, specific set of limited activities</td>
<td>A wide range of activities regrouped under large scale strategies</td>
<td>Multiple Objectives, regular maintenance and operating activities related to core business of the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURPOSE</td>
<td>Aimed at creating a change, a specific service, product or output</td>
<td>Aimed at creating sustainable response to systemic and underlying causes of a problem/issue</td>
<td>Aimed at maintaining and growing the organization, realizing the mission and mandate through structural organizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMAN RESOURCES</td>
<td>Project team (temporary)</td>
<td>Program team (as projects but longer, broader role)</td>
<td>Permanent staff (assigned to core work of the organization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DYNAMISM</td>
<td>Quite stable once plan is defined, adopts a course until its termination phase; changes only in project parameters</td>
<td>Evolve in substantive ways over time based on changes in the environment</td>
<td>Adapts to strategically respond to changing environment and technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS</td>
<td>Success is measured by completion of phases and attainment of the objective</td>
<td>Success is measured in the long term, on progress noted in impacts sought after long period of implementation</td>
<td>Success is measured by assessment of organization’s progress, reports on ongoing operations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The fuzzy concept of … “PARTICIPATION”…

Let’s take these two situations:

A) You are an active member of your community, you are an influential leader, and have shown a strong sense of organization.

A dam will be constructed in the area, and it will affect people’s lives in many ways, not necessarily positively. People will be displaced, will lose agricultural land, access to the village through the main road will be cut off by water. But people will have water on an ongoing basis. The district government sent a representative to your house to ask you for a specific action: it wants you to participate in the project planning so you can convince the community that it is a beneficial project for them.

B) You are the same person as in case A.

The district government needs to address the chronic water shortage in its area and some ideas are identified, such as possibly building a dam, digging deep boreholes, or constructing small irrigation schemes from a nearby river. The government sent a representative to your house and asked you for a specific action: it wants you to participate in the project planning so that the project decided upon has the support and the collaboration of the community, is feasible and can be endorsed by the government.

For reflection and discussion:

1- Is the government asking you for the same type of participation in those 2 cases? … Who will you work with in case A? and in case B?

2- What **ROLE** are you asked to play with the community in A? and in B?… how do you think you can act in each of those roles?

3- What is the “participatory process” in case A? … and in case B ? what do you think the government understands as “participation” in each of the cases?

Who is in?... Who is it for?...Who is it by…?

On beneficiaries…

The concept of “beneficiaries” reflect the notion that there is a ‘giver” and a “receiver”, in some kind of a “giving” transaction. It reduces the relations and roles to the notion that there are “recipients” of something that the State, or NGO, will “deliver” to them (a toilet, food aid, a well, a training…).

Talking of “beneficiaries participation” is often a way to reflect on a consultation process with people who will “benefit” from something, but does not take away some notion of
somewhat “passive receiving” as opposed to active “take charge” characteristic of true emancipation processes.

**On stakeholders…**

The term comes from the government and private sectors. The ‘stakeholder’ language was meant to reflect the “inclusivity” of the State apparel and of companies thinking processes and practices.

But in reality, the “people who have a stake” in something, are the ones for whom strategies, products, programs are decided for, what will be crafted around their “needs” or the demand of the market. They “have a say” in what is done for them. But they are not necessarily “actors” in the project. They are “concerned” within an existing reality, project, situation, but are they actors or decision-makers?

Jacques Rancier, a French philosopher, who wrote *Ten Theses on Politics*, refers to this as the « politics that makes decision on the people, for the people, instead of the people”

---

“**For us, street traders, being a stakeholder is a slavery term. This is because government and big business think for us, plan for us, and all we are left with is to fit in their plan and do as we are told…**” - Mama Rose, street trader, South Africa--

The term “stakeholder” is to the private and government sectors what the term “beneficiaries” is to a “charity”.

*EMANCIPATION?*  
*EMPOWERMENT?*

---

**About Projects and People’s participation:**

- Traditional development projects are mostly **“external”, top down and needs based interventions”**:
  
  (1) NGO, State agency, see a need, a problem, look for solutions, and identify the process which will be come a project to respond to that need.
  
  (2) State, donor (or both), defined a broad based strategy (program approach) and solicits or contracts out, the identification of where this strategy will unfold and projects to be defined within the strategy, to implementing agencies (NGOs, private sector, etc)

- They are **often pre-determined based on identified needs**, policies, interests of governments, NGOs and international donors, with at time input from communities themselves (they are as a result generally seen as “institutional” endeavours)

- Most “participation” of communities is at the stage of **needs assessment**, or **project identification** phase, and within specific activities where sub-sections of the community will take part.

- “**Participation” is more and more seen now as a MUST in view of sustainable development**: if people DON’T participate in a project that concerns them, they will NOT own the process, results, and assets or outcomes, whatever these may be. The
project will not have long term success, and will not likely be sustainable, when external agencies (State extension services, NGOs, etc) leave at the end of the project.

How do YOU define “Participatory development”? 

2 types of Approaches to participatory projects: 1) Target oriented – 2) Experiential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th><strong>Goal</strong></th>
<th><strong>BLUEPRINT (target oriented)</strong></th>
<th><strong>EXPERIENTIAL (process oriented)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal</strong></td>
<td>To deliver a pre-set package of outputs (goods and services) to specific target groups</td>
<td>To create positive CHANGE in a community, by way of promoting people’s capacity to take charge and lead their own development process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deliverables</strong></td>
<td>Identified at the onset of the project, it “lands” on the community / target group</td>
<td>Not identified at the onset, it “emerges” from the community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results expected</strong></td>
<td>Can be listed as set and predictable outcomes, fit in a RBM framework</td>
<td>Unpredictable, bound to people’s choices, know-how, assets and action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency (actors)</strong></td>
<td>Externally driven, people as beneficiaries brought into the agenda/plan at some stages of the process</td>
<td>Endogenous (the people themselves), with facilitation support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community involvement</strong></td>
<td>Buy-in sought after: Varies, from passive recipients to consultative, to engaging: willingness of people to take part in activities</td>
<td>Leadership and initiative: the people take charge, and engage with other actors through negotiating their plans, support needed, etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decision making</strong></td>
<td>Generally resides externally, at project managers level</td>
<td>Resides within the community, based on consensus or interests of collective groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of NGO</strong></td>
<td>Direction and operational, managerial</td>
<td>Facilitation, negotiation, and bridging what emerges from the community to the outside world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>Project Life Cycle; RBM, Project management (scope, time, cost, HR, risk, etc). Managerial</td>
<td>Participatory planning, Appreciative inquiry, ABCD, PRA, RRA, etc. Interactive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What do Project team members need to have?

What do Project teams using participatory approaches need to have??

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Team members (blueprint)</th>
<th>Project teams using Participatory approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Module 2

PROJECT MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

Where does it come from?

The most widely accepted and used methodology on Project Management has been designed by the Project Management Institute (PMI), a professional organization of 30,000 project management professionals. It has drawn a widely recognized methodology called the *Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBoK)*. Some elements of this methodology will be used here as the foundation of the conceptual framework on Project Management.

Project management is a discipline that has evolved into very specific and detailed processes mostly adopted to meet the systems needs for complex situations, and to integrate multiple disciplines. Highly technical sectors (Aerospace and Defense) and government sector originally started using Project management systems systematically in the 1940s. The private sector, in high technology sub-sectors (construction, engineering, computers, electronics) started adopting Project Management systems in the 1960s.

The informal sector and social services started later to recognize the value and use Project management concepts and techniques for project planning and implementation. Many concepts have relevance to any sector and are useful to help organize human activity that aims at creating a product, a service or effecting a change. But the “participation” notion, earmarked by social science, is not mainstreamed in Project management as we understand it. We will attempt to integrate better the notion of participation into the project management principles and the project cycle.

Project Management is the *application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements.*

It boils down to a set of technical parameters, clusters of processes and steps in view of achieving a result. It is comprised of tasks and activities, grouped in phases under what is identified as “Project Life Cycle”. Each phase completion is assessed before moving to the next phase. The project management process includes properly ‘closing’ the project.

---

1 Project Management Institute: A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge
A) Project management’s processes

There are 5 “process groups” in Project management, which are in summary the steps or phases that need to be happening in the life of a project:

- **Initiating processes**, which involve recognizing that a project or phase of a project should begin and making a commitment to start;

- **Planning processes**, which involve development of a workable scheme to achieve the goals for which the project was undertaken; Defines and refines objectives, and plans the course of action required to attain the objectives and scope of the project

- **Executing processes**, which involve coordinating the step by step activities, the resources, including human resources, required in the plan; Integrates people and other resources to carry out the project management plan as designed

- **Monitoring and Controlling processes**, which involve monitoring project progress and taking corrective action, if needed; regularly measures and monitors progress to identify variances from the project management plan so that corrective action can be taken when necessary to meet project objectives

- **Closing processes**, which involve bringing the project to an orderly and formal conclusion; Formalizes acceptance of the product, service or result and brings the project or a project phase to an end.

**Processes Sequence:**

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiate</th>
<th>Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Execute</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close-out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

**Processes Dynamics:**

Coady International Institute: *Participatory Project Planning and Management*
B) Project management’s knowledge areas

There are 9 “knowledge areas” recognized in project management: those areas all integrate in any project; they all have to be taken into account in the design of the project though they don’t necessarily have the same weight in each and every project:

- **scope management**—“the processes required to ensure that the project includes all the work required, and only the work required;”

- **time management**—“the processes required to ensure timely completion of the project;”

- **cost management**—“the processes required to ensure that the project is completed within the approved budget;”

- **quality management**—“the processes required to ensure that the project will satisfy the needs for which it was undertaken;”

- **human resource management**—“the processes required to make the most effective use of the people involved with the project;”

- **communications management**—“the processes required to ensure timely and appropriate collection, dissemination, and storage of project information;”

- **risk management**—“the processes concerned with identifying, analyzing, and responding to project risk;”
• **procurement management**—“the processes required to acquire goods and services for the project implementation,”

• **integration management**—“the processes required to ensure that the various elements of the project are properly coordinated.”

### C) Project’s Life Cycle (PLC)

The term “project life cycle” is used to refer to the totality of the various phases into which a project is divided.

Each project phase involves completion of one or more deliverables, which are tangible and verifiable outputs of a process (a design, an output, a set of recommendations, and so on).

Each phase also concludes with a review so that errors may be detected and corrected and so that it can be determined whether the project should continue on to the next phase.

The PLC phases are the following:

- **Initiation Phase** – “someone recognizes an opportunity to be gained or a problem to be resolved”

- **Planning Phase**—the project’s case and the detailed project plan are created;

- **Design Phase**—further definition of the need being met and description of the technical aspects, step by step activities and tasks to be done to reach the objective;

- **Implementation Phase**—the execution of the project plan, the unfolding of the various steps of the project until completion.

- **Evaluation Phase**—determining how well the project realization met the project objective and how well the project was managed.
Case study:

The village of Bingayo is 7 km from the road leading the region’s capital, where the main market is located. Bingayo people produce a wide range of vegetables, and staple grains, as well as fruits that are abundant in its forested area. A swampy area of 2 km is close to the village and in the rainy season, it becomes almost impossible to reach the main road because the swamp swells with mud and water. There is a high level of malaria in rainy season, and the swamp is risky to cross for anyone but particularly for women and children. The swamp is very long and ends in a dense forested area so there is no detour possible.

Women are overburdened with the main responsibilities for the family, growing and collecting products from the land (vegetables, fruits and roots) and selling and buying; men are responsible for housing construction and maintaining infrastructure in the community, as well as harvesting grains. Children have to go to school in the capital after grade 5.

Selling and buying essential goods is difficult in that season, which is also the most productive for villagers, and villagers experience shortage of some basic goods which they don’t produce. This results in negative consequences on their health and livelihoods (what they produce and sell). The older children are also cut off from school access in that period, resulting in high drop-out rates or failing grades.

You are an extension specialist serving the area, and you feel that it is a priority to solve the problems of this village, as the community in question has a strong potential for income, employment, and growth for the area.

In your small group, using the chart and definitions above, identify the processes, in the project, where:

(15 min)

1) …it is the most “logical” to work hand in hand with the community, in a highly participatory way, and what needs to be gained in doing that?

2) …it may be more challenging to apply a highly participatory approach, and why?

Then, as a second step:

(20 min)

1) Select ONE of the processes area where you will flesh out a strategy to use a participatory approach. How will you organize or approach it? Who will be involved? What will you do?

2) Using a flip chart, list under you selected Process: 1) your strategy; 2) your approach; 3) the actors; 4) the actions proposed.
2- Participatory development philosophies and approaches

Background to Participatory approaches

The concept of “Participation” applied to development work, arose in the 1970’s, inspired by Paulo Freire’s philosophy and activist movement, based on the fundamental recognition that poor and disempowered people, and marginalized communities, abound with knowledge, creativity and capacities that are not recognized or valued by dominant research and development practices.

Participation of the people in “participatory research”, in its original manifestation, intended to stimulate through dialogue and positive conversations, the awareness of that knowledge and capacity, and through it, the emergence of existing creativity leading to action. It was meant, in other words, to bring “POWER” back to the people and encourage their own “take charge” attitude.

In that context and along that philosophy, ultimately, the agenda for development would be driven by the people themselves, and the agencies or any outsiders claiming to support the development process (researchers, NGOs, extension workers, etc) would in fact be acting as FACILITATORS of this process in the community.

The concept of participatory research and how it was applied was mostly in a perspective of social activism and in view of political action to benefit the underprivileged, the marginalized and the poor people.

In the years that followed, the notion that any development and social research process can benefit from being participatory, came about in the area of Applied Anthropology where research methods focused on valuing more the local knowledge and culture, the understanding of people’s behaviours and attitudes through taking the time to observe, engage and establish a rapport, rather than acting as “collectors of information”.

In the 1970s and 80s, the concept of participatory approaches evolved along those lines, as approaches to involve communities, create profound links between “outsiders” knowledge and peoples lived realities, support the need to build awareness on and about the rich indigenous knowledge and experience, and support the process of analysis by people themselves and self-driven development action. It moved from the attitude that we need to “change” people, to the attitude that change can happen without being “prescribed from the outside” but rather, stimulated within communities through real engagement, conversations, dialogue and stimulating facilitation.
**Principles of Participation**

Key principles of participation have been named (Egger and Majeres, 1998) as:

- **Inclusion**; of all people, groups, representative, affected by a project
- **Equal partnership**; everyone brings capacity, equal right, skills to the process
- **Transparency**; climate of open communication and building dialogue
- **Sharing power**; avoid the domination of one group over the other,
- **Sharing responsibility**; all have equal responsibility for outcomes and decision
- **Empowerment**; encouragement of people with skills to apply them, mutual reinforcement and promotion of what exists in people to be used for the project
- **Cooperation**; operating together, “sharing everyone's strength reduces everybody’s weakness”

****************************

**Some of the key Participatory approaches**

**Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)**
Emerged in 1993 (Robert Chambers) -Institute if Development Studies, UK- as a result of growing concerns with the use of formal surveys and the technocratic approach to field assessments and visits. Realizing that these approaches were not always relevant to the development objectives and achievements, RRA was designed as a “reversal of learning”.

**RRA meant:**
- Rural people look at and assess their own problems, spell out their own issues;
- People themselves set their own goals
- They define their plan for action based on their chosen objectives
- They monitor their own achievements

---

2 Have participatory Approaches Increased Capabilities? IISD web site: [http://www.iisd.org](http://www.iisd.org)
RRA has been applied to rural livelihoods, health, nutrition, emergencies and disasters, water, food production and is used intensely in marketing systems. RRA uses a range of simple techniques to gather a summary picture of a community's situation, issues, problems and path to improvement. It can be used for research, for project decision, for programming directions, for needs assessment among others, but mostly as a basis for project planning. It is shorter than traditional social research methods (weeks instead of months or years), it is cheaper, and targeted (using sampling that are of high relevance). For instance, relying on multidisciplinary teams rather than individuals, RRA techniques that are applied include:

- interview of individual, household, and key informants in and around the community
- methods of cross-checking information from different sources (triangulation)
- sampling techniques that ensure quick access to result and information, adapted to an objective
- group interview techniques, including focus-group interviewing
- collection of quantitative data directly and by many means
- direct observation of physical site, set-up, environment, infrastructure, behaviours, etc.

Chambers cites the main biases of rural development tourism as being: spatial (urban-tarmac-and-roadside biases, that is going only to easily accessible places), project (neglecting non-project areas), personal contact (meeting the less poor and more powerful rural people, men rather than women, users of services rather than non-users, and so on), dry season (travelling in the post-harvest or post-rainy season, when it is easier) and politeness-and-protocol bias (lack of courtesy and convention, lack of adaptation to local conditions, shortage of time, etc.).


Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)’ and ‘Participatory Learning and Action’ (PLA) grew out of RRA, and is comparable in many aspects. But with PRA, the information collection and its interpretation reside with the community itself, with outsiders playing the role of facilitators instead of instigators, or “extractors’ of information. PRA is meant to be a “shared learning” approaches, where each of the people and the outsiders learn, and inform. The PRA approach is used at multiple stages and for multiple functions, not only for “needs assessment” of project identification phase. PRA techniques serve well to a wide range of situations. The main principles are respect, capacity to listen and learn without prejudice, accepting to step back and work as a catalyst in the facilitators’ role, letting the people lead and decide on the directions they want to take. It is also useful as a means for monitoring and evaluation. The approach
started to be used in rural settings but has also been used in urban settings. It is an approach for shared learning between local people and outsiders. Though there are many possible tools within PRA, it is recommended to use the more “neutral” tools first, while working to establish a solid rapport and trust with the community, then to use tools that the community would have some reluctance in sharing information about, such as wealth ranking, livelihoods revenues, etc.

PRA uses multiple techniques as well, but **fundamental principles of PRA** consist of:

- **Participation:**
  - the full participation of people from the community is essential not only as a means to getting information but as the ground on which the process of development is understood and exercised as a collective process, with responsibilities and rights of involvement for everyone.

- **Flexibility:**
  - though many techniques and methods can be proposed in PRA, it is not a blueprint approach and those using PRA will benefit from adapting and choosing methods that suit the context and purposes. PRA, as RRA, is tied to a philosophy and a mode of operating in relation to community participation, rather than a “recipe” to use as a set of mechanical steps.

- **Team work:**
  - the value of a multi-disciplinary team, including local people who have a good knowledge of the area’s condition and situation, people presenting diverse interests and occupation, age groups, skills sets. This will allow to see the same things from different perspectives and viewpoints. The facilitator’s role is vital as it will require sometimes to challenge cultural patterns that may be excluding people, challenge the ways people communicate, and similar realities that will require sensitive facilitation.

- **Triangulation:**
  - the accuracy of information and its relative value can be obtained or ensured by a process of cross-checking the same information from at least 3 sources. This is to ensure the reliability of data collected.

- **Optimal ignorance:**
  - the idea is that not all information and data is relevant, and there needs to be an exercise done to sort out what is the important and relevant information, and to limit the PRA exercise to that scope.

**Some PRA tools**
- Planned meetings with open agendas (transparent process)
- Semi-structured interviewing
- Mapping and modeling
- Preference listing and ranking
- Focus group discussions
- Transect walk
- Seasonal diagramming (historical)
Asset-based approaches

Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry emerged in 1990 (David Cooperrider, Case Western Reserve University) as a response to the disempowerment that needs-based approach to communities create. In the years following the adoption and development of participatory approaches, there had been more and more attention paid to local knowledge, local strengths, assets, institutions and skills.

Appreciative inquiry turns the lens on valuing the skills that exist in people (helping them to recognize them); the conditions and factors that trigger success among individuals and groups; helping identify and build on individual and collective group capacities; and on mobilising resources from within (harvesting first what is there, before seeking resources outside), to achieve the “dream”. It leads to the building up of community action plans, through a process of positive inquiry and stimulus.

Appreciative inquiry builds on the “4 D’s” steps:

- **Discovery**: recognizing and appreciating what exists and gives value to a community, a group, in its human experience, history, practices, resources, assets and people.
- **Dream**: envisioning and looking at possible impact: what might be, creating a positive image of a preferred future.
- **Design**: constructing and developing together what is needed to attain the dream, starting with what exists, and moving to what needs to be created to reach the ideal; a process of deeper analysis, inquiry, consensus and negotiations.
- **Delivery**: making it happen and sustaining it: how to empower, learn, assess achievements and directions, adjust, build capacity as required, and sustain.

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA)

With the emphasis on learning defined as a result of “self-development through experience” rather than the result of formal teaching, participatory learning and Action proposes approaches, methodologies and tools around the principle of guiding self-development, both with individuals and groups. The vision in this approach is that people themselves, when guided and facilitated properly, are more likely to come up with appropriate solutions to problems and issues. The PLA approach wants to help bring out people’s capacity to identify what needs to be done, to prioritize, to organize and take action. Outsiders can help in facilitation of the process but not with providing the answers and making the decisions. They can also play a catalyst role, and a linking role, where groups identify a need for external resources or expertise.

Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action

Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action (APPA) combines the framework of Appreciative Inquiry and the tools of Participatory Learning and Action (PLA). Its objective is to find and emphasise the positive, successes and strengths as a means to empower communities, groups and organisations to plan and manage development and conservation.

Asset-based Community development (ABCD)

---

3 [http://portals.wi.wur.nl/ppme/?Appreciative_Participatory_Planning_and_Action](http://portals.wi.wur.nl/ppme/?Appreciative_Participatory_Planning_and_Action) (web site on Participatory Planning, Monitoring and evaluation resources)
The principles of Asset-based Community development, articulated by Jody Kretzmann and John McKnight (in “Building Communities from the Inside Out”) rest on the recognition that many successful community-driven initiatives have taken place with limited outside intervention. These endogenous activities seem to take place through self-guided leadership, with citizens rather than institutions at the centre of the development activity, and in communities that are able to recognize and use their strengths, skills, capacities, social, financial and human capital, as the building blocks of their own development. They are successful, on their own merit, and get support from external agencies that play a catalyst and bridging role, helping to facilitate and resource the community process rather than drive it.

ABCD has been called a philosophy, an approach, a method, a tool, and it is a bit of all but nothing static. ABCD is grounded on the philosophical principle of communities, groups, people, being “in charge”, making decisions and drawing action plans to improve their life. It uses a range of methods and tools, that are also used in PRA, PLA and CA approaches, and in some cases, adapts existing tools to better suit the local context. The Coady International Institute has been an important proponent of ABCD around the world, and has translated it into a practical experience in Ethiopia, in partnership with Oxfam Canada, since 2003.

The Capability Approach (CA)

The Capability Approach was developed by Amartya Sen (“Development as Freedom, New York: Knopf, 1999) to help conceive and share the principles of a foundation for human development that includes “participation, human well-being and freedom as central features of development”.

In this approach, Sen clearly spells out that economic growth is the means of human well-being rather than the end, as the traditional economic growth approach tends to believe and promote; and that development work should expand people’s capabilities and freedoms to achieve what they value.

In this approach as well, people are active participants and agents of their own development. The approach considers differences of values, positions, in groups. It includes tools to bring awareness to disparities (race, gender, age, class and others) between people, communities and nations. It is grounded on the belief that people cannot get to emancipation if subjected to other external forces to make decisions for them, and that the process of community empowerment resides with people gaining confidence, capacity and will to remove themselves from “unfreedoms”.

In this approach, participation is put “at the centre of development”.

---

4 “From Clients to Citizens”, The Coady International Institute, edited by Alison Mathie
Different twists to the definition of PARTICIPATION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation implies “empowering people to mobilize their own capacities, be social actors, rather than passive subjects, manage the resources, make decisions. And control the activities that affect their lives”</th>
<th>“Participation is the process through which stakeholders influence and share control over priority setting, policy-making, resource allocations and access to public goods and services.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cernia, 1985</td>
<td>The World Bank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How are these 2 definitions different?

Reflecting on your experience: (20 minutes)

Think of an experience you had, where you attempted to be participatory and inclusive in developing a project (in an organization or in a community), but the result was not very successful, or not up to your expectations.

a. What happened? What type of participation (see 7 types above) do you think you were using?

b. Why did it not work as you expected?

c. What are the major obstacles you have experienced in trying to use participatory approaches?

d. What do you think we should do in a similar situation to achieve expectations and obtained a well defined project?
Module 3

THE PROJECT PLANNING PHASE

A project plan is a more formal document (approved by management, donors) that documents assumptions and decisions. It helps stakeholders and team members understand how the entire project fits together. It is used to guide the project, control its execution and measure progress through all phases of the Project Life Cycle (PLC). The project plan is a LIVE document: it needs to be used at all times in the course of the project: it is a comprehensive mapping of what the project involves.

THE PROJECT PLAN HELPS YOU:

• describe the work that needs to be done to complete the project
• get buy-in from the authorities, donors
• get buy-in from those executing the work
• track the progress and measure completion
• track changes to the project (if any) during execution
• keep all parties to the project focused on tasks required to meet project objectives, and ensures that it is only these tasks that are undertaken

Project Planning Phase

A) PROJECT DEFINITION

1. Defining the project (naming it in the document)

2. The community concerned by the project (location, environment, context, background)

3. Scope/Project Description (in the document, will be an executive summary)
   ➢ Identifies the breath of the project (how large, when, where, by whom, for whom), the main objectives, as well as important constraints (time, cost, quality)

4. Objectives
   Objectives are specific and measurable. The objective includes the project deliverables and may also include other specific items that are deemed to be important to measuring the success of the project such as: milestones, specific quality, cost limit. Note: Objectives are effective only when “all” project stakeholders have agreed to them.

5. Anticipated benefits: what is expected out of this project, what will be gained through this project

6. Cost/Budget: Projects have costs: what will they be? How do we estimate them? What can be contributed and by whom? Project managers will also need to identify what needs to be solicited externally and where

What is involved?

- Getting reliable information
- Identifying the context and people
- Getting awareness about people’s wish for change
- Analyzing with people their expected benefits
- Identifying what is realistic, deliverable, possible
- Looking at what is available, already there, on which to build
- Looking at what may have to come from the outside