

**OVERCOMING ORGANIZATIONAL OBSTACLES
TO PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGIES IN MALAWI**

A Thesis

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of

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by

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ABSTRACT

OVERCOMING ORGANIZATIONAL OBSTACLES TO PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGIES IN MALAWI

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This thesis is an investigation of the organizational context within, and the mechanisms through which, participatory methods are being adopted by non-governmental organizations in Malawi. In an attempt to go beyond the traditional analysis of participatory rural development, an evaluation of the experiences of Malawian fieldworkers, NGO directors and independent consultants was conducted.

The study suggests that the enthusiasm with which NGOs in Malawi are implementing participatory rural development has not led to the instilling of participatory values in the greater development process. In order to rectify this situation it is recommended that NGOs concentrate more time and resources reflecting on their operational processes so as to improve their internal participatory practice and move closer to becoming learning-based organizations. This approach involves not only creating an environment which embraces continuous learning and encourages staff to pursue creative visions, but improving an organization's infrastructural mechanisms to provide fieldworkers with information and ready contact with their colleagues necessary to effectively implement participatory methodologies at the field level.

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Although my name alone is printed on the cover of this thesis, there are many other people who were involved in its genesis, development and ultimate completion who deserve thanks and recognition. I am especially indebted to my family for their love, encouragement and financial support without which none of this would have been possible.

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ideas reality. I believe that the skills and knowledge I acquired throughout my course work, combined with those I learned in the field that will serve me well in the future.

I would like to dedicate this work to all fieldworkers who on a daily basis struggle to work around and through the multiple, but often unrecognized obstacles to participatory methodologies.

It is important that we link participation and learning together since either promoted by itself cannot make its best possible contribution.

(Uphoff, Norman)

The ways in which donor agencies, governments and even NGOs operate still impede new, more collaborative approaches to development.

(Uphoff, Norman)

Even though on a theoretical level participation has gained wide recognition and its practical value in development is well established, actual cases of implementation and successes are few.

(Mohan Mathur)

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Chapter One

Introduction

Introduction

The field of development administration¹ is inhabited by theories, counter-theories, approaches and paradigms of all types. Discussions of development are consequently centred around lofty terms such as “community development”, “self-reliance”, and “sustainability”. “Community participation” has become the new catchword of development administration in the 1990s. This concept is being applied in both non-governmental and state-sponsored development programs targeting health, education, social work and rural development. “So widespread is its use that some talk of a paradigm shift to participatory development” (Chambers in Nelson & Wright, 1995;30).

The participatory development approach holds much promise; however, there are many administrative obstacles to its effective implementation. In many cases, projects and programmes outlined in proposals as participatory remain administered from the top down without systematic consultation and involvement of the intended beneficiaries. Those fortunate enough to have participated in development enterprises too often find themselves dominated by large bureaucracies which control their lives and restrict their opportunities for creative and individual initiative, and decision-making (Korten and Carner, 1984). The procedures and institutions that donor agencies bring to the field are often not conducive to

¹ For the purpose of this research development administration will be defined as “the continuous cycle of formulating, evaluating and implementing interrelated plans, policies, programs, projects, activities and other measures to reach established development objectives in a scheduled time sequence” (Stone in Dwivedi, 1994;5).

the establishment of horizontal communication linkages and thus participation. Hence, the rhetoric of participatory development rarely becomes reality, illustrating that "...the undoubted virtue of involving people in development is not as straightforward or uncontroversial as it might at first appear" (Midgley *et al.*, 1986;23).

The Evolution of the Participatory Development Approach

While participation is an ancient concept, the contemporary idea that the marginalized poor should be mobilized by external agents and encouraged to participate in decision-making was not formalized and popularized until the early 1970s (Midgley *et al.*, 1986). Although there is no clear linear sequence from non-participation to participation in development activities, there is a general progression which can be traced. Early post-war models of development were heavily influenced by the belief that capital injection, commoditization and industrialization would transform the subsistence peasantry of developing countries into participants in a modern economy. Central economic planning with an emphasis on programs promoting immediate economic growth was embraced. With careful planning and appropriate data from background studies, planners chose the most cost-effective project design for achieving a given development outcome - essentially a blueprint for implementation. The emphasis was on resources, the urban sector and most important, quick returns. Efforts directed at the grassroots were not seen as important, based on the assumption that planners and technicians could create a development momentum that would pull rural villagers into modernization.

“The textbook version of how development programming is supposed to work is labelled the blueprint approach in recognition of its emphasis on careful pre-planning” (Korten, 1980; 496). The project is treated as the basic unit of development action and becomes the instrument by which planned developmental changes are introduced into what otherwise would be the normal course of events (Korten, 1980). Projects are implemented through conventional bureaucratic structures in which programs and targets are formulated with little regard to the willingness or capability of the people to respond. These projects are time bound which means that there are excessive pressures for immediate results, as measured by goods and services delivered, making it difficult to move beyond a relief and welfare approach.

While this blueprint approach to development has an appealing sense of order, and is often well suited for large-scale, physical infrastructure such as hydroelectric dams and large-scale monocropping of improved foodcrop varieties, this approach proved inadequate in rural development where objectives are ill-defined and projects are smaller in scale (Korten, 1980). By the end of the 1960s this concept of planning was badly shaken by historical events such as the war in Vietnam and by popular movements like the struggle over poverty and the environmental movement in the 1970s.

In search of alternatives, the United Nations formalized the adoption of popular participation with the publication of two major documents in the 1970s. The first was Popular Participation in Development: Emerging Trends in Community Development (1971). This document outlined participation with reference to community development and stated that “the realization of human potentialities and man’s ability to control his environment are the

measure of real development and that an increase in material progress without a corresponding increase in the development of human capacities and social institutions would be superficial and temporary” (United Nations, 1971; 10). The UN turned to voluntary organizations as executors of participatory initiatives expecting them to be more flexible and better attuned to ‘working with people’ than state institutions. Thus participation became a way to legitimize policies and disguise what remained a paternalistic industry.

By the mid 1970s participation of project beneficiaries had become conventional wisdom. Development organizations began to define participation as the unlocking and enhancing of human potential, rather than the wholesale replacement of existing systems with foreign models (Finsterbusch and Van Wick, 1987). Participatory development at this point combined the ideas of participatory democracy - citizens participating in national economies and government decision-making - with a new vision of grassroots participation centering around empowerment of individuals and communities. Proponents of participation saw it as a means of making existing projects function better. However, project beneficiaries continued to be seen as free labour rather than collaborative decision-makers and as a result their participation was sought only once projects such as irrigation schemes, health posts and schools were ready to be constructed.

In theory, participatory development was to enable the poor to influence the agenda of development institutions and organizations, which in turn would lead to an increased capacity to act in their own interest. Based on Freirian ideals of conscientization - “the process in which men, not as recipients but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness of the sociological reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality”

(de Silva *et al.*, 1979;56 in Gran, 1983; 121), the belief was that in order to improve their lives, marginalized people needed to develop a critical insight into the structures, ideas and practices in society and in themselves that place and keep them in their positions of inequality (deKoning, 1995). This adult education approach to development implemented by many NGOs in the late 1970s began to lose its credibility by the 1980s.

This loss of appeal was due in part to the use of the educational approach in legitimizing policies and projects that remained predominantly manipulative and paternalistic (Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994). Another major reason for the declining favour of participatory methodologies was the fact that few organizations had realized the complexity of the process, and how long it would take to show results. As a consequence, many development projects returned to their top-down, pre-planned format, and the focus shifted to short-term funding and quick results. "With some exceptions, many donors began to lose interest in approaches to participatory development that emphasized empowerment, in favour of more predictable and measurable outcomes" (deKoning, 1995; 35).

In the 1980s, discussions began to examine why 30 years of conventional, technocratic and top-down forms of development did not seem to be working. Many project evaluators concluded that the failure of many development schemes could be attributed to the lack of popular participation and flexibility in their implementation and evaluation (Rondinelli, 1983; Fals Borda, 1988). As Chambers puts it, "...where people were consulted, where they participated freely, when their needs and priorities were given primacy in project identification, design, implementation and monitoring, then economic and social performance are better and development is more sustainable" (Chambers, 1991; 515). In reaction to these

past failures, the focus of participation became the process through which people become engaged in implementing projects designed to benefit them. This shift in emphasis led to the almost universal adoption of the ideal of community participation by the major multilateral development aid agencies like ILO, UNESCO, WHO, UNDP, UNRISD, and FAO, as well as by several bilateral institutions like CIDA, SIDA and GTZ. Bottom-up planning was advocated by international donors as an ideal approach in hopes that grassroots participation in the projects they financed would meet with better success (Garcia-Zamor, 1985).

At the beginning of the 1990s hopes for participation as a way out of pressing development problems were revived. With the rising trend of democratization and local empowerment, participation returned to the forefront of the development discourse. There has been an increasing emphasis on people as the ultimate purpose of development efforts. Participatory philosophy and practice are again being embraced as the 'missing link' of international development. This renewed popularity of participatory development has several origins: the recognition of past failures of top-down approach; a concern for cost-effectiveness due to funding cutbacks; a preoccupation with sustainability, and the ideological belief that the poor should be empowered to have command over their lives. People-centred development looks to the creative initiative of people as the primary development resource and rejects the assumption that projects are vehicles for application of predetermined government solutions to development problems.

This paradigm aims to "change the orientation of existing research and development structures, develop a sustainable, community-based research capability, and create new social and political institutions" (Okali and Sumberg, 1994; 2). Consequently, the process of development is redefined as a collaborative and on-going process. It has become

conceptualized as a process of planning with local people rather than for them. International agencies and non-governmental organizations are no longer regarded as being the only agents of change. Instead of serving as delivery agents of technological information and managers of quality control, fieldworkers are being asked to learn through their actions and act as 'catalytic change agents' who work in collaboration with local communities to assist them in the identification of their own needs, problems and priorities.

The far-reaching implications of this learning paradigm include: the expansion of the pool of actors to include social movements and the private sector; participation beyond the project cycle; new partnerships in development efforts; a decentralized approach which emphasizes consultation and learning; a higher priority to learning over tangible results; and the adoption of a systems approach rather than a linear development sequence.

The paradigm's focus on human resource development has changed the context within which field staff interact, requiring more dialogue with project beneficiaries. It is through collaborative group discussions, often initiated by a development catalyst, that a collective consciousness and conscientization develops. Regular and open communication between project organizers and the community is the key to the participatory approach. This communication breaks the hierarchical, authoritarian work culture identified with the blueprint approach, and makes NGOs and development institutions more transparent and more accountable to the communities and individuals with whom they work.

Thus, rather than presenting packages of technology and information to solve problems, organizations are beginning to refocus their energy, instead presenting and discussing choices and alternatives with communities. However, this paradigm complicates the administration of development projects as it creates considerable uncertainty and is

characterized by an openness to redesign and adaption to changing circumstances. It requires an organization with a well developed capacity for responsive and anticipatory adaption - organizations that embrace error, plan with people and link knowledge-building with action.

The participatory development approach holds that the ultimate purpose of development is to progressively improve the quality of life of local people by de-alienating the individual from the state through the nurturing of more socially aware, empowered individuals and a strong civil society. According to Owens and Shaw, the modernization of society involves restructuring the relationship between the state and its people such that the populace is able to exercise some influence over the national policies which affect their lives (Owens and Shaw, 1972). The participatory development approach thus shifts the focus of the development agenda from economic development and policy changes to a holistic concept within which nurturing a democratic consciousness becomes the goal.

Problem Statement

While the virtues of the participatory development approach are widely documented in the development literature, in practice much participation falls short of enabling access by project beneficiaries to decision-making because of a fundamental misunderstanding of what participation is. Furthermore, while the rhetoric and writing of development administration changes quickly, the reality of practice lags behind (Chambers, 1995). Organizations and institutions, be they government or non-governmental, are being seduced by the language of participation without fully understanding the implications of its adoption for their own structures, operating procedures and field practices. The adoption of participatory methodologies is not simply about facilitating participation, but about changing the approach

of development agencies.

The embracing of participatory development methodologies by the NGO and development community has been accompanied by a wave of training courses, workshops and manuals for both fieldworkers and trainers. While this training has resulted in some change in the style of interaction between fieldworkers and local communities, the goal of empowering and building the capacity of local communities to initiate and implement development projects independently of outside agents (which was expected to follow quickly) remains more of an ideal than a reality. Development organizations face a growing problem of determining how to train their field staff to use participatory methods effectively, sensitively and consistently as part of their standard working practice. It is with the organizational context and mechanisms through which participatory methods are being adopted by Malawian non-governmental organizations that this research is concerned.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of this research was to investigate the following question:

- Through what mechanisms do non-governmental organizations in Malawi seek to operationalize the participatory development approach in order to strengthen indigenous natural resource management and organizational capacity?

The specific research objectives were:

- 1. to investigate and compare the rationale behind the adoption of participatory development methodologies by government departments and non-governmental organizations in Malawi.**
- 2. to compare the mechanisms through which non-governmental organizations adopt and implement participatory development methodologies in community-based natural resource management initiatives in Malawian communities.**
- 3. to explore the different uses of participatory methods by non-governmental organizations and their field staff.**
- 4. to examine the nature and cause of difficulties encountered by organizations and participatory methods practitioners during natural resource management project design and implementation**
- 5. to derive from the results of objectives 1., 2, 3 and 4, a set of operational guidelines for the operationalization of participatory development methodologies and methods suitable for both government and non-governmental organizations working in natural resource management in Malawi.**

Assumptions

This research is guided by the following assumptions:

- 1. that participatory development and the empowerment of local people are positive, beneficial and desirable**

2. that the participatory development approach should be adopted by development organizations and their staff
3. that development agents have the capacity to empower others
4. that there is an enabling environment within Malawi to foster participatory development methodologies
5. that there is an cooperative relationship between the Government of Malawi and NGOs
6. that experiential training workshops and resources on participatory methods will improve their implementation by fieldworkers

Limitations of the Study

This research project was limited by a number of factors, the most prominent of which is the short amount of time and exposure I had to conduct interviews in Malawi. The total time for field research was five months.

Before arriving in Malawi I was unaware of how recently participatory development methods had been introduced to field staff and communities. The first recorded use of participatory methodologies in Malawi was in 1992 by Action Aid. Therefore, the number of NGOs using participatory development in environmental management is quite small (roughly 10 organizations), limiting the size of the researcher's sample.

Transportation and communication infrastructure is poor in Malawi. While major centres are linked by paved roads, access to rural communities is limited by poor roads and lack of public transportation. Furthermore, the state of the vehicles used for public

transportation, combined with poor road conditions make travel incredibly time consuming without access to a personal vehicle. Given that I was dependent on WUSC and the UNDP for transport, a vehicle was rarely at my disposal.

The telephone system in Malawi presented another limitation to this research. Phoning to make initial contact with organizations and schedule interview appointments in other cities proved impossible in some cases. Phone lines are regularly cut by the Postal and Telecommunications Service with no notice, and exchanges were regularly busy, preventing calls from going through. While e-mail is available in Malawi it is limited to a Fidonet service located at Chancellor College. The number of phone lines into the College are limited making connection difficult and messages are sent every five hours, delaying both reception and response time. Therefore e-mail could not be used to schedule interviews. As a result much time was wasted trying to contact people, or visiting offices only to find no one available to interview. Field staff were often out of the office and country directors left Malawi for conferences and international meetings, making scheduling interviews arduous.

Language also proved to limit the study. As previously mentioned, I intended to interview community members regarding their perceptions and reactions to participatory methodologies. However, the language barrier in rural communities made this difficult.

Last, given that the interviews measured subjective perceptions of interviewees and were combined with observations of the researcher, this research is limited in its generalizability by geographic specificity and the environmental focus of the Capacity 21 project.

Significance of Study

“To date, beyond general observations, there has been little analysis of how participation has taken place in previous projects/programmes...” (Carew-Reid et al., 1994;52). This study attempts to go beyond the traditional fragmented approach to analysis of participatory methodologies by conducting a comprehensive needs assessment on the training needs in participatory methods by Malawian field officers and project coordinators. It is hoped that this research will yield practical results in the form of a manual and experiential two-day workshop for field officers. Beyond producing a printed manual on participatory methods for use by PRA practitioners, the results of this research should be useful for a wide variety of organizations on the nature of the need for training in the use of participatory methods, as well as of monitoring and evaluation systems.

Little documentation exists to illustrate how the process of strengthening indigenous capacity works in practice, particularly in terms of local institution-building and organization. This research project should contribute to this literature, and in so doing assist international agencies, non-governmental organizations and individual development workers by providing them with a resource for future reference.

World University Service of Canada

World University Service of Canada is a non-governmental, non-profit organization which was established in 1939, and incorporated in 1957 as the Canadian affiliate of the World University Service with headquarters in Geneva. Initially its objectives were the promotion of “the ideals of peace and international understanding among university groups

around the world” (Johnston, 1988; 21) and the involvement of “the Canadian academic community in social and economic development at home and in developing countries” (WUSC Annual Review 1987, 6). Overseas volunteer service was instituted in the mid-1970s and covered a number of countries in Asia and Africa. Involvement in Malawi began in 1980 with the placement of seven teachers. Today, WUSC volunteers in Malawi work as teachers, and development workers. In 1996 there were 22 volunteers in the country.

The Malawi Applied Research Program

At the 1995 WUSC Annual General Assembly, the idea of hosting an advanced graduate seminar modelled after the existing WUSC Seminar was put forward. This proposal coincided with a suggestion by a former WUSC-Malawi volunteer to initiate a thematic seminar that dealt with environmental issues in Malawi. The Malawi Field Office combined both these ideas and created the Malawi Applied Research Program (MARP).

The first group of eight Canadian graduate students spent nine weeks in Malawi in 1995. These students worked collaboratively with Malawian counterparts in the area of natural resource management. Short-term research activities were conducted in food security, community forestry, gender and environment, and water. Training in Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques was also included.

The purpose of the Malawi Applied Research Program is to facilitate human resource development of Malawian development workers through the interaction and participatory training over a nine-week period. By collaboratively undertaking research projects, Malawian and Canadian participants acquire new skills and experience in participatory

development techniques.

Based on the positive reception by participating organizations and Canadian graduate students, WUSC, with some alterations, repeated the MARP in 1996. Instead of working together for the first part of the program, the next group of eight graduate students, of which I was a part, were placed separately with partner organizations such as Concern Universal and the United Nations Development Program.

I was to serve as the Participatory Methods Advisor for Community-level Environmental Initiatives in collaboration with the Ministry of Research and Environmental Affairs (MOREA) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). My task was to prepare a methodologies manual to assist government and non-governmental fieldworkers incorporate participatory approaches to community environmental management within their work and effectively implement the UNDP Capacity-Building for Community Management Programme.

MOREA and the UNDP requested that a manual on participatory methods be compiled, using a consultative process, for use by government and non-governmental fieldworkers, research groups, and other interested parties to enhance:

- the ability of communities and district-level organizations to integrate economic and environmental decision-making**
- the capability of communities to understand their environmental problems, prioritize their needs and identify remedial actions**
- access to information and networking on environmental issues at the district and community level**

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter elaborates on a number of key concepts and theories central to participatory development methodologies. For clarity, the chapter has been divided into two parts - the first focusing on the philosophical premise and definition of participation, the central focus of the model of participatory development and the barriers to its implementation. Part Two is meant to introduce the reader to the learning process approach, the learning organization and concepts of staff training. The conceptual framework which has directed my research is also included in Part Two.

Part I

Community Participation

While the original ideas of participation are relatively simple, the movement that developed around it is characterized by a series of debates as to its definition (Okali, Sumberg and Farrington, 1994). When the concept of popular participation was initially advanced as a key element of an alternative, human-centred development, it was intended to perform four functions - cognitive, social, instrumental and political. Its cognitive function was to regenerate the development discourse and its practices upon the basis of a different mode of understanding the realities development projects and programmes were meant to address. Participation's political function was to provide development with a new source of

legitimation, focusing on the empowering of the powerless. The instrumental function of the participatory process was to provide actors of development with new answers to the past failures of conventional development strategies, while also proposing a new strategy of involving people in their own development. Finally, participation, in social terms was the slogan "...which gave the development discourse a new lease on life. All institutions, groups and individuals involved in development activities rallied around the new construct in the hope that the participatory approach would finally enable development to meet everyone's basic needs and to wipe out poverty in all its manifestations" (Rahnema, 1994; 122).

There is currently no single definition of community participation. Therefore when one talks about people's participation in international development programmes and projects, there is no assurance that one is communicating any commonly understood meaning (Rahman, 1993). Instead, there are two overlapping schools of thought and practice - transitive participation, or participation as a means to an end, and intransitive participation which regards participation as an end in itself (Pretty, 1995; Nelson and Wright, 1995). This lack of consensus on a definition, according to Karim (1994), is due to the heterogeneous nature and contexts of the process and its goals.

Transitive participation is seen as a strategy, means, or set of techniques available to government and non-governmental agencies to involve people in implementation of programmes with the provision of labour (Santos, 1990; Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994; Kottak, 1985; Mohan Mathur, 1986; Midgley, 1986). The purpose of this type of participation is to make development programmes function better. As such, community participation is taken to mean incorporating large number of local people into public works projects, and "...is only

useful as long as it serves to help achieve national economic and political objectives” (Midgley, 1986; 99). Participants are viewed as a labour pool, an input through which human and material resources can be mobilized and tapped to complete the project more efficiently. (Lane, 1995). However, participants are rarely asked to share in making actual decisions. More often they are consulted and asked to help implement policy procedures after they have been established. While primary stakeholders are involved, they are still too often limited to being passive recipients, informants or labourers in these development efforts. This organized form of participation often leads to superficial and fragmented achievements of no lasting impact on people’s lives, their effects remaining inevitably limited, in time and space, sometimes even producing opposite effects in many unforeseen and unexpected areas (Rahnema, 1994). This concept of community participation dominated the discourse of development administration until the late 1980s.

The intransitive school perceives participation as an essential part of human growth, linking it to the need of individuals to control and construct meaning of their own lives. Participation is not seen as a process of involvement, but rather one through which individuals engage in all aspects of the development process without any predefined purpose (Pretty, 1995; Nelson and Wright, 1995). Participation is an ongoing process through which people learn to analyze and solve their own problems by collaborating in the actual decisions which affect them. Consequently, local people become better able to understand the causes of their poverty and are thus in a better position to mobilize and utilize the resources available to improve their situation. According to this school, the main aim of development is the initiation of mobilization for collective action, empowerment and institution building (Pretty,

1995; Jiggins and Shute, 1994). According to Fals Borda, Rahman and Mohan Mathur, the aim of participation is to achieve power for the oppressed and exploited, and the defence of their just interests to enable them to advance towards shared goals of social change within a participatory system (Fals Borda, 1988). As such, participation becomes a fundamental human right and an end in itself without which all efforts to alleviate their poverty are difficult if not impossible (Burkey, 1993). Kothari contends that participation is not some process of involving everyone and reducing all to a common denominator. Rather it consists of evolving institutional structures from which diverse individuals get a sense of dignity and self respect (Kothari, 1988).

In its present context, participation has come to be 'disembedded' from the socio-cultural roots which had always kept it alive (Rahmena, 1994). Not only has participation become a politically attractive slogan and an economically appealing process, but the participatory process is perceived as bringing "...to development projects what they need most in order to avoid the pitfalls and failures of the past..."(Rahmena, 1994; 119) - a close knowledge of the field reality, networks of relations, and the co-operation of organizations able to carry out developmental activities. The risk associated with this trend is that participation will be diluted so that any involvement of people in implementing new approaches to projects as labourers or through their presence at meetings is termed participatory (Ashby and Sperling, 1994).

In the present context of development administration, participation "...is considered basically in terms of the direct involvement of the people in developing local policies for socio-economic advancement and their involvement in the implementation of these policies

with a view to bringing about effective benefits directly to the people " (Panandiker, 1988; 38). The danger here is that the interpretation of what this 'participation' actually means in the context of development projects can vary according to the way agencies make sense of and value social processes. However, Rahnema believes that participation "...is too serious and ambivalent a matter to be taken lightly, or reduced to an amoeba word lacking in any precise meaning, or a slogan, or fetish or, for that matter, only an instrument or a methodology" (Rahnema, 1994;126). Each definition holds that power must be devolved from centralized, bureaucratic governments and international development institutions and redistributed to facilitate an increase in local involvement and control over the decision-making process.

As organizations become more familiar with the philosophy of participation, it is becoming more and more apparent that "...the first step in achieving genuine participation is a process in which the rural poor themselves become more aware of their own situation, of the socio-economic reality around them, of their own problems, and what measures they themselves can take to begin changing their situation" (Burkey, 1993; 57). In order to improve their lives, people who are or have been marginalized "...need to develop a critical insight into the structures, ideas and practices in society and in themselves that place and keep them in positions of inequality" (de Koning, 1995; 34). Paulo Freire refers to it as a process of problem-solving education or conscientisation - "...the stimulation of self-reflected critical awareness in people of their social reality and of their ability to transform that reality by their conscious collective action" (Burkey, 1993; 55). By looking into one's self and using that which one hears, sees and experiences to gain an inner conviction that they, together with

other like-minded people are capable of changing their lives. This is a process that occurs within an individual and must be undertaken by the people who can decide what their important needs and experiences are. Therefore it can not be imposed from the outside nor can it be undertaken by experts (Burkey, 1993).

Burkey (1993) states that the first step in involving the poor in participating in their own development is Participatory Action Research (PAR). The fundamental objectives of PAR according to Burkey should be to increase the fieldworker's understanding of the local context and to increase the insight of the local people, especially the marginalized, "...into what factors and relationships are the root causes of, and contributing factors to, their poverty" (Burkey, 1993;60).

Thus, individuals are engaged as both subject and object in the process of participatory action research, creating knowledge for and about themselves. It is upon this new knowledge that individuals and communities reflect, base their decisions, and take collective action (Burkey, 1993). It is the initiation of a permanent process of action and reflection that participatory action research seeks to establish, as it is through such a process that communities increase their knowledge of themselves and their situation, thereby gaining greater control over their own lives. According to Paulo Freire "attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into the populist pitfall and transform them into masses which can be manipulated (Burkey, 1993; 57). Therefore, the role of external change agents should be one of dialoguing with the people about their view of the world rather than to speak to them about our own view or attempt to impose that

view on them. More importantly, unless participatory development approaches are "...explicitly linked with an educational process which enables groups of people with little power and resources to gain more control over their own lives, the term "participatory" remains meaningless" (de Koning, 1995; 35).

Training for Transformation

Fieldworkers have often had difficulty in translating the philosophy and theory of Freire into practical action and faced apathy and fatalism in the communities within which they work. Training for Transformation (TfT) was developed to assist fieldworkers overcome these obstacles and encourage the development of self-reliant, creative communities.

Based on the fundamentals of adult learning, TfT integrates Paulo Freire's approach with group methods essential for participatory education, organizational development and social analysis. TfT is a dynamic process in which education and development are totally interwoven and through which it tries to "...help each person and each community become more and more capable of, and committed to, the service of the people and national transformation" (Hope and Timmel Book 1, 1984; 12).

This approach to community development believes that community workers have an important role in creating a friendly, affirming 'climate' and providing a process to help the community discuss their own context in the most satisfactory and productive way possible. Therefore, it attempts to build the fieldworkers' understanding of the underlying factors affecting communication; content, non-verbal communication, feelings, attitudes, concerns

and hidden agendas. Through a process of reflection, fieldworkers are sensitized to the effects of their own behaviour while they build an understanding of the reasons why particular methods are used in particular contexts. Thus, TfT focuses primarily on the process of community development.

The Participatory Development Approach

Self-reliant participatory development is an educational and empowering process in which people, in partnership with each other and with those able to assist them, identify problems and needs, mobilize resources, and assume responsibility themselves to plan, manage control and assess the individual and collective actions that they themselves decide upon.

(Askew, in Burkey, 1993;56)

Defined as such, the participatory development approach is not a set of tools to be given to clients but rather a process rooted in the belief that people are able to be responsible for their own lives if given the space to employ their capabilities and learn from their experiences. The foundation of the participatory development approach is the belief that increased partnership and participation of local people in the decision-making process is the basis upon which 'just' societies rest (Kronenberg, 1986).

Participatory development approaches thus shift the focus of the development agenda from economic development and policy changes to a holistic concept within which nurturing basic democratic political values and the birth of a democratic consciousness becomes the goal. The well-being of people is seen as being dependent on more than just economics. Non-material elements such as self-esteem and empowerment are equally important.

The objectives of the participatory development approach as outlined by Burkey are the following:

- the creation of self awareness and a conscious understanding of their own situation by the poor both individually and collectively
- the creation of self reliant groups/associations having a strong sense of self-identity and group responsibility and capable of setting priorities, planning, implementing and assessing their own projects and activities by mobilizing their own resources
- the establishment of a viable, self-sustaining income generating activities owned and operated by individuals, families and small groups
- the establishment of viable and just political systems and processes which promote equitable distribution of resources as well as promote human/individual rights
(Burkey, 1993; 206-207)

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) formally adopted the participatory development approach in 1981 with the publication of The Peasants' Charter: The Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (1981). According to the FAO, "rural development strategies can realize their full potential only through the motivation, active involvement and organization at the grassroots level of rural people with special emphasis on the least advantaged, in conceptualizing and diagnosing policies and programmes and in creating administrative social and economic institutions" (FAO, 1981;13).

The guidelines and principles outlined in The Peasants' Charter begin with "that the fundamental purpose of development is individual and social betterment, development of endogenous capabilities and improvement of the living standards of all people, in particular the rural poor" (Ibid.; 3).

Obstacles to Participatory Development

While little consensus exists as to the definition of participation, there does appear to be some agreement amongst academics surrounding the reasons the participatory approach is so rarely harnessed into effective practice. Perhaps the most commonly cited obstacle to effective implementation of the participatory development approach is development agencies themselves.

Authors such as Stiefel and Wolfe and Eade have recognized "...that much of what passes for popular participation in development and relief work is not in anyway empowering to the poorest and most disadvantaged" (Eade, 1995; 131). Thus, participatory approaches often highlight the fundamental contradictions between the goals of NGOs - to foster self-reliant development - and the hierarchical, top-down structure which they establish themselves within developing countries; as institutions there to stay (Eade, 1995). NGOs themselves, their systems, structures and norms existed before the concepts of participation became part of the development paradigm (Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994; Gow and VanSant, 1985). Developed to regulate programmes rather than administer them, NGOs are often highly bureaucratic institutions within which power and decision-making are usually centralized. Therefore, many NGOs by their very nature are non-participatory and non-democratic and lack the theoretical grounding in the ideology of participatory development necessary to give it direction and impact (Vivian and Maseko, 1994).

This dissonance between the participatory ideals espoused as organizational policy and administrative efficiency frequently militates against the emergence of the type of participatory mode advocated in the literature on participatory development (Midgley *et al.*, 1986). Consequently, participation most often becomes a catchword without genuine meaning; an

ideal rather than a reality. This is due to logistical difficulties in operationalizing such a strategy given the organizational structure of many NGOs (Burkey, 1993; Vivian and Maskeo, 1994).

Schneider (1995) and Gran (1983) contend that the bureaucratic imperatives of security, control and growth upon which these agencies are founded are fundamentally opposed to the goal of human liberation inherent within the process of participatory development. James and Ndalama conclude that “the leadership style, while espousing democratic decision-making is often authoritarian and alienating, creating a destructive organizational culture” (James and Ndalama, 1996; 7) for the cultivation of participatory development methodologies. Gran (1983), Stiefel and Wolfe (1994) and Eade (1994) add that the concentration of power in organizations, their ideologies and economic doctrines, along with their exclusionary operating procedures also create barriers to participatory development.

This bureaucratic orientation of NGOs, according to Stiefel and Wolfe, is fundamentally a problem of insecurity, technocratic bias, arrogance and lack of humility (Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994). “Excessive pressures for immediate results as measured by goods and services delivered, drive out attention to institution building and make it difficult to move beyond a relief and welfare approach to poverty...” (Korten, 1980:484).

Gow and VanSant (1985) attribute the bureaucratic structure of NGOs to their financial dependency on external donors. According to them, demands for financial accountability placed on NGOs require a significant level of bureaucratic control which then contributes to an institutional preference for predesigned, capital-intensive projects whose objectives and results are more concrete and tangible. “While many programs initiated by external agencies tend to use participatory methods for planning, they do not make corresponding changes in

resource allocation mechanisms to local institutions, and they tend to retain financial decision-making powers for themselves” (Carew-Reid *et al.*, 1994; 73). Funds are rarely available to finance in-depth research prior to project design and thus there is no opportunity for community participation in the design and planning stage of the project cycle. According to Carew-Reid *et al.* (1994), many NGOs and funding agencies perceive this as too costly in terms of organizational time and administration. It is his opinion that this resistance robs communities of the basic formative experience of learning how to identify and prioritize development goals, effectively hampering the potential growth of local institutions and resulting in poor sustainability of programmes (Carew-Reid *et al.*, 1994).

Korten (1980) also notes that excessive pressure from donors for immediate results and their bias towards funding time-bounded projects rather than programs contributes to the neglect of a participatory process that results in capacity building for sustained operation and maintenance of development initiatives. Furthermore, donors demands for upfront planning of projects and programs, coupled with rigorous adherence to fast-paced implementation schedules and pre-planned specifications virtually ensures that the real decisions remain with professional technicians and fieldworkers rather than with the community (Korten, 1980).

Therefore there is a substantial gap between what donors espouse as policy and what they require from the NGOs they fund. Demands for detailed planning and subsequent adherence to line-item budgets pre-empts the participatory process and forces fieldworkers and project managers to act as if they know what they are doing prior to consultation with communities. Given their dominant influence on the programming strategies and methodologies of NGOs, Korten feels that funding agencies must acquire a greater understanding of the requirements of the participatory development approach (Korten, 1980).

According to Burkey (1993), there is an urgent need to revise policies and procedures in order to eliminate bureaucratic hindrances to financing participatory programmes. He is supported by Kelley, who adds that the rigid administrative structures of funding agencies which require reports to be written in a compartmentalized framework, contribute to a dilution of the participatory efforts of change agents at the community level (Kelley, 1996). “Ample leeway must be provided for reserves for unspecified activities which are expected to arise as a result of the participatory process in the financial year” (Burkey, 1993; 125). This implies that if organizations and their donors are to commit themselves to participation in deed as in theory, “...greater attitudinal and administrative flexibility is required” (Kelley, 1996; 256).

However, participatory projects are not easily integrated into the current management methods. Incorporating participation into projects requires a decentralized approach and an emphasis on consultation as opposed to rigid timetables (Beaulieu and Manceukian, 1995). Yet, administrators seek stability and are likely, therefore, to continue applying human and material resources in search of predictable patterns and results (Gran, 1983). Moreover, most NGOs and donor agencies are administratively ill-prepared or simply unwilling to change their operational styles to foster more participatory development initiatives. “The managerial skills needed to support this process are often overlooked, but are vitally important. It is easier to simply slot methods into routine procedures, treating them merely as means to ends that avoid the risk of challenging established interests” (Cornwall and Fleming, 1995;10).

“The successful implementation of participative planning is directly tied to the culture of the organization and the work area” (Spencer, 1989, xiv). The consensus is that until organizations are guided by overall sets of people-centred principles, built on flexibility and

on rewarding managers for taking risks inherent in the reality of development, managers will act according to the present prevailing norms and the gap between participatory theory and practice will continue (Korten, 1980; Gran, 1983; Spencer, 1989; Burkey, 1993; Mohan Mathur, 1986).

Conclusion

Despite the writings of the authors cited above, this crisis of bureaucracy is rarely debated outside the bureaucratic corridors where it originated. However, the fact remains that as Quarles van Ufford states "...development policy processes are fraught with basic contradictions which must be acknowledged and not obscured by diplomatic language or a proliferation of new strategies and solutions" (Quarles van Ufford *et al.*, 1988; 34).

Part II

Introduction

The inadequacy of the administrative systems of development organizations to adequately handle the new development tasks associated with participation is attributed by Korten (1980) to the fact that earlier development efforts failed to appreciate the true significance of administrative capability as a key factor in the overall development process. The feeling amongst experts in organizational development is that development planning in organizations has been myopic in its neglect of the human factor and its preoccupation with economic factors (Hope, 1984).

Until recently, it has been assumed that the current administrative systems are sufficient to carry out the sophisticated tasks associated with participatory development. Development

administrators who struggle to offset their ignorance and lack of control over the implementation process are beginning to realize that in order to prevent participatory development from becoming a mere slogan, a genuine participatory ideology must be adopted (Quarles van Ufford, 1988). Wider issues of organizational and administrative systems must be addressed so that the approach can be operationalized into effective practice. It is not enough to relegate responsibility for participation solely to the fieldworkers working at the grassroots level, for it is the administrative level of NGOs and their donors which must establish the environment and mechanisms through which participation can be facilitated. “Those promoting participation need to pay attention to the relationships within and among bureaucracies, and between bureaucracies and clients” (Uphoff *et al.*, 1983; 81). Without a significant change in this administrative system, the central philosophy of participatory development will continue to be missed. This next section will examine the suggested change in organizational and administrative systems by such authors as Korten (1980), Mohan Mathur (1986), Scoones (1995), Pretty (1995), Senge (1994), Casey (1993), Sadler (1995) and Thomas (1985).

Learning Paradigm

One of the most frequently cited articles on learning process approach is Korten’s “Community Organization and Rural Development: A Learning Process Approach” (1980). In it he states that Third World development assistance programmes must be part of a holistically perceived learning process rather than a bureaucratically mandated blueprint design.

With participation now seen as the goal of many international development programmes, the task of development cannot continue as it has in the past. Korten and Mohan Mathur agree that development not only needs a new orientation, but that the perception of the rural poor as passive recipients of projects must change if participatory methods are to realize the goal of promoting development (Mohan Mathur, 1986). Both authors feel that the solution does not lie in eliminating the bureaucracy of development organizations, but rather in establishing organizations "...with a capacity for embracing error, learning with the people, and building new knowledge and institutional capacity through action" (Korten, 1980; 480).

"As development theory and practice evolved itself towards participatory strategies and the promotion of sustainable development, organizational interventions shifted to building capacity in existing institutions" (Booy, 1989; 2). Booy states that the focus of development has shifted to one of process and improving capacity rather than social engineering and technical fixes. This shift, according to Korten, means that development actions of the 1990s must "be guided by a new paradigm based on alternative ideas, values, social technique and technology" (Korten, 1984; 300). The dominant logic of this new paradigm is that of a balanced human ecology, and its goal is human growth in terms of greater realization of human potentials. Korten's model of the learning process approach to building program strategies and appropriate organizational competence "...suggests new programs should progress through three developmental stages in which the focal concern is successively on learning to be effective, learning to be efficient, and learning to expand" (Korten, 1980; 480).

Midgley also calls for the adoption of a process approach to planning development programmes - one that rejects the blueprint assumption that "...projects are simply vehicles for the application of predetermined solutions to developmental problems..." (Midgley, 1986;

100). This approach emphasizes the ability to discover and develop relationships through dialogue between planners and people of the community (Booy, 1989). It reverses learning to a bottom-up process, therefore, “gearing up aid agencies for participatory development goes beyond procedural changes and implies a shift towards people-centred development” (Schneider, 1995:52).

For this shift in paradigm from one of things to one of people to be used on any scale in an empowering mode requires widespread changes in bureaucratic procedures and cultures, including participatory management (Chambers, 1994). Gow and VanSant (1985) state that the decentralization of bureaucracies and evolution of participation is a gradual, evolutionary process in which project staff and beneficiaries try alternative strategies. Booy outlines various strategy interventions available to development practitioners which promote a social learning approach to institutional development. These include designing strategies for purposive learning, managing a learning process and providing the impetus for changing to a learning process (Booy, 1989). The learning process allows for variation in bureaucratic structures and can be adapted to political, social, economic and physical changes during project implementation; and transfers ownership of programs to implementers creating a supportive atmosphere (Gow and VanSant, 1985). This type of approach not only “...assumes considerable uncertainty and is characterized by an openness to redesign and adaptation to changing circumstances” (Gow and VanSant, 1985:124), but takes a considerable amount of time, highlighting that quick fix approaches will not promote social learning.

Korten states that organizations and development institutions are not investing enough in the difficult process of building community problem-solving capacity within the communities they work and thus there is insufficient integration of the technical and social

components of development action (Korten, 1980). "To see 'social learning' and the reorienting of bureaucracies as technological tools which development agents must give to their clients without changing their own behaviour or reorienting the performance of their own organizations would miss the critical element of social learning theory" (Thomas, 1985; 27).

Organizational changes necessary to arouse active participation include placing priority on a learning process - sharing knowledge, creativity and commitment - over tangible results and adopting a systems approach rather than a linear or segmented approach to development (Beaulieu and Manceukian, 1995). Recognizing that bureaucratic practices constitute formidable barriers to participatory development, some organizations are beginning to introduce reforms.

Organizational Change

The basis for the sort of administrative reform being called for in NGOs is "...innovation; the injection of new ideas and new people in a new combination of tasks and relationships into the policy and administrative process" (Hope, 1984; 82). Dichter and Rahman agree that in order to foster the basics of popular participation among institutions, indirect means such as non-hierarchical learning and education, "building each other" and "sharpening each other" through mutual dialogue and inquiry are required (Dichter, 1992; Rahman, 1993). This institutional development is intended to improve the quality of an organization's work, and is not the same as institutionalization or institutional growth; it is a consolidation of an organization's skills and resources. In the words of Beaulieu and Manceukian (1995), priority must be given to a learning process over tangible results. Midgley further states that

organizational change needs "...a firm political commitment [by all staff members] to adopt participatory methods on a wide enough scale to transform the rhetoric of participation into concrete action" (Midgley, 1986;104).

Reform means attacking the procedural elements which block participation by the poor and marginal groups (Gran, 1983). "If the administrative system operates such that only those who share the values and norms inherent in its dynamic are able to participate in the benefits it has to offer, then there is little possibility for marginal client groups to link successfully with that system" (Thomas and Brinkerhoff, 1978;7). "The lack of sufficient operational know-how continues to be a serious obstacle to participation-oriented development" (Mohan Mathur, 1995; 166).

Cernea (1985) suggests that there are significant transaction costs involved in shifting from an old to a new administrative approach. Superimposing the new approach over existing bureaucratic structures is not possible without some sort of administrative reorganization, the establishment of organizational tools and new attitudes. This implies that participatory development is no quick fix but instead presents NGOs with what Uphoff (1984) describes as a challenge to create new patterns and norms of behaviour to meet the new needs of communities. According to Uphoff, creating new patterns of behaviour demands that organizations invest more resources in observing, assessing, synthesizing, interpreting and reflecting about the development process (Uphoff, 1984)

Learning Organizations

The widespread desire for organizational transformation is not matched by an understanding of how to bring it about. Bonvin (1995), deKoning(1995) and Senge (1990) agree that in order to address the inequalities of traditional development administration, “an institutional learning process needs to be developed to by-pass the bureaucratic barriers to participatory development” (Bonvin in Schneider, 1995;22). All other reforms are limited unless NGOs are set up in a way that requires continuous learning and the integration of research, reflection and action as outputs (deKoning, 1995).

Senge presents the most comprehensive outline of how organizations can accomplish such changes. His thesis, which will be discussed in depth in The conceptual framework, centres around the creation of a learning organization; “an organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Senge, 1990;1). The essence of a learning organization, according to Senge, is a fundamental shift in mind-set by both individual staff and the organization as a collective.

Senge develops his detailed argument around one central idea; that there are five learning disciplines that organizations must work on - personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking- in order to become learning organizations. These five disciplines differ from more familiar management disciplines in that they are ‘personal’ disciplines; dealing with how people think, what they truly want and how individuals interact and learn from one another (Senge, 1990). Senge states that “it is vital that the five disciplines develop as an ensemble. Without a systematic orientation there is no motivation

to look at how the disciplines interrelate” (Senge, 1990; 12).

Rather than create a specific road map for creating a learning organization, Senge proposes that each organization has a destiny - a deep purpose that expresses the organization’s purpose. Consequently, the deepest challenge to building a learning organization is “...creating a sense of purpose that binds people together and propels them to fulfill their deepest aspirations” (Senge, 1990; 298). It is Senge’s belief that learning organizations are developed through a long-term process of acquiring fundamental new ways of thinking and interacting, as well as shifting deep beliefs and assumptions about the world; one that may take years to master (Senge, 1990; 1994).

Training

While the literature on training is exhaustive, this section examines literature specific to the training needs and strategies of non-governmental organizations. “Development project training has two objectives: a direct objective to improve organizational performance and an indirect objective to enhance an organization’s ability to function effectively within a changing environment” (Honadle and Hannah, 1982: 295). Booth and Ndalama add that the intended purpose of training is to improve an individual’s or group’s understanding of problem identification or problem-solving and enhance their ability to respond more effectively through the acquisition of new skills (Booth and Ndalama, 1994).

Appropriate training is commonly perceived as essential to the success and effectiveness of development work (Eade, 1994). There is a perception that the proper response to new ideas, such as participatory development, is to train everyone in their application. This reflects an institutional assumption that if the correct quantifiable inputs are inserted into

development organizations, than certain pre-determined outputs will occur (CDRA, 1994/95). However, “rural extension training and field attachment is riddled with many difficulties stemming from philosophy, orientation, expectations, motivation and job or community perception” (Nturibi, 1982; 110). Thus as Pretty et al. (1995) point out, the notion of training as a simple solution is flawed.

Training itself does not equal organizational development nor human resource development. Neither, as the UNDP illustrates, should it be seen as a panacea to solve institutional coordination or structural problems (UNDP, 1994). While training is important in strengthening staff understanding of new participatory approaches, it alone will not convert a conventional institution into a people-centred one (Ndalama and Sullivan, 1996). Furthermore, although it is often equated with capacity-building or institutional development, the Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) agrees with Ndalama and Booth, that not only is training only appropriate at certain times and in certain circumstances, but that it “...can only address a limited number of systems in an organization and depends on the structures and strategies of the organization to facilitate and encourage individuals to utilise the acquired knowledge and skills to bring about change” (Booth and Ndalama, 1994). In reality, there are many critical organizational needs and problems that cannot be addressed by training.

Pretty et al. contend that too often, organizations wanting training for staff do not thoroughly examine the needs of their organization nor the implications of staff training in terms of follow-up training and institutional modifications (Pretty et al., 1995). A common perception amongst development organizations is that training involves simply putting on a course or series of courses. Pre-packaged training programmes are examples of this belief,

but are at best paltry responses to the intricacies of organizational development (Eade, 1994).

Traditional training programmes emphasize the transfer of technical skills and knowledge from the trainers to the trainees. According to Honadle and Hannah there are six weaknesses to traditional training which prevent it from meeting its objectives. They contend that traditional training: (a) is place-oriented; (b) emphasizes teaching the skills trainers know rather than determining management needs or building upon knowledge trainees already possess; (c) expects learning to occur by inference from artificial examples; (d) draws trainees from only one management level at a time; (e) fails to examine actual performance and skills, and (f) is treated as a discrete event rather than as a one step in a longer term management development activity (Honadle and Hannah, 1982). As a consequence, an alternative approach is required.

Burkey supports this thesis, citing the fact that the content, methodology, knowledge and the setting of training sessions are all determined by the trainers, making it essentially undemocratic, hierarchical and non-participatory (Burkey, 1993). Such training reflects the bureaucratic tendency to isolate discrete pieces of knowledge or methodologies from one another, focusing on transferring technology rather than espousing new ideas and approaches to the learner. Booy, like Honadle and Hannah, suggests that rather than transfer the knowledge and skills of the trainer to the trainees, “the focus should be to enhance the knowledge and skills of participants...” (Booy, 1989;34)

The alternative approach advocated by Honadle and Hannah, Booy and Burkey has two major characteristics: it is action-oriented and reflects an organizational capacity development bias rather than a transfer of knowledge to individuals bias. While the short-term objective of this approach is more efficient and effective organizational action, the long-term objective

is developmental capacity (Honadle and Hannah, 1982).

“Improved organizational performance requires dealing with the organization as a structured unit rather than just as an unstructured collection of individuals” (Honadle and Hannah, 1982;298). More important, training of change agents can help to change the situation of an organization only if accompanied by a serious commitment to developing organizational capacity within the parent organization concerned (Ndalama and Sullivan, 1994). Carroll, Schmidt and Bebbington outline that this requires not only specialized training in new methods and technologies but also in general aspects of administration, accounting and management (Carroll, Schmidt and Bebbington, 1996). Furthermore, they propose that training in technical, social and organizational skills is mutually reinforcing and therefore should be offered in an integrated approach which facilitates a “...learning-by-doing and a continuous sequence of activities moving through the cycle of teaching, application, review, reflection, exchange, feedback and improved application”(Ibid; 32).

Honadle and Hannah propose an action-oriented training that minimizes place bias, involves multiple organizational levels, and uses real problems to demonstrate. Their alternative also “...emphasizes the organization and attempts to focus participant knowledge and skills on pertinent issues rather than transferring trainer knowledge and skills to trainees” (Honadle and Hannah, 1982;299) . As such, this perspective on training goes beyond the emphasis on organizational development to include structural considerations such as incentive systems and resource allocation as critical dimensions affecting organizational performance.

To Mwakanema, the development of skills for managing a learning process are more important than mastery of a particular subject matter such as participatory development or participatory rural appraisal (Mwakanema, 1995). However, James and Ndalama feel that

such internal management skills are not often adequately addressed in training of change agents (James and Ndalama, 1995). The implication of the above conclusions is the development of long-term training programmes which develop the social and human skills in communication and an understanding of their role as change agents in the participatory development process as well as "...limiting of the role of 'one-shot' courses or seminars to situations where specific information needs to be conveyed quickly" (Carroll, Schmidt and Bebbington, 1996;32).

It is the opinion of Pretty et al. that "a lot of training efforts is wasted because there is too little support from the relevant people who could provide incentives for the participants to change their practice when they return from the course" (Pretty et al., 1995;15). Training is only effective when it is part of a well designed overall strategy, which enables participants to put what they have learned into practice (Eade, 1994). According to the Community Development Resource Association (CDRA), unless an organization has developed its capacity to harness training and acquisition of skills sufficiently, training courses are unlikely to 'take' and skills will not adhere (CDRA, 1994/95). It is therefore suggested by Pretty et al. that a session be included in training courses that deals with the institutional implications of the new skills or techniques being learned in order to foster a higher level of appreciation of potential ramifications amongst change agents (Pretty et al., 1995).

Burkey believes that given the very special role that change agents play in participatory development organizations need to place more attention on human resource development; not only the acquisition and application of relevant skills and knowledge but also the appropriate values and proper attitudes and emphasize effective linking of theory and practice. Such training takes time and is an ongoing process, as it is essentially a personal experience

depending on the commitment and participation of each trainee (Burkey, 1993).

Thus, the literature suggests moving beyond training for individuals within development organizations towards an action-based approach to enhancing organizational performance and capability. By putting organizational capacity at centre stage, the essence of development once again is highlighted. While Honadle and Hannah, Burkey, Ndalama and Booth acknowledge that this approach is no panacea, they propose that those who take up the challenge of moving beyond packaged training will be rewarded in both their rural and organizational development efforts.

Conceptual Framework

Non-governmental organizations are dynamic, multidimensional institutions whose principles rarely translate straightforwardly into agendas for action. Not only must they respond to the agendas and priorities of donors in order to receive funding, but they must also relate to the government of the countries within which they work, their systems of development administration and national structures controlling people's access to resources. Furthermore, most NGOs hold in tension a range of organizational and individual values, attitudes and beliefs which are not totally compatible with each other. Commonly set by head offices, organizational values, objectives, mandates, priorities and methodologies influence the structure of the organization, its working environment, projects and working relationships amongst fieldworkers and between the organization and communities. This provides senior staff and fieldworkers little opportunity or flexibility to determine their own strategies or select methods for carrying out their work based on their own values, experience and the local context. Thus NGOs, and more important, fieldworkers, function within a context which is

to a large part determined for them, not by them (Fowler, 1992).

“For historical and practical reasons organizational development has been equated with staff training” (Fowler, 1992; 18). There appears to be little recognition that the integration of new methodologies requires a change from within an organization and “...depends on the structures and strategies of the organization to facilitate and encourage individuals to utilize the acquired knowledge and skills to bring about change” (Booth and Ndalama, 1995; 35). Concentrating on their service delivery, organizations continue to adjust to new contexts by first concentrating on developing the skills of their fieldworkers. As a result, organizational development and the integration of the new approach frequently fails to penetrate past a change in the provision of financial resources and individual skills training (James and Ndalama, 1995).

According to Fowler and the CDRA, organizational change is rarely achieved through training unless the capacity of the organization to harness training and acquisition of new skills has been developed sufficiently and the training is part of an overall organizational development programme (Fowler, 1992; CDRA, 1995). Training courses do not ‘take’, and skills do not adhere within organizations that do not know where they are going and why; which have a poorly developed sense of responsibility for themselves; and which are inadequately structured (CDRA, 1995).

Pretty *et al.* (1995), view this trend as symptomatic of organizations who neglect two critical areas which influence how new or modified rural development methodologies are incorporated and implemented - the organizational learning environment and the institutional environment. According to Pretty *et al.*, field methods, the learning environment and institutional support represent key starting points and preconditions for the adoption of

alternative methodologies. However, none of these by itself is likely to be sustainable as the three spheres overlap and rely upon one another (See Figure 1).

Field methods in E are likely to be abandoned by extension staff who have little institutional support or an organizational learning environment in which to work. Similarly G, a positive learning environment without any institutional support or field methods will remain marginal and probably short-lived, typically relying on one person or group of individuals. Where there is only institutional support for the specific field methods, as in F, it is likely to remain only rhetoric and intent unless cultivated by a responsive learning environment and applied directly in the field. (Pretty et al., 1995). It is sector A that Pretty et al (1995) suggest organizations strive for. It is here where support for field methods exists at the top level of the organization, authority is more decentralized and linkages are encouraged with other institutions.

Senge et al. (1994) in an effort to explain the process of creating a learning organization further expand on the interaction of these three interlinked circles. By integrating these two theories one can gain a better understanding of the internal dynamics of non-governmental organizations attempting to integrate new methodologies into their work.

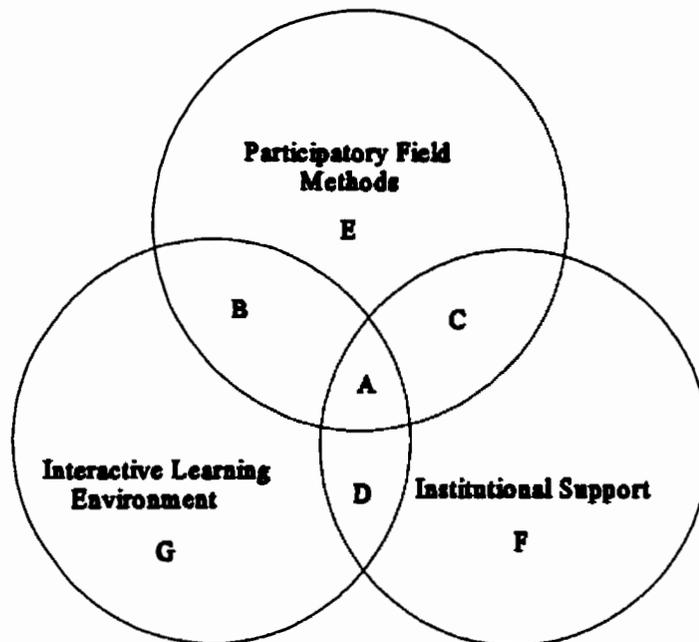


Figure 1 - Key Starting Points

Source: Pretty et al, 1995;63.

As mentioned in the literature review, Senge contends that the essence of a learning organization is a fundamental shift in mind-set by both individual staff and the organization as a collective. In addition to new skills and capabilities, awareness and sensibilities, staff are required to acquire new attitudes and beliefs. The process through which these are secured is referred to by Senge as a “deep learning cycle.

The acquisition of new skills and capabilities through training alters what organizational staff are able to do and understand. Over time they begin to see and experience the world differently, which alters their beliefs and attitudes about the world. This shift in attitude then enables further development of skills and capabilities (See Figure 2.).

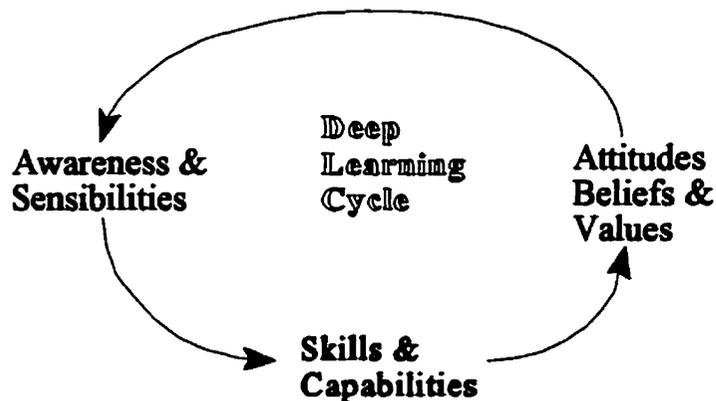


Figure 2 - Deep Learning Cycle

Source: Senge et al., 1994; 17.

However, such learning does not happen in any enduring fashion unless it is sparked by people's own ardent interest and curiosity. Without this spark of interest, the effects of training last for a while but without commitment, skills are systematically forgotten, and often the principles and theories which made the training seem so worthwhile in the first place are the first to be forgotten (Senge, 1994).

It is Senge's claim is that the organizational dilemma of training fieldworkers to use new methods effectively, sensitively and consistently as part of their standard working practice lies not with the tools themselves, but with their implementation. The learning environment within which these new methods are acquired must be dynamic, interactive, focus on problem-solving, and be field-based in order to facilitate successful integration of new field methodologies into an organization's everyday operations and activities. More important, Senge states that "...if learning is related to a person's own vision, then that person will do whatever he or she can keep learning alive" (Senge, 1994; 193). This is the discipline of

personal mastery.

Those who are convinced that their personal vision of reality is important, and who realize that in order to reach that result they must change their life and commit themselves to that result assimilate the vision at a level where it changes more of their behaviour (Senge, 1994). This produces a sustained sense of energy and enthusiasm which then produces some tangible results (implementation and experimentation with new methodologies). Working effectively in an interdependent organization requires staff to expand their personal mastery, to think of all resources as shared.

While the central causality of change within organizations is the learning cycle, this cycle is difficult to initiate, as deep beliefs, values and assumptions of individuals are not like light switches that can be turned on and off at will. Instead, the key focus for activity and thus formation of a learning organization occurs within a larger area of action or organizational design made of three components - guiding ideas, innovations in infrastructure; theory methods and tools - all of which must be given equal weight or the triangle collapses (See Figure 3).

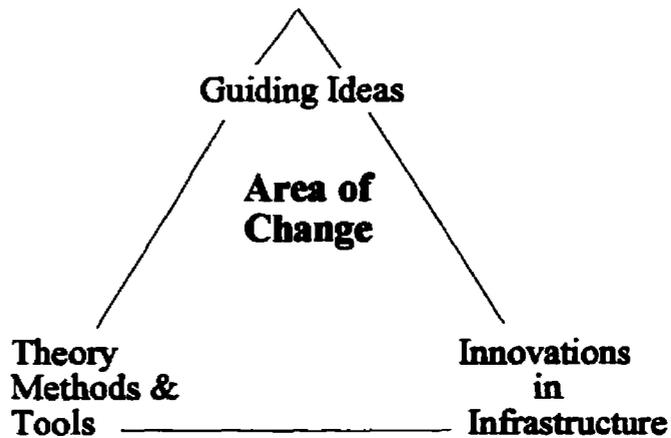


Figure 3 - Area of Change

Source: Senge et al., 1994;22

Guiding ideas for learning organizations start with vision, values and purpose - what the organization stands for and what its members seek to create. A vision is a picture of the future individuals and the organization as a whole wish to create. However, it is not an idea, but rather a force in people's hearts. The first step in mastering the discipline of shared vision within an organization is for those at the administrative level to give up traditional beliefs that visions are always announced from 'on high'. When individuals lack their own sense of vision, all they can do is sign up for someone else's which results in compliance not commitment. Compliant people accept the vision presented but do not truly want the vision in and of itself (Senge, 1990). "Without a pull toward some goal which people truly want to achieve, the forces in support of the status quo can be overwhelming" (Senge, 1980;209). It is not until people in an organization truly share vision that they are connected, bound together by a common aspiration.. To be genuinely shared, visions must emerge from many people reflecting on the organization's purpose. Therefore, vision cannot be dictated from

above but must be generated from a never-ending process of reflection and conversation where people articulate their common stories and ideas (Senge et al., 1990). It is within such an atmosphere, that people excel, learn and adopt new methodologies, not because they are told to but because they want to (Senge, 1990).

Innovations in infrastructure are “...the means through which an organization makes available resources to support people in their work” (Senge et al., 1990; 32). Senge suggests that in order to build a learning organization, leaders must review, develop and improve the infrastructural mechanisms to ensure that their staff have the resources they need - time, management support, money, information, ready contact with their colleagues and more (Senge et al., 1990). However, these changes in infrastructure often have far less impact than expected, as they frequently conflict with the organization’s established guiding ideas (Senge, 1990). Thus infrastructural reform must be linked to guiding ideas in order to avoid a reactive response from staff and instead facilitate a smooth reform.

The “most important innovations in infrastructure for learning organizations will enable people to develop capabilities like systems thinking within the context of their jobs” (Senge et al., 1990; 34). Developed over the past 50 years, systems thinking is a conceptual framework for seeing wholes, interrelationships and patterns of change rather than things. “In mastering systems thinking, one gives up the assumption that there must be an individual, or individual agent responsible for change” (Senge, 1990; 69). It is a discipline for seeing the structures that underlie complex situations and serves as the cornerstone in constructing Senge’s learning organization.

In order to make effective organizational change, one must look at the whole organization, rather than divide it into component parts. Without systems thinking, there is

little incentive or ability to see the interconnections between and interdependencies amongst the spheres of new methods and tools, interactive learning environment and institutional support (Senge, 1990).

Last, there are theory, methods and tools - sets of propositions about the world which are subjected to repeated tests - which help enhance the capabilities of individuals and organizations orient themselves toward what they care about. This corner of the action triangle represents bodies of actionable knowledge comprised of underlying theories, and practical tools and methods derived from these theories (Senge, 1994). Methods and tools such as participatory rural development techniques need to be built on underlying theories because without them, the tool is unlikely to add to our store of generalizable knowledge. Without an underlying theory you get tools which might work in one situation but you do not know why, and thus we are unable to appreciate its limitation. Similarly, people cannot develop the new skills and capabilities required for deeper learning without an underlying theory, method or tool. Methods and tools of learning organizations will be impossible to implement widely without changes to traditional guiding ideas in management (Senge, 1990; 39).

The power of these two ideas - deep learning cycle and area of action - is generated when the different pieces are put together. The action triangle represents the most tangible elements of developing a learning organization, dealing with guiding ideas and infrastructure, while the deep learning cycle in contrast represents the more subtle underlying discipline-based change in attitudes, beliefs, awareness, sensibilities and skills (See Figure 4). Both continuously affect and influence one another; guiding ideas are influenced by the changes in attitudes, beliefs and values occurring in the deep learning cycle while skills, and capabilities

are affected by theories, methods and tools of the action triangle. “If we stop working to articulate guiding ideas, to improve infrastructure, and to apply the tools and methods embodied in the learning disciplines, the deeper learning cycle will not progress” (Senge, 1990; 44).

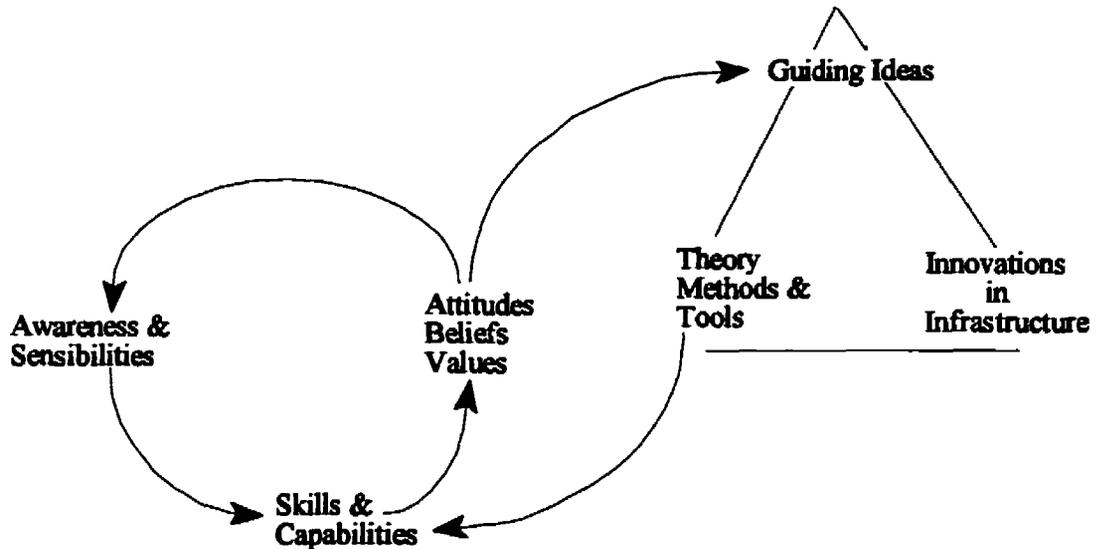


Figure 4 - Putting it all Together

Source: Senge et al., 1994;42

Despite the fact that the learning environment or deep learning cycle often develops or pushes for training strategies, a series of internal and external factors influence the ultimate outcome. The organization’s guiding ideas and infrastructure may impede necessary changes in attitudes and values amongst fieldworkers and other staff, and the level of institutional support may be insufficient to initiate and sustain the deep learning cycle. National politics, availability of funding and culture are external factors which also influence the outcome of training courses and thus the implementation of new methodologies in the field

The implementation of new methodologies is also affected by project objectives; the nature and length of training, follow-up and support; proficiency and personality of trainer; organizational environment and bureaucracy; project objectives and budget; community politics; individual staff personality, values and commitment; as well as culture. Similarly, community attitudes and expectations, the distribution of power and access to resources, strength of local leadership and access to outside funding all impact upon both the action taken as follow up to the project's design and the project's ultimate results or impacts (See Figure 5). The potential influence of these factors will be elaborated through the application of this conceptual framework to the Malawi context.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Preamble

Serving as Participatory Methods Advisor for the UNDP with the Malawi Applied Research Program meant, according to my original job description, that I was to work in collaboration with the UNDP, the Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment (CURE) and Ministry of Research and Environmental Affairs. However, upon arrival in Malawi it became evident that CURE had not been notified of my arrival, nor of my task. Further investigation revealed that CURE itself was contemplating undertaking a similar resource development project in collaboration with Clark University. Communication and protocol problems ensued which significantly delayed commencement of my work.

Dependent on my UNDP supervisor, to establish contacts within each organization, I used this delay to research what organizations within Malawi had experience using participatory methodologies in the natural resource management sector and establish contact for my own research. These informal interviews not only made me aware of organizational obstacles being confronted by non-governmental organizations while attempting to implement participatory methodologies, but led to a redirection of my research.

Originally, the goal of my research was to investigate the mechanisms the Malawi Capacity 21 Project attempts to operationalize participatory development methodologies in order to strengthen indigenous management and organizational capacity. It quickly became clear that the UNDP's Capacity 21 Project was not implementing development projects, but rather attempting to build the capacity of Malawi's government ministries and departments

to do so. Furthermore, while investigating the means through which NGOs operationalize participatory methodologies remained the goal of the research, the specific objectives were altered to include a study of organizational obstacles to participatory methodologies as perceived by fieldworkers.

Throughout the first two months of my stay in Malawi, I used the opportunity of serving as a UNDP intern to gather contact names, acquire documents and conduct informal interviews with informants. The task of compiling the Guide for Developing Community Environmental Action Plans was left entirely in my hands. Using existing participatory rural appraisal manuals as resources, I began by formulating a table of contents and rough outline of the Guide's content. The Guide for Developing Community Environmental Action Plans was heavily based on already existing participatory rural appraisal manual. When complete, a draft was circulated for comments and I began to conduct my semi-structured interviews with fieldworkers, NGO Country Directors and independent consultants.

Introduction

The methodological framework for this study was conditioned to some extent by the expectations of the Government of Malawi and United Nations Development Programme. However, the investigation of Malawian non-governmental organizations integrating participatory development into their environmental management work accounted for the point of view of country directors, fieldworkers and independent consultants. Thus, this study of organizational impediments to participatory rural development is grounded in the perceptions of these participants.

Theoretical Framework

Patton defines evaluation as “the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs, personnel, and products for use by specific people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness, and make decisions with regard to what those programs, personnel, or products are doing and affecting” (Patton, 1982; 15). Scriven on the other hand, defines evaluation as the comparison of an observed value with a standard (Scriven, 1980). While there is no one all-encompassing definition or model of evaluation, a distinction can be made between two paradigms - scientific or positivist and the naturalistic or social-anthropological (Lee, 1989). Through a brief examination of the distinction between these approaches, I will attempt to place my exploration of the organizational impediments to adopting and implementing participatory development methodology in Malawi along the evaluation continuum.

The conventional paradigm of evaluation is the scientific paradigm. This paradigm assumes that by using objective-oriented, rigorous and often highly quantitative methods - tests and surveys - to evaluate the degree of fulfilment of the project’s objectives that an adequate understanding of the project’s benefits can be achieved (Lee, 1989). While there are a number of different evaluation models which fall under the scientific paradigm, two predominate; summative and formative evaluations.

Summative, or process evaluations seek to verify that projects have actually been directed at the target area or population, and that the specified means to implement the program objectives were carried out. The intention of this type of evaluation is to decide whether to continue funding or terminate a project. Formative, or impact evaluations investigate the “extent to which a program effects a change in the desired direction; implying

there are a set of pre-specified operationally defined goals and criteria for success” (Lee, 1989,). This information is sought in order to provide project managers feedback from the project for its improvement (Scriven, 1980).

The scientific paradigm of evaluation has been heavily criticized for its reliance on formal tests and its general approach to investigation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Parlett, 1985).

Its heavy reliance on operationalism requires the scientific paradigm to break reality into separate concepts and their respective variables for analysis. This limits its ability to represent the reality of a project, since it is the interaction between the pieces that constitutes reality. A further consequence of this fractured approach to investigation is that human respondents are treated as objects and the human, social and process elements of projects and their implementation (Lee, 1989). Project dynamics such as the interaction between project staff and local communities, socio-economic and environmental factors like funerals, inflation, and the impacts of a delayed rainy season are frequently overlooked as legitimate factors which affect a project’s ability to meet pre-set timelines and objectives. Moreover, the conditions these scientific approaches to evaluation require are often inappropriate where project benefits and processes may not be quantifiable. It is for these reasons that Lincoln and Guba conclude that in order for an evaluation to be comprehensive, this paradigm should be complemented with the techniques of the naturalist paradigm.

The naturalistic paradigm draws heavily on the ethnographic methods developed by anthropologists such as participant observation, life history, documentary analysis and investigator diaries (Merriam and Simpson, 1995), and thus formulates a holistic view of the project being studied. Approaching projects as systems rather than objects and gathering information from a variety of primarily qualitative methods the naturalistic paradigm ensures

that the context within which the project is or has been implemented is taken into account and that the views of all those involved are included, grounding the evaluation in individual experience rather than a priori assumptions.

The intention of naturalistic evaluations is not to pass judgement on a project, but rather to provide a description of the multiple realities of those involved in the project. Consequently, once the data have been collected they are interpreted through a process of negotiation with the respondents before the final report is produced. This emphasis on the human aspect of evaluation is generally accepted as one of the naturalistic paradigm's main strengths. Using a number of different techniques for data collection ensures that views of "less tangible but crucial aspects of human and organizational behaviour" (Worthen and Sanders, 1987; 141) are accounted for.

Although these paradigms appear mutually exclusive, evaluators tend to shift between the two. According to Lee, there have been a proliferation of new models for evaluation in the last fifteen years (Lee, 1989). One in particular - illuminative evaluation - influences this research. First proposed by Malcolm Parlett and David Hamilton in 1972, illuminative evaluation endeavours "...to describe in the participants' own words, what the participants in the project perceive to be beneficial or problematical, in order to report as accurately as possible the actual experience so that eventual readers may live it also" (Paton, 1980; 54). Illuminative evaluation concentrates on what is termed the learning milieu - the material environment within which participants and fieldworkers collaborate - rather than on the instructional system - the formalized plans of a project around which positivistic evaluation focuses. The learning milieu ranges from the cultural to the social, to the institutional and to the psychological, thus it is impossible to separate a project from its context.

There is no one methodology to follow when conducting an illuminative evaluation. Rather, Parlett and Hamilton (1972) prefer to view illuminative evaluation as a strategy whose size, aims and techniques are dependent on a variety of factors including the evaluation sponsor's preoccupation, the number of participants involved in the project, the level of cooperation and degree of access to relevant information and the time available for data collection. Thus "the problem defines the methods, not vice versa" (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972; 15).

This investigation of the organizational obstacles to implementing participatory methodologies, while not originally intended to be an evaluation, is a modified form of illuminative evaluation. It seeks to describe the human processes, benefits, problems and structural elements involved when non-governmental organizations attempt to integrate participatory methodologies into their development projects from the point of view of fieldworkers and NGO directors in Malawi. What follows is a more detailed outline of my research methods and process followed

A Period of Observation

Once in Malawi, and before commencing the study, I spent the first nine weeks acclimatizing to my new setting and serving the UNDP as Participatory Methods Advisor. This allowed me to become familiar with non-governmental organizations using participatory development in their projects and contact individuals knowledgeable about participatory development within Malawi. Upon completion of the Guide for Community Environmental Action Plans my focus shifted to the investigation of organizational constraints to participatory methodologies.

Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were performed over a three month period with a sample of twenty-four field Malawian staff members representing four non-governmental organizations. This sample was supplemented by interviews with key informants such as the UNDP Environment Programme Officer, the CURE Environmental Officer and a number of independent consultants. A total of 31 separate interviews were held with 26 different people.

All interviews were conducted in English, and were initiated by asking for a description of the individual's background with participatory development, including training received, years of experience and amount of time working with their current employer. Additional questions centred around reactions to participatory development methodology, comfort level while using the methodology in local communities, level of understanding of the methodology and barriers or difficulties experienced while using participatory development in the field.

Country directors and administrative staff were asked questions that centred around the nature of training provided to their extension staff, how and why their organizations was using participatory development methodologies, their feelings about the methodology and the nature of organizational change required or that had occurred since their adoption of participatory rural development, as well as problems encountered.

Independent consultants were asked for their general perceptions regarding how participatory rural development was being used by non-governmental organizations within Malawi. These conversations usually covered such topics as training of extension workers, organizational change, organizational and Malawian culture and the barriers to integrating participatory development methods into field work.

Participant Observation

Throughout the five months I was in Malawi I had numerous opportunities to observe a variety of different stages of the integration of participatory rural development by Malawian extension staff. The first was a one-week community mobilization training workshop sponsored by the World Bank. I was able to listen to the reactions of extension workers to the new methodology being explained as well as their concerns about using it in the field. In addition, I gained an understanding of how such training is conducted in Malawi through my observations throughout the week.

A similar opportunity was presented by Action Aid, a non-governmental organization based in the United Kingdom. I accompanied Malawian agricultural extension staff to a community where fieldworkers practiced the participatory development techniques they had been taught in the classroom earlier in the day. I gained insight into the difficulties faced by participatory development trainers in communicating the essence of participatory rural development and the reaction of communities to the methodology.

In an attempt to understand how extension staff were using the methodology in their daily work, I accompanied extension staff with two separate organizations, each for one week, as they conducted their work in rural communities. This experience provided both an opportunity to learn to what extent participatory rural development was actually being used in the field and an insider's perspective on the difficulties faced by extension staff on a daily basis as they tried to integrate participatory rural development into their work with Malawian communities. Informal discussions with extension staff at the end of each day provided insight into the reasoning behind community reaction as well as their own behaviour.

Near the conclusion of the study, I had two separate opportunities to present the participatory methodologies manual that had been written, as well as to discuss participatory methodology in general in public forums. The first was to the Participatory Development Methods Network, a support network established to bring development practitioners together to share their experiences with participatory development methodologies. A discussion focused on the barriers to participatory development provided the author with valuable information for the study. The second public presentation was to the Department of Rural Development at the Bunda College of Agriculture, a constituent college of the University of Malawi. Focused on participatory extension, this presentation generated a discussion amongst graduate students and faculty members of the department touching topics such as how to teach participatory methodologies, the role of extension workers using this methodologies, and the value of participatory rural development in general. I left this forum with a better understanding of how young people within Malawi feel about participatory development, as well as some of the institutional barriers within the educational system of Malawi to integrating participatory development into the curriculum.

Synthesis of Findings

The findings collected by the interviews and participant observations as well as secondary data (documents acquired in Malawi) were combined in order to provide the reader with a general understanding of how participatory development is being used by non-governmental organization and are presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter Four

Situational Context

Malawi within Africa

Malawi is a land-locked country in Southeast Central Africa bordered by Tanzania to the northeast, Mozambique to the southeast and southwest, and Zambia to the northwest. The offices of the Central Government are located mainly in Lilongwe, the nation's capital. The country is divided into three regions - Northern, Central and Southern, each with its own Regional Headquarters; Mzuzu, Lilongwe and Blantyre respectively. Under the regional level, the country is divided into 24 districts - five in the north, nine in the centre and ten in the south. While these administrative districts vary considerably in size, population and physical geography, they all have the similar administrative structures. This chapter relies heavily on information found in Crosby's Historical Dictionary of Malawi as well as overviews of Malawi provided by World University Service of Canada.

The Geographical Context

Malawi is one of the smallest countries in Africa, just 885 km long, and varying in widths from 80 to 161 km, covering a total area of 118,485 km². It is slightly larger than Newfoundland. However, over 30,000 km² of the country is covered by fresh water. Lake Malawi, Africa's third largest lake, extends 571 km along the spine of the country and 80 km covering 20 percent of Malawi's land area. Its only outlet is to south via the Shire River.

The Great Rift Valley extends north/south throughout Malawi and is covered by Lake Malawi in the north and is called the Shire River Valley in the south. Rift faulting has provided Malawi with a varied topography, creating a series of plateaus. East and west of the Rift Valley the land rises to between 900 and 1200 m. above sea level. The Nykiu Uplands to the north rise to 2600 m. To the south of Lake Malawi, the Shire Highlands vary between 600 m. and 1060 m. It is here that one finds Mount Zomba and Mount Mulanje, which at 2130 m. and 3048 m. respectively, are the highest mountains in the country.

Located south of the equator, Malawi has three recognizable seasons. However, its tropical climate varies according to topography, preventing generalization. From May to August, the weather is cool and dry. The temperature on the plateaus ranges between 15 ° and 18° Celsius, while the lowlands experience temperatures of 20° to 24° . Lows range from five to 14.

Temperatures rise during September and October, reaching 20° to 24° in the highlands, 27° to 30° in the Rift Valley. Areas near the lake are hot and humid at this time. These are generally the hottest and driest months of the year. Late November to April mark the rainy season. It is during this time that the majority of the average annual rainfall of 760 mm to 1000 mm occurs. Temperatures begin to cool down again during March and April.

The vegetation pattern of Malawi is diverse, varying with soil types and climate. Mixed savanna woodland covers the greater part of the Shire Valley, along the southern lakeshore, the districts of Salima and Karonga. Woodland species found in the country include e baobab, acacia, pod-mahogany and palms. Viphya pine is found exclusively in the Northern Region.

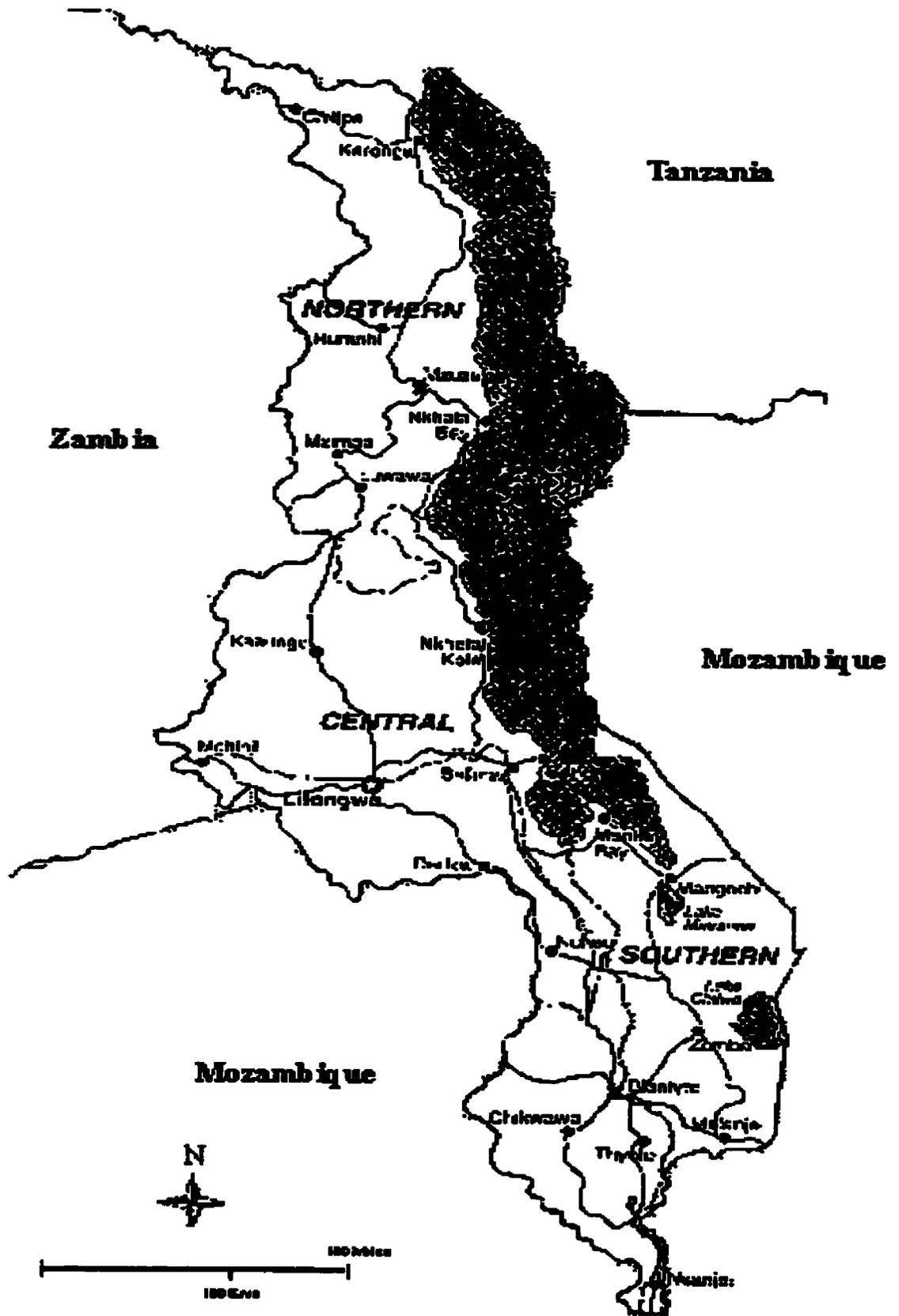


Figure 5 - Map of Malawi

Source: 1995 Facts on File, Inc.

Economic Activity

Malawi is a predominantly agricultural country. Ninety percent of its resident population is employed in agriculture, and it provides 46 percent of the gross domestic product. Seventy percent of this agricultural production is subsistence production of maize, rice, beans and cassava. Groundnuts, cotton and tobacco are grown as cash crops by smallholders if they own enough land. Estate production represents the other 30 percent of Malawi's agricultural production and 60 percent of its domestic exports. Tea, tobacco and sugar are the major estate crops. The tea estates are located in the Southern Region around Thyolo and Mulanje, while tobacco estates are concentrated in the Northern and Central Regions. Sugar estates are located along the Shire River in the Southern Region.

Fishing represents the other major economic activity in Malawi. More than 20,000 people are directly involved in the fishing industry. The fishing grounds of Lake Chilwa, Lake Malawi, Lake Malombe and the Shire River yield enough fish to supply domestic requirements as well as nearby export markets such as Zambia and Western Mozambique. Catfish, chambo, usipa, chisawasawa and utaka are all commercially important species.

Like most developing countries, Malawi is an exporter of primary produce and an importer of industrial goods. Major exports are tobacco, tea, sugar and groundnuts as well as a small amount of rice, fish, maize and hoes. Malawi's major trading partners are: Britain, Zimbabwe, South Africa, the Federal Republic of Germany, the U.S.A., Mozambique, France, the Republic of China, Japan and Hong Kong.

Slowly, Malawi is attempting to develop its tourism industry as a way increasing its foreign exchange revenues. Developments along the Lake Shore and surrounding the five National Parks are beginning to attract more international tourists.

The Sociocultural Context

Formerly called Nyasaland (Land of the Lake), Malawi may have been inhabited by a pygmy race as long ago as 10 000 BC. However, it was perhaps in the thirteenth century that the first of several related clans settled along the northern shores of Lake Malawi originating from northern Shaba province. For the next 250 years family heads led their clans into the Shire Valley along the western and southern shores of Lake Malawi and into Mozambique and Zambia (Crosby, 1980).

The Maravi peoples who originated within Nyasaland began to move from the central portions of the country to its southern regions, absorbing the Katanga and Kafula peoples. The main section of the Maravi peoples settled in an area southwest of Lake Malawi and branched out in search of better land. Their empire dominated the region north of the Zambezi River and east to the Mozambique coast.

Approximately 500 years ago, the Tumbuka, an agricultural people entered Nyasaland from the northwest and began inhabiting the region north of the Dwangwa River which became known as Tumbukaland. Other smaller groups followed and settled in this area, adopting the Tumbuka language.

The Ngonde migrated into Nyasaland at the end of the 15th century from Tanzania, settling in the Mbande Hill area north of present day Karonga. At the end of the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth century some of the Ngonde moved south of the Limpopo River where they intermarried with the Shona peoples indigenous to the area and became known as the Venda. This movement, combined with further migrations of other groups and clans from Zambia and Tanzania who mixed with the Tumbuka, altered the cultural mix of northern Malawi.

The nineteenth century saw further incursions into Malawi and was a period of social insecurity. The Ngoni arrived and defeated the Tumbuka, while the Yao arrived from Mozambique and Swahili Arabs also made their way inland from the coast.

Today, the dominant ethnic groups are the Chewa and Nyanja, both descendants of the Maravi, Lomwe, Yao, Ngonde, Tonga and Tumbuka. Roughly 50 percent of the estimated 11 million people are either Chewa or Nyanja, and thus ChiChewa and English are the official national languages (Crosby, 1980).

The population density of Malawi is one of the highest in the southern African region at 170 inhabitants per km² and an average annual population growth rate of 3.4 percent. Life expectancy at birth is 44 years while the infant mortality and under five mortality rate per one thousand live births is 142 and 221 respectively (UNDP, 1996;).

The Political Context

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to see Lake Malawi, and by 1870 there were two major slave trading centres in Nyasaland, Mangochi and Nkhota Khota. Objecting to the slave trade and the expansionism of Catholic Portugal, the British declared Nyasaland a protectorate in 1891. By 1953, Britain regarded Nyasaland, a land with little mineral wealth, as an economic liability and was willing to federate the area with the two Rhodesias. Despite protests against the spread of racism from Southern Rhodesia the Federation was formed in 1953 and soon became the focus of political dissent.

It was this situation which brought Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda back to Nyasaland on July 6, 1958. Called home from Britain by members of the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC), to lead in the struggle against the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Dr. Banda

took effective leadership of the NAC. He organized people throughout the country against the Federation, for freedom from colonial rule and for independence. He also reorganized the Congress movement so that youth and women took a more effective role.

This activity brought about a declaration of a state of emergency on March 3, 1959. Dr. Banda was arrested along with nearly 1,500 of his followers in the Congress movement and detained in Rhodesia and Malawi, while the NAC was banned. Despite the absence of their leaders, the people of Nyasaland remained ungovernable and maintained pressure against the Federal regime.

Banda was released on April 1, 1960 and the British Government agreed to talk with members of the NAC regarding a transition to independence. Upon his release, Banda formed the Malawi Congress Party (of which he was elected Life President in 1960) and led the Nyasaland Constitutional Conference in London in July and August of 1960. During the elections that followed in 1961, the Malawi Congress Party was ushered into power with an overwhelming victory. In the general election of 1964, Banda led the Malawi Congress Party to an unprecedented victory. All 50 seats were won by the Party and on July 6, 1964, Nyasaland became independent Malawi.

Two years after independence, Malawi became a republic within the Commonwealth and Kumuzu Banda became the first President. The Malawi Congress Party (MCP) voted him to become Life President of the Republic and the constitution was accordingly amended. Dr. Banda was formally sworn in on July 6, 1971.

From the time of his election in 1966, Dr. Banda tightened his grip on the direction of Malawian affairs and was inflexible in his hold on power. Human rights abuses were widespread, the press was heavily censored and Dr. Banda held total control of the MCP,

parliament and the judiciary. In his own words “Anything I say is law. Literally law. It is a fact in this country” (as quoted in Lwanda, 1993; 149). Unity, loyalty, obedience and discipline was his credo.

Between 1964 and 1993 thousands were detained without trial and declared subversives (anyone who questioned the government’s policies or voiced opinions other than those held by Dr. Banda). Relatives of detainees stayed quiet for fear of being detained themselves. Political assassinations were common from early 1960 until 1990 (Lwanda, 1993). “This climate of fear ensured that Malawians remained largely quiet, a factor which led foreigners to feel that Malawians were not only contented but were docile” (Lwanda, 1993; 164). In fact, Banda was able to convince the world for many years that he was a benign dictator.

Many foreigners who were aware of the extent of the repression in Malawi chose to give Banda the benefit of the doubt. It was left to the Malawi Catholic Bishops to lift the veil on the situation. In their Lenten letter written in March, 1992, the bishops challenged the moral legitimacy of Dr. Banda’s peaceful and harmonious state. This letter was sent to foreign governments and international organizations in hopes of instigating action. The result was that the Paris Group voted to suspend all non-humanitarian assistance to Malawi in opposition to its human rights abuses. They opposed the total power and control of the MCP and the Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP), a much-feared paramilitary youth group formed by Banda’s party. In addition, the Lenten letter marked the beginning of nation-wide overt resistance to the status quo. A national referendum was held to ask Malawians whether they wanted a multi-party system. The answer was an overwhelming yes.

The first free and fair multi-party national election in Malawi to be held in 30 years took place on May, 17, 1994. More than three parties contested in this election, the United

Democratic Front, Malawi Congress Party and AFFORD were the original ones. Bakili Muluzi of the United Democratic Front Party (UDF) was voted in as president. The MCP and AFFORD each won seats in the 177-member Parliament.

Although Banda was ousted as the President of Malawi in 1994, one cannot understand Malawi or its peoples without studying the profound effects he had on the country over the last 30 years. How does one man take one of the most militant nationalist movements in south-central Africa in the late 1950s and early 1960s and turn it into one of the most conservative political regimes in the entire continent by 1970? Banda, by declaring one party, one government and one leader, forged an authoritarian national unity. "The high degree of government centralization, which prevailed during Dr. Banda's rule, led to the decline in genuine locally initiated community projects and an increase in projects planned by central government" (Lwanda, 1993; 150). Community development programs were dictated by the central government and were primarily oriented towards institutions and infrastructure such as primary schools, roads, bridges and boreholes. Participation in these development programmes was forced, and there were no incentives to reward people. Consequently, a mood of passivity spread over the country and community inertia to initiate local projects was eliminated.

Mozambican Refugees

Fleeing violence, civil war and drought (the worst of the century in southern Africa), nearly one million Mozambican refugees crossed the border into Malawi between 1992 and early 1993. Their presence placed enormous stress on Malawi's resources and led to extensive environmental degradation, particularly in the Dedza and Blantyre regions. In

March, 1994, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees began a voluntary repatriation program, and by the end of 1994 about 600,000 Mozambicans had returned home.

Capacity 21 Capacity Building for Environment Support Programme

Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on the Environment (UNCED) in 1992 called for national governments to develop plans of action for sustainable development which were to be developed with wide participation. A major theme of Agenda 21 is the need to eradicate poverty by giving poor people more access to the resources they need to live sustainably (Keating, 1994; viii). The UNDP felt that “governments should use wide public consultation to determine what improvements in capacity their people need to implement their national version of Agenda 21 for sustainable development” (Ibid; 58).

The Capacity 21 Programme is the UNDP’s attempt to play a leading role in supporting countries like Malawi to build their capacity to integrate the principles of Agenda 21 into their national policies. The Malawi Capacity 21 Programme provides for the development of a comprehensive national framework to enhance community participation in environmental management. The program seeks to ensure that local communities and institutions have the capacity and understanding to integrate environmental considerations into the development planning process. By enhancing the Government of Malawi’s coordinating ability through decentralized awareness-building, information management and training in new methodologies for identification and prioritization of community environmental problems, the UNDP aims to empower local Malawian communities and individuals to manage their environment (UNDP Programme Support Document, 1996)

In the words of the UNDP document,

The main point of entry for support by UNDP/Capacity 21 will be to involve local communities in environmental management and implementation of integrated development activities through strengthening district level institutional and human capacities down to the local community level. The main capacity building targets have been identified:

- a. enhance institutional capacity to integrate environmental considerations into district level decision making;**
- b. enhance capacity to reach districts and local communities with awareness building and education on environmental management;**
- c. enhance capacity to create and maintain an information management system operational to facilitate environmental management and awareness**
- d. to enhance capacity and institutional structures for identification and resolution of key local environmental concerns**

(Ibid.;27-28).

These targets are to be met through a multi-fold approach which includes extensive training of at least 240 district staff over the two years of the Malawi Capacity 21 component, establishing District Training Teams, supporting the preparation of an Environmental Resource and Learning Centre, and strengthening environmental focal points in the districts (UNDP Programme Support Document, 1996).

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Chapter Five

Findings

Introduction

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first two present the research findings categorized according to the two respondent groups, Malawian fieldworkers and NGO country directors and independent consultants. To preserve the opinions of respondents, many of their comments are presented in their own words. The third section presents my participant observations of one training workshop and PRA efforts in three villages in the study area. Relevant reports and documents are also used to supplement the empirical findings.

Section I: Interviews with Fieldworkers

Understanding of Participatory Rural Development

During my interviews with fieldworkers, a variety of different definitions and interpretations of participation, participatory rural development, participatory rural appraisal and training for transformation were presented. One fieldworker differentiated TtT from PRA or PRD, indicating that while they share similar principles, TtT is an action oriented continuous process which requires a change in attitude and PRA is a set of tools.

A second fieldworker defined participation as “involving community members at all levels of the project cycle. It is a genuine dialogue between partners”. He continued to

differentiate TtT and PRA, indicating that TtT looks at the behaviour of the fieldworker and its external impact on one's working relationship with the community while PRA is a set of tools for information gathering. A third fieldworker noted that participation is important "because people take control of the process and ownership of its outputs; this means it is more sustainable".

A project officer within an indigenous Malawian NGO responsible for providing TtT and PRA training to other organizations defined community participation as "the development process where communities are allowed to engage in self determined change and make decisions themselves". Like the other fieldworkers interviewed, he feels that TtT deals more with an attitude change while PRA is a set of tools.

Experience Implementing Participatory Methodologies

One fieldworker using PRA in the context of a water project revealed that some communities have rejected working with the organization because they feel the methodology demands too much work and contributions from them. They were more comfortable following the traditional service delivery model of development. He also highlighted that the participatory rural development approach is new to almost all the communities he works with. He feels that communities are beginning to compare the methods of his organization with those of other development organizations working in the district. They are also questioning why the organization demands so much work from them as compared to other organizations who simply provide waterpoints with no community labour. In his opinion communities are still looking for handouts based on their experiences over the last 30 years.

Initially the water project's objective was to provide 200 waterpoints in 200 communities

using community participation. This was the first time the organization sought to use the participatory rural development approach. At the outset, the intention was to employ participatory rural development methods throughout the entire project cycle. However, after attempting this in two communities it was discovered that using a broad participatory rural development approach would be extremely time consuming and prevent the organization from meeting its targets on time. Consequently, the participatory rural development process was narrowed to specific tools such as village maps, transect walks and Venn diagrams to collect baseline data regarding why the community wants a protected waterpoint, where the community would like the new waterpoint to be located and why, to determine the contributions of the community and organization as well as who will manage and maintain the waterpoint. Other tools are to be used at later dates to gather and learn more information for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

This fieldworker does not feel that this process has been effective in terms of empowering local communities. Instead, he regards the participatory process implemented by his organization as a series of extractive information gathering tools. He perceives the refusal to participate by some communities as a success rather than a failure, since the philosophy of participatory rural development is based on the belief that communities are supposed to decide what they want to do.

Asked how participatory rural development methodologies had changed the way he works, he replied that “extension workers have more power and voice within the project” and that there is a more informal and participatory interaction between extension workers and communities and that extension workers are more able to voice their opinions and problems to their project manager. However, he indicated that participation is not being practiced

within the organization itself.

A second fieldworker, when asked how participatory methodologies have changed the way he works, indicated that it required a major change in his attitude. He expanded by saying that it was difficult to sit back and know nothing, ask questions rather than give answers and direct and accept the community's priorities as being valid. He also mentioned that he had to accept the priorities of the communities he works with as being valid, that he understands and searches for the reasons communities behave and/or think the way they do. He gave an example of a community that refused electricity for fear of being forced to relocate so that government officials could take personal advantage of this new amenity to build resorts and personal homes.

A further change he mentioned was having to become more flexible in terms of what he wants to get accomplished each day and being responsive to and respectful of the community's timeline and needs. The last change he mentioned was becoming part of the team; working in collaboration with the community instead of for them. He said that "PRD makes your work harder at the beginning of the process but easier at the end because the community is doing the work". PRA is not easy". It took him approximately three attempts at conducting participatory rural development to feel comfortable with the process.

A training manager who is responsible for organizing and facilitating participatory development training and support for different divisions within his NGO described his task as "closing the gap between training and internalization of the concepts of participatory rural development". However, he feels that he lacks sufficient resources on participatory rural appraisal, participatory methodologies and training for transformation in order to put together comprehensive training programs. He also relies on the budgets of specific projects within

his organization to fund internal training, having no individual budget of his own. While this is expected to change, it restricts the training that he can provide at this date.

The mandate of the organization with which this former fieldworker, now internal trainer, is employed is “to facilitate the empowerment of Malawians, facilitate people becoming more aware of their problems in general”. However, he feels that the organization and its staff are failing to internalize development issues and concepts and are guilty of “saying one thing and doing another”.

A trainer in participatory methodologies indicated that he finds an ambivalence towards PRA, especially amongst government departments fieldworkers receiving training in participatory methodologies. NGO fieldworkers, in his opinion, are generally more receptive, but there is still resistance. After some time they begin to understand and embrace the concepts with enthusiasm

A different training officer, representing an organization with 18 agricultural field staff indicated that his role was training field staff to be responsive to communities, to mobilize cooperation and enthusiasm of communities. This is done through three one-week workshops held every year. These workshops are intended to update concepts and share experiences amongst fieldworkers, update technical agricultural issues, analyze agricultural problems and their causes, as well as prioritize agricultural problems faced by local communities. Action planning with farmers and specialized training on leadership, group dynamics, financial statements, record keeping, problem analysis techniques are also covered in these training sessions. He indicated that the initial response of fieldworkers to participatory methodologies and frameworks such as TtT were one of strong resistance; “they were scared they would look like they didn’t know anything especially in problem analysis” and that

fieldworkers complain about how slow the participatory process is, fearing they won't meet their project targets.

These experiences of fieldworkers and trainers are supported by the results of a project evaluation conducted by Oxfam UK & Ireland (Kamlongera and Vaughan, 1993). The focus of the Oxfam Mulanje Programme was participatory training of fieldworkers from all sectors with the intention of developing skills, attitudes and knowledge that foster participation of beneficiaries in development. Group and individual interviews amongst fieldworkers by the evaluators revealed the following views:

- a) Some extension workers said that using the participatory methods, they found that people in the villages now talked more readily, could identify their problems and begin to come up with solutions
- b) some felt that the method was very long-winded, giving rise to lengthy arguments and little action.
- c) Most felt that a lack of follow-up to their training was a major handicap. Sometimes, attempting to put training into practice, they had felt uncertain about whether they were moving in the right direction and felt that they needed more support.
- d) some said they had difficulty in following through the participatory approach since it ran counter to their superiors' ways of operating. They suggested that their supervisors in the various ministries should be fully trained in this approach. Many continued to receive directives from their ministries and targets to meet which they felt to be incompatible with a participatory, problem-solving approach.

This evaluation of the programme also revealed that while the training in participatory methodologies were appreciated by participants in terms of content and format, participants felt that these trainings lacked follow-up. The evaluators indicate that “...without more intensive follow-up and support, the lessons of the trainings are likely to be lost” (Kamlongera and Vaughan, 1993; 20).

A second document, An Assessment of Participatory Training in Dedza District: The Impact of Training for Transformation and Participatory Rural Appraisal further corroborates the experiences of the fieldworkers I interviewed. This study revealed that since receiving Tft training, fieldworkers tend to be “more respectful of communities’ knowledge” (Bournimisza, 1995; 2) and that they now take the time to understand specific problems in specific villages, compared to before when they just assumed that they knew what the problems were, and that they had the solutions” (Bournimisza, 1995;2-3)

The assessment also concluded that when Tft training was combined with PRA training, its impact was much greater. In cases where only PRA training was provided fieldworkers had difficulties in applying the learned skills. Fieldworkers who were interviewed indicated that they found PRA methods and tools to be technically difficult and that they were often uncertain “...about how PRA can be used in the project cycle and how it can be used to create village action plans” (Bournimisza, 1995; 9). Therefore, they felt that they experienced many limitations not experienced by their counterparts who had Tft training (Ibid, 1995).

Perceived Limitations of Participatory Rural Development

When asked about the obstacles faced implementing participatory methodologies, one fieldworker indicated that the administration of his organization is concerned with dates, targets and budgets while fieldworkers like himself are dealing with people. He felt that the administration had no idea of the field reality or the importance of visiting communities to set meeting times with the traditional authorities.

Another obstacle he mentioned was transport to the communities he works with. The organization demands that vehicles be back at the office compound by five p.m. and fieldworkers are not allowed to stay out overnight due to the risk of vehicle theft. This makes his work difficult when the communities, which are frequently an hour's drive away, want to meet in the afternoon. When asked if the administration had been invited to accompany fieldworkers into the field he replied "no".

Other limitations to the participatory development process cited by this fieldworker include funerals; he often arrives for a scheduled meeting only to find a funeral is being held that day so the community is in attendance, postponing progress on the project. Consequently, as this fieldworker indicated, the PRD process adopted by his organization can take months to initiate. For example, in one community initial contact was made in December 1995 and drilling of the waterpoint was not scheduled to begin until June 1996.

Miscommunication and/or misunderstandings between the community and fieldworker frequently result in situations where the community is expecting the fieldworker to arrive and he does not or vice versa. A general lack of understanding of what participation is really all about and why it is important by both community members and government officials also blocks effective practice of participatory methodologies. Politicians, according to this

fieldworker, tend to complicate things by labelling self-help projects “thangata” (forced labour) so that communities stop participating. This was especially evident during the national elections in 1994.

He feels that there is a general lack of dedication amongst fieldworkers - that they work to earn, not to make a difference or for the sake of the poor. A change in attitude is required, but this takes time to bring about. This fieldworker does not feel that his values are the same as the organization he works for, that he works in a confined environment of his particular project. He has little information on other organizations using participatory rural development and the ways in which they are incorporating it into their projects. His opportunities to talk with fieldworkers from other projects within this organization regarding their experiences using participatory rural development methods are limited. He would like to interact with other organizations and projects in order to establish a network of support for himself and others. He would also like to write support materials for fieldworkers, but has received no support from his organization to undertake this initiative - indicating to him that the organization does not feel that producing support materials is a priority.

Two extension workers who were interviewed together while conducting a PRA for the World Bank Community-Based Environmental Management Program indicated that PRA is difficult to do on an intensive basis, but that they are forced to do so from donors and the organization they work with in order to meet timelines and targets. Rather than work all day in the community for a week, they feel it would be better if fieldworkers established a schedule with the community where they visit one or two days a week at the same time.

Another barrier that these two fieldworkers mentioned was the fact that communities want to see tangible and quick results from their work, but the participatory process and

community-based natural resource management projects takes time. This lag leads to a problem of maintaining community enthusiasm towards the project according to these two fieldworkers.

According to a third fieldworker, there are two levels at which participatory methods can be blocked - the field level and the organizational level. At the field level the political history of Malawi has eroded the power and confidence of local communities to make decisions. Even though the political climate has changed, communities remain unwilling to make decisions for themselves. A lack of local financial and material resources and government institutional structures also impede the implementation of participatory rural development at the field level.

The organizational level is where this fieldworker feels the most significant obstacles to participatory methodologies lie. He stated that the attitudes, levels of knowledge and professional backgrounds of fieldworkers can impede the practising of participatory methodologies in the field. Prior to working for a non-governmental organization, most fieldworkers were employed by the government and functioned within a hierarchical environment which is difficult to forget and leave behind. He further indicated that these organizational barriers are evident within his organization.

While participatory approaches are being advocated by his organization, this fieldworker indicated that they are difficult to implement in terms of participation in decision-making within the organization. Having received internal training on participatory methodologies (TfT and PRA) he feels that the decisions are being made only by top management. He and (according to him) other staff members do not feel that TfT and PRA approaches are being practiced within their organization and that there is a misunderstanding by top management

of participatory methods and participatory management. He did indicate that people are free to talk with top management about their concerns and ideas but there is some question as to whether they are valued and taken into account when the decision is made. Furthermore, he feels that there is insufficient organizational support for fieldworkers. There is a lack of follow-up to training, no evaluation of internal training has been done and support staff are not trained in participatory methods.

Echoing much of what other fieldworkers have said with regard to impediments to implementing participatory methodologies, a further interview with one fieldworker revealed that while he felt “empowered as an individual” within his organization to influence organizational policy and projects he feels that international donors are not flexible enough to allow the organization to function in a truly participatory way. Time limits within the project cycle and demands for measurable results restrict his use of participatory methodologies. He also feels that the administration of his organization has little or no idea of the field reality within which fieldworkers operate. He cited an example of the administration being suspicious of the number of site visits fieldworkers were making in advance to commencing participatory rural appraisal exercises. The administration thinks fieldworkers are attempting to earn daily allowances for their time spent in the field when, according to the fieldworker, these meetings are necessary in order to introduce themselves to the community and set a comfortable environment for further work. Setting this atmosphere by following proper protocol and order of introductions to local leaders is critical to project success. If this is not done properly participation of the community is difficult to mobilize. By limiting access to transport and the number of site visits before the project begins the administration is “saying one thing and doing another”.

While supervisors talk of participatory development, their actions do not reflect an adherence to its practice.

Yet another fieldworker listed the incongruence between community needs and donor needs as a barrier to participatory methodologies. Donors require quantifiable facts and therefore demand that fieldworkers report dollar by dollar spending and report monthly or quarterly on project progress. However, fieldworkers, in order to meet the needs of the community and facilitate a participatory process, need fiscal flexibility and find it difficult to report human development results such as leadership skills and empowerment. Given that continued funding is attached to meeting the demands of donors, fieldworkers struggle to marry these two, or at least to find a balance between delivering the cold, lifeless figures to donors, and providing the community the support and direction they need. Donors, according to this fieldworker see participation as a means to an end, yet fieldworkers are taught that participation is an end in itself.

Within his organization he feels that there is a lack of professionalism - a general caring about people as individuals as if their opinion matters. Without this professionalism he believes it is difficult to develop teams.

In addition to identifying many of the same organizational and field-level obstacles to participatory development, one fieldworker indicated that some Malawian communities have become research wise and will give fieldworkers the answers they think are wanted. This means the community is not communicating their real needs or priorities, and thus they are not truly engaged in the participatory process.

Two fieldworkers said that in their personal experience, government extension workers tried to sidetrack the participatory process they were working to establish. This behaviour

is thought to be motivated by the fact that Government extension workers feel threatened by the presence of NGO fieldworkers and are not optimistic about the participatory rural development approach as a way to work with communities.

A different extension worker stated that “the problem with PRA is its time requirements. It takes a long time to establish relationships with communities before any work can begin”. As a result, she would like her organization to stop supporting and administering one-year projects because she feels that nothing much can be accomplished as PRA takes too long for any results to be realized by the community in such a time period.

For those providing training in participatory methodologies the sentiment is that the use of development methodologies, in particular PRA by NGOs in Malawi, is too institutionalized and there is insufficient institutional support for fieldworkers. Difficulties commonly faced by these trainers include biases of fieldworkers towards rural communities, resistance of trainees to relinquishing power to communities and an unwillingness of participants to stay in rural communities during their training to gain practical experience.

Besides the attitudes of trainees, trainers are often presented with a group of trainees too large to facilitate an effective training session. In his opinion, the ideal number of trainees is 6 at a time but the typical training is 16-20 participants. Frequently the training is on a tight time frame which forces communities to do things they might not normally do in an effort to develop an action plan. A ten day training event has four days in class and six days of community practical work. Community expectations of money, inputs (maize, fertilizer etc) can also block training sessions. Trainees also expect allowances for the time they spend in the field during training.

In one organization the internal trainer indicated there was a lack of a proper understanding of his role and job description amongst other field staff. According to him, the gap between training and practice of participatory methodologies can in part be attributed to a lack of commitment by extension workers to their jobs and to the communities they work with. Rather than internalize TFT and participatory ideology, and change their attitudes, fieldworkers are more likely to externalize these concepts, perceiving them as something for them to deliver to or conduct on Malawian communities.

Two fieldworkers identified limited feedback or follow-up by Malawian NGOs after training is delivered to their staff as yet another obstacle to successful implementation of participatory methodologies. One fieldworker indicated that there is currently no formal setting for discussing the barriers to participatory rural development with other fieldworkers, and he would appreciate having such a forum in order to develop strategies to overcome these obstacles

Suggestions for Improving the Participatory Rural Development Process

One fieldworker would like to see the formation of a District Coordinating body so that non-governmental organizations can gather and talk about the approaches being used and try to coordinate their work so not as to confuse communities with different methodologies and expectations. The District Coordinating Body would be one way to discuss these issues as well as to replenish the energy of fieldworkers so they don't burn out according to this fieldworker.

Another fieldworker stated that the top management of his organization needs to be exposed to the field reality when using participatory methodologies so that they gain an

understanding of the process. He recommended that top management should be trained in participatory methodologies before their field staff so that while fieldworkers are being trained management can concentrate on generating a supportive organizational environment which will sustain the change to participatory methodologies. In his opinion management support is a crucial ingredient to influencing and bringing about change.

In support of this fieldworker's views, the Assessment of Participatory Training in Dedza District reported that fieldworkers felt the need to change donor attitudes so that they understand that the projects may need more time than initially allotted in the project proposal. Also, they felt that donors and the administration of their organizations should be trained in participatory methodologies so that they understand the need to be more flexible when it comes to project planning and implementation (Ibid; 7).

A third fieldworker felt that his organization needs to undergo organizational development because it is not very introspective, something he feels is necessary for every organization in order to sustain constant renewal of ideas and energy. Only by capturing what people (staff) are saying and acting on it is introspection and renewal possible. This process requires a willingness by top management to accept what is said and a commitment to act on it. This is linked to professionalism. According to this fieldworker "there must be symbiotic relationship between an organization and its employees" and staff need to know what their work is doing for both the organization and them as individuals.

Section II - Interviews with Country Directors and Independent Consultants

Understanding of TtT and PRD

According to one country director, there is a lack of understanding of empowerment, training for transformation and participatory methodologies in Malawi. He felt that the focus is on changing the fieldworker but not on changing the attitudes of communities so as to initiate community mobilization. In his view, staff do not understand the organization's structures and environment which are both determined by administrators or boards of directors when they define the NGO's vision and mission. Staff are unable to see the links between these organizational elements and do not understand what a participatory organization is or why it is desirable. This viewpoint is supported by a second Country Director who feels that field supervisors are confused right now, and that they aren't sure what they are supposed to be doing. Her impression is that trainers view TtT and PRA as a technology to be transferred to those they train. This is evident in one of the objectives of the Training Support Unit (TSU) "The TSU will fulfil training requirements through the process and technology of community empowerment for [the organization itself], communities and other organizations".

When asked to define participation, a different Country Director felt he could not provide one. However, he did describe participatory rural appraisal as both an attitude and a methodology which relies on a particular mind-set. He indicated that if PRA is seen solely as a condition for grants and assistance from donors then it will be a farce. In his opinion, time must be spent with communities before participatory rural development/appraisal exercises are implemented in order to explain the methodology and its purpose to the

community. However, he recognized that organizations are under financial and time constraints which make this difficult to practice.

The first independent consultant I interviewed defined participation as “to take part in something; the community comes up with the idea and initiates action”. To him, genuine participation means that the community is involved in all four steps of the development cycle 1)problem awareness (2) reflection on root causes (3) decision-making (4) action/implementation. He identified TtT as a problem posing methodology and PRA as a situational analysis that is itself transformational. However, according to him, “the whole thing is upside down in Malawi”.

From his experience and observations, he feels that most people and NGOs in Malawi “don’t understand what participation means” and involve communities only in the implementation stage of the project cycle. Participation is seen as being something that takes place in communities rather than something that affects both the behaviour of fieldworkers and the organizations they work for. Consequently, this consultant feels that communities are asked to take part in projects that are predesigned, and administered from the top down.

A second independent consultant who trains in TtT and PRA, and has conducted PRAs herself in Malawian communities, defined empowerment or participation as a process which challenges the minds of people to be able to question and challenge the forces on their lives. She differentiated TtT from PRA by identifying PRA as a data gathering method which when adopted an adult learning approach, gives it elements of empowerment. TtT on the other hand is a more complex, long-term process which involves self-discovery and experiential learning through real life experience

She indicated that while there is a lot about participatory rural development and empowerment on paper - in proposals, mandates etc. - in Malawi, there is little awareness of what it actually means. She has found that it is normally one individual in an NGO who understands the philosophical underpinnings of participation and how to translate the theory into practice. However, they often lack first-hand experience practising it in field situations.

A report on a training for transformation workshop provided by the Foundation for Participatory Development in Malawi supports these comments, indicating that "...there is an inadequate understanding and application of concepts and methods for managing and developing popular participatory development programmes" (Mwakanema, 1996 ;2). The report suggests that a "lack of practical experience in popular participation methods makes it difficult for most participants in Malawi to relate PRA steps to their work..." (Ibid; 9).

Experiences with Participatory Rural Development

When asked to outline how his organization had integrated participatory rural development methodologies into its operations, one Country Director stated that the organization adopted participatory methodologies into their mandate by setting a mission statement specific to the Malawi field office. This mission statement, which was written by the Malawian staff, reads "To empower Malawians to identify and achieve their development objectives".

In order to fulfill this mission, staff are provided with training first in TfT then PRA. There is no specific training strategy in the sense that course A is followed by Course B; it tends to be a case of taking advantage of what is available within Malawi and offering courses internally when it is felt necessary. According to the NGO project staff do not view their

projects as means to empower communities, but as a means to reach general goals such as to improve water and sanitation conditions of Blantyre District.

To date, participatory methodologies have been adopted into the planning and implementation stages of projects. The structure of the organization has not changed as a result of the adoption of participatory methodologies but the way decisions are made within the organization has. The organization is trying to create a greater sense of ownership for the organization and its projects amongst staff. “The most significant change has been improvements in communication and a shift to more participatory management style of the organization’s upper-level project staff and the organization’s directors. The organization has also appointed an internal trainer to assist staff achieve the mission statement.

A second Country Director whose NGO began using PRA in 1992 in Malawi provided a detailed outline of its experience implementing participatory rural development. After two years the organization noticed that fieldworker PRA training was not being reflected at the community level; no action plans were being developed. Instead, participatory methodologies were being used to conduct typical appraisals; collecting information on community problems, priorities and needs. PRA was being used as a research tool rather than a program tool. The PRAs its fieldworkers were conducting generated a collection of stories from communities but they were not being used to design projects or programmes. Communities were being recruited to participate in programmes after they had already been designed, thus community participation was being limited to the implementation stage of the project cycle. The consultants who conducted the Training Needs Assessment of Malawian NGOs found that “participatory short-circuiting - taking communities from phase 1 (problem identification) to phase 4 (make a plan of action) in the project cycle - is being practiced by many development

organizations in Malawi”.

In 1993 the NGO shifted its focus and began working on how to break the poverty cycles. Participatory Rural Development was seen as an effective means to achieve this while simultaneously generating community action plans. In 1996 the organization adopted a quality- first doctrine and the PRA process is now being used to develop community -based and designed action plans. It also developed a code of conduct for all staff along with indicators to be monitored by the communities. A good deal of time was dedicated to developing the mission and values of the organization at the national headquarters in the United Kingdom. There were two or three phases of consultation at different levels of the organization and he felt that the process of developing the mission was worthwhile and that the culture of the organization should be reviewed on a regular basis.

As a result of adopting participatory rural development methodologies the role of the organization has become that of a facilitator rather than an implementer. Furthermore, according to the Country Director, the organization and its fieldworkers have stopped being development preachers, and moved away from an Information, Education, Communication (IEC) focus. Consequently, it has reduced the number of fieldworkers it employs, as those actually implementing projects were no longer needed since the communities took over.

The organization’s field methodology is still changing due to its adoption of participatory rural development. It is now looking at placing its field supervisors in the communities they work rather than being stationed in town. They are expecting to lose around 50 percent of field supervisors over this issue because supervisors do not want to live in the field (lack of resources and amenities).

While the decentralization that has occurred within this NGO has changed the relationship between the organization and the communities with which it works, it has made the organization's work more difficult and more time consuming. Furthermore, although fieldworkers employed by this organization receive two PRA trainings and all staff receive TFT training, the impact of this training on the organization and its operation has been negligible, according to the Country Director. Therefore, the organization is currently embarking on training communities in PRA in an attempt to ensure that their projects are sustainable and independent. It is for these reasons that the Country Director of this NGO feels that his organization is a learning organization; one trying to marry participatory rural development with the project cycle as it grows and changes as an organization.

The administrator of the training support unit of one Malawian NGO indicated that to date the adoption of participatory methodologies by her organization has been through frequent staff workshops to orient staff at all levels to what happens in the office and the field. Once these staff members received their training they leave, becoming independent consultants. The organization is now wary of sending new staff out of the country for training and is concentrating on internal training instead.

The Country Director of a non-governmental organization whose initial focus was on preparing funding grants and monitoring the progress of Malawian NGOs began receiving requests for training in participatory rural development and organizational development support. In 1996 USAID redesigned the organization, redefining its role so that now more attention is given to delivering training and technical assistance than to grant provision. USAID would like the organization to function as an NGO support unit by the end of the project (year 2000).

In response to both local NGO requests and the change in organizational mandate, the Country Director has tried in the last two years to shift the organization's focus towards capacity building and improve the ability of his staff to provide the technical assistance in training, management and administration required by local NGOs. Several people have been sent out of Malawi to receive in-depth training in participatory rural development and NGO management. Internal training has also been delivered through short-term courses in small enterprise management and fiscal management in Malawi. Most recently, staff of this organization were trained in monitoring and evaluation techniques and there are plans to offer advocacy training in the near future. Regular skill training has been accompanied by strategic planning and organizational development in an effort to map out a clear plan for the organization's future with the local staff to ensure it continues to meet the needs of Malawian NGOs.

Reflecting on the adoption of participatory methodologies within Malawi this Country Director posed a number of questions. The first was "how do you increase the number of qualified and dynamic community facilitators and participatory methods trainers? The second, "how do you change the system so that organizations can manage to spend enough time and resources on training their staff?".

He feels that the proposed Capacity-Building for NGOs in Malawi (CABUNGO) "risks duplication" of his organization's services, and he feels that the two organizations should cooperate and form one organization rather than compete. If cooperation is not possible, he feels that both organizations must clearly define their purposes and visions in order to avoid competition and most important confusion amongst Malawian NGOs as to the difference in services between the two organizations. He also questioned the capability of a new

organization like CABUNGO to provide the technical assistance Malawian NGOs require. "How are you going to develop staff to provide organizational development support to NGOs?" According to him, it takes a long time to develop capable staff and there is always the problem of keeping staff (revolving door syndrome). There is a tendency amongst Malawians to acquire training and skills while employed with an organization and once they have made sufficient contacts and accumulated enough experience, to become independent consultants or move to another organization which pays more.

One independent consultant, based on his experience training NGOs in participatory rural development, he observed that NGOs in Malawi still see themselves as service providers. The extent to which NGOs practice participatory management and adopt participatory values within their organizational structures is, in his opinion, marginal

The objective of this programme is to improve the capacity of the government of Malawi to manage decentralization of government. It aims to strengthen the capacity of the area and district development committees as well as the District Economic Committee through training and participatory rural development, participatory rural appraisal and project management. Within the 5th Country Programme TtT and PRA trainings have been consistent in the six districts because they followed the same strategy and used the same trainers. Therefore the differences in success between districts comes down to leadership of district leaders.

Limitations of Participatory Rural Development

According to one Country Director, fieldworkers within his organization are viewing participatory development as a means to an end - to improve project success - rather than as a goal in itself. Fieldworkers are not looking at the bigger picture of community development and participation; instead they focus only on specific project objectives, thereby maintaining the dependency relationship between fieldworkers and communities. There is a gap, in behaviour, between staff and the mission of the organization. He feels that staff “are not taking their training and the concepts of participatory development to their logical conclusion”.

This Country Director feels that while participation is reflected in the organization’s projects it is not as evident within the organization itself. There is currently no common ownership of the NGO’s vision or mission and staff commitment is nebulous. Despite training all its staff in Training for Transformation the NGO saw little change in its operation or its fieldworkers’ behaviour. The Country Director feels that the training was not internalized due to the fact that the TtT training provided was too theoretical and not practical enough to bring about any change in the daily attitudes of staff. In his opinion “you need a comprehensive training package for different staff levels” in order to result in organizational and individual attitude change.

In an effort to solve this problem, the organization brought in a consultant to lead a two day workshop on Learning Organizations. This workshop was organized in an attempt to close the gap between policy and practice with regard to participatory methodologies by explaining to fieldworkers and other staff why and how the organization had adopted participatory rural development approaches. It was also hoped that the workshop would

develop a greater awareness of the general development process amongst fieldworkers and provide them with a context to place their own work.

The workshop also provided a forum for ten staff from a cross-section of the NGO to discuss individual and organizational barriers to participation and participatory methods they face. Besides mentioning the need for reversals in the way people work, more specific obstacles such as the unwillingness of senior staff to be questioned, personal management style, lack of drive to motivate others and the fear of being criticized were also brought up for discussion. The unwillingness to evaluate senior staff, inappropriate attitudes and a lack of commitment to creating a participatory organization were identified as other organizational obstacles to participatory management present within this NGO.

A second Country Director noted that despite the training in participatory methodologies provided to fieldworkers, it was difficult to break their assumption of status and paternalistic behaviour and cultivate a sense of commitment to their work. He stated that expatriate fieldworkers are much more committed to their work and local communities than Malawian staff. In his opinion, this attitude comes from the feeling of superiority higher education generates within Malawi. This Country Director was the first person to indicate that personalities of fieldworkers also strongly influence the participatory rural development process.

Another obstacle to participatory methodologies identified by this Country Director is the fact that the impact of PRD is subjective, difficult to measure and requires a lot of staff resources for follow-ups. Furthermore, results are unequal between communities as expectations, leadership and contexts differ. This has led to more analysis by the organization in order to discover how to overcome these specific obstacles.

The administrator of an NGO Training Support Unit has experienced other difficulties as a result of adopting participatory methodologies. The most critical of these has been the loss of senior level staff after they received training in Training for Transformation in Kenya. She indicated that while there is a commitment to participatory methodologies by sector heads within the NGO, there is still a hierarchy within the organization and “staff don’t know what needs to happen at the organizational level in order to integrate participatory methodologies into the environment”. Frustrated after acquiring training in participatory methodologies, a number of fieldworkers and trainers remained with the Training Support Unit long enough to accumulate experience and contacts and then left to become independent consultants, sometimes in competition with the Training Support Unit.

Speaking more generally about obstacles to participatory development within her particular NGO, she indicated that while staff were free to voice their concerns at weekly staff meetings, few took advantage of this opportunity. In her opinion, the culture of deference within Malawi and the unfamiliarity of Malawians with freedom of expression effectively blocks the participatory process from functioning within the NGO.

Another significant obstacle to the participatory development process within this NGO is the fact that no internal review has been done on any of the internal training or on those provided to their clientele. In general, its impact over the previous two years was unknown, partly because monitoring and evaluating the level of understanding and application of participatory rural development by trainees is extremely difficult and time consuming.

Furthermore, there is no standardized course although a two week course is recommended. As a result training sessions range from one week to two days in length. Given the variety of training (TfT and PRA), its duration, and the difficulty in measuring

levels of understanding, the organization has little standardized material upon which to base an impact assessment. The administrator of the Training Support Unit indicated that NGOs themselves also lack the financial resources and time to monitor and evaluate the impact of adopting participatory rural development.

The first independent consultant I interviewed indicated that the culture and values necessary to implement participatory rural development are not present in the majority of Malawian extension/fieldworkers and NGOs. In Malawi today, concepts of decentralization, receptivity, sharing power, challenging power, human rights and accepting criticism, which he identifies as necessary values for successful implementation of participatory development, are in their infancy.

Major barriers to participation in Malawi, according to this consultant, include the attitude of fieldworkers; they feel they are better than villagers, that they know more and that by using PRA they lose dignity and the respect of the community. As well, the attitude of communities in Malawi is one of waiting for service delivery, not participatory projects, that they must organize and initiate. In addition, there is the inability of the government extension workers to be critical of government policy, political nature of development work and the perception that development equals the delivery of resources.

He also identified problems with training in TfT and PRA provided to Malawian NGOs. In his opinion trainers often do not have a good grasp of the concepts, nor do they have first-hand experience using TfT or PRA in the field. Many participatory methodologies trainers in Malawi have attended TfT, PRA and Training of Trainers courses without spending any time implementing these methodologies in the field.

He also feels that training in participatory rural development in Malawi lacks adequate focus on how participatory methods and approaches can be applied within an office environment and that NGOs do not adequately support their fieldworkers in their efforts to implement what they have learned. Trainees often re-enter their NGO, unsure of where and how to start changing their behaviour; without adequate support, this consultant believes participatory methods are unlikely to be used in the field.

According to a second independent consultant, the biggest obstacle to participatory rural development in Malawi is that the structure of NGOs and implementing organizations remains untouched. “Currently, organizations and ministries want participatory tools not the approach that they are embedded in”. As a result, organizations mobilize communities rather than communities mobilizing themselves and communities give responses to predetermined questions. Yet this process is labelled participation.

One of the factors contributing to this problem, according to this consultant, is that organizations and individuals do not appear to understand the process of empowerment and thus give it low priority. Consequently, the amount of time and resources assigned to staff training by organizations is too little. She feels that two-week training sessions that take place away from the normal working environment are not enough for a person to internalize TfT concepts. No time limit can be placed on the transformation of an individual, as it is an ongoing process.

The background of most Malawian fieldworkers is one of being recipients of knowledge. They therefore they translate this experience into their working style, seeing the community as recipients of information and directions rather than knowledgeable partners. This perception, according to this consultant, commonly results in a general resistance to the PRD

approach amongst fieldworkers. They are not comfortable, nor committed to the philosophy of development and empowerment of the community. She labelled such individuals “waterproof people” - those who do not absorb TtT training and who block the adoption and implementation of participatory development .

A further obstacle to participatory rural development in Malawi, according to her, is that the “administrative structure of NGOs remains top-down so training bounces back in the organization’s face with resignations of people and conflicts”. Lacking support and follow-up after training trainees frequently become frustrated when they attempt to implement the participatory methodologies they learned when they return to their working environment. Many people revert back to their old approaches or seek employment elsewhere.

Another obstacle to implementation of participatory methodologies this consultant identified is the expectations of Malawian communities that NGOs provide everything for them. This attitude requires that fieldworkers take time to explain the TtT and PRD approach to development in order for the community to recognize that they must be involved at all stages. This process is time consuming and fieldworkers are often forced to short-circuit the participatory process in order to meet objectives and deadlines. She also indicated that the authoritarian regime of Malawi influences the approach and behaviour of local NGOs, fieldworkers and government ministries (no questioning of authority or power sharing).

The third consultant I interviewed was the Programme Advisor for the Management for Development Programme of the UNDP. She identified selfishness as the biggest barrier to participation in communities; there is no going beyond ‘me’ to the community amongst district leaders. “Where there is committed leadership to the participatory process and decentralization of power, positive results come about”. She thinks that this selfishness could

be due to the poverty level within Malawi, and the fact that the Banda regime destroyed any sense of trust within and amongst communities.

Another problem she identified is that through PRA exercises communities are encouraged to analyze their problems, but when they are devising action plans they still request schools, roads and other infrastructure because they think these are the only things the government can provide. There seems to be little awareness of alternative funding sources and the ability to apply somewhere else for money.

Strategies for Improving Participatory Rural Development in Malawi

One Country Director felt that there needs to be a greater focus on creating good animators rather than technical experts in participatory rural development. which doesn't happen in a two week training course. Creativity needs to be stressed in connection with using participatory development methods and tools, stressing different ways of using the same tools at different times and in different contexts.

He also indicated that NGOs in Malawi need to clarify their role as facilitator not implementer and make this clear to communities from the outset. Fieldworkers need to lead communities through a process in which they outline how they are going to manage the project instead of prescribing how to the community should organize itself.

There is a need to look at the impact of training on individual fieldworkers and staff, as well as on the organization's projects. There is also a need to focus on human resource management skills as well as since management style affects the use of specific skills and general atmosphere within an organization.

An independent consultant observed that a review of organizational management styles

is required and that PRA should be done before funding is allocated to a project so that the organization has a prioritized list of problems established by the community. Rather than create new institutions and structures, NGOs should focus on strengthening the traditional authorities of Malawi in order to strengthen civil society so that communities themselves demand to participate and Traditional Authorities become the spokespersons of the poor. Traditional Authorities should be trained in Tft and in mobilizing the community.

He felt that NGOs need to re-orient their philosophies to become more accountable to the poor within Malawi and that they should focus their participatory training in Bunda College of Agriculture as its graduates are the fieldworkers of the future. He also suggested that the training of fieldworkers needs to start with self-examination of values, attitudes, assumptions about their roles and their management and work styles. Fieldworkers need to be challenged to review their own behaviour. Furthermore, he was of the view that training isn't the solution to all NGO problems but management is. He felt that the problems the organization wants to solve needs to be identified in order to determine if training will solve it but that this "requires a level of commitment and vision that most NGOs don't have".

Another consultant believes that Tft training needs to focus on the attitudes and values of fieldworkers and that there is also a need to standardize Tft and PRA training within Malawi to generate a pool of facilitators with similar skills and attitudes to avoid confusion within and between communities.

Section III - Participant Observation

My first participant observation opportunity was presented by The World Bank's Community Mobilization Training for Community-Based Environmental Micro-Projects. This was a one-week training workshop for fieldworkers who were to work with 16 communities throughout Malawi and develop Community-Based Environmental Action Plans. The purpose of the course was to share techniques in community mobilization and generate a better understanding of Malawi's key environmental issues and discuss potential solutions.

During the introductions on the first day of the workshop, participants were asked to list their expectations of the training. The responses were the following:

- to be a better facilitator in community mobilization
- to be familiar with community mobilization skills that will result in full community participation in projects
- to learn more from some topical issues in environmental protection and management
- to know more an detailed information on community mobilization
- to learn different experiences after using PRA in the field
- discuss techniques of community mobilization
- to know how to assist the community to prepare a project which they all feel is important
- to know the concept of PRA application in implementation and evaluation

I began to question the content of the workshop on day two when we again were focusing on the consequences of deforestation and factors contributing to population growth, both of which had been covered the previous day. There was no discussion about how fieldworkers could initiate such a discussion with the communities they would be going to work with, or particular participatory methods that would be useful to facilitate community discussions about these issues. I felt that a lot of time was being spent reviewing basic environmental information, that these fieldworkers already knew, as evident from their

extensive answers and discussions of deforestation, water pollution and population problems. The discussions became very technical when air pollution was the topic, and I felt that ozone depletion was not something fieldworkers would need to discuss with local communities.

During the afternoon of Day Two, I noted a lack of enthusiasm amongst participants and the course seemed to be dragging. It was my opinion that the workshop could have been made more participatory. Participants were not gaining any practical experience facilitating group discussions or using participatory methodologies through their involvement in group discussions. In general I felt there was too much lecturing

Day Three focused on organization building in communities. However, the discussion concentrated on generating definitions of a community and an organization. There was a discussion as to why fieldworkers would want to organize communities, but there was little strategizing about how this could be effectively implemented. For example, the definition of community organization that was proposed came from the Manual on Social Forestry. It outlines community organization as “a process in which a change agent engages a community or an action system composed of individuals or groups to bring their collective efforts to bear in an orderly, deliberate and planned way on a social situation so as to deal with selected social needs and enhance social functioning”. Specific methodologies for achieving this were not discussed.

There was a discussion of the responsibilities of a community facilitator which generated the following list:

- liaising with the community and development agencies**
- facilitate the identification of roles among the community**
- monitoring the functioning of the community**
- motivating the community to take active roles in their own development**
- reporting progress to development organizations with input from the community**

- to impart some skills to the community
- to help communities identify problems, priorities and find solutions for their problems

However the discussion did not indicate how these tasks were to or could be achieved by fieldworkers. Fieldworkers were not asked to share their personal experiences attempting to achieve these tasks, nor were specific participatory methodologies suggested by workshop leaders. At the completion of the course I did not feel that many of the expectations expressed by participants had been met and that in many ways these fieldworkers had not been adequately prepared to generate community environmental action plans.

Participant Observation of a Three-day PRA in Kasewe Village, Karonga

I was presented with the opportunity to accompany two fieldworkers participating in the World Bank's Community Environmental Micro-Projects Programme to Kasewe, a small community in the District of Karonga, approximately seven kilometres from the boarder of Tanzania. The first obstacle that we faced was one of transport. These two fieldworkers were stationed in Dedza District and did not have access to a four-wheel-drive vehicle. We took public bus transportation to the town of Mzuzu where we were to pick up a vehicle from the organization's field office. Upon arrival we discovered that the vehicle had been in an accident and was not available; however, one motorbike was provided. One fieldworker and I proceeded to Karonga via public transportation, while the second fieldworker rode the motorbike and met us in Karonga.

Upon arriving in Karonga we went to visit the District Commissioner to announce our arrival and outline the work we would be doing in Kasewe. We requested a letter of

introduction from him so that the local forestry and agricultural extension workers would participate in our initiative. Our plan was initially to visit Kasewe that first day as well, but due to time constraints we had to postpone our introductory visit until the following day which put us behind schedule.

After hitchhiking and riding to Kasewe the next morning, approximately a forty minute drive, we tried to locate the forestry extension worker. Due to lack of and poor quality telephone lines we could not notify him in advance of our arrival. After some time we were able to introduce ourselves and requested that he introduce us to the village Chief. We spent approximately one hour with the village Chief introducing ourselves, stating that we wanted to work with his village to develop an environmental action plan, but that we needed to hold community meetings with as many people in attendance as possible. The community was busy that afternoon, and there was not enough time to send a message of a meeting for that afternoon, so it was agreed that we would return the following morning to have our first meeting. Returning to Karonga, we were frustrated with the fact that we had been in the District for two days but no work had been accomplished, and we had to return to Lilongwe with a completed Action Plan in the space of five more days.

We arrived in the community the following morning and waited for people to gather at the Chief's house for the meeting. We started two hours late because we wanted to ensure that the group gathered was representative of the community, meaning that we needed women, young people and elderly as well. General introductions were made during which it was discovered that we had a language problem; the women of the community did not understand Chewa and therefore we needed to appoint a translator.

The first exercise the fieldworkers introduced was community mapping. The Chief

indicated that they had done this before and was hesitant to participate in a similar exercise when nothing had developed from the last time fieldworkers had facilitated this exercise. With some explanation, he consented.

The women in attendance did not participate in the village mapping, and in an effort to facilitate their participation, we attempted to have the women draw a separate map. It seemed that they were uncomfortable representing their community pictorially.

Upon completion of the village map, the fieldworkers started an activity calendar. However, they did not explain why these exercises were being done or why the information that they were learning was important. Furthermore, the activity calendar was drawn by the fieldworkers based on the response of community to specific questions which made me question the extent to which the community was participating in this development initiative.

The fieldworkers seemed to be having difficulty coordinating the participatory rural development techniques so that all the different interest groups (women, men, old and young people) were able to participate. By spending time coordinating things, they had less time for working directly with the community and generating an action plan. Furthermore, the idea that the community environmental action plan was meant for the community to develop their own solutions to their environmental problems was not clearly communicated by the fieldworkers, and thus it was not understood by the community as evident by their frequent questioning of "How can you help us?"

While the exercises facilitated by the two fieldworkers were successful in gathering data on the environmental needs of the community, it was my feeling that the discussions after these exercises needed to be more probing. They did not appear to be following up the community's sharing of information with questions that would assist them and the community

understand the problem or situation better.

The community seemed to tire quickly of these methodologies and discussions, perhaps because they had done many of them before, but we also were requesting that they spend all day with us. During the transect walk that we conducted, the community did not seem to understand what the fieldworkers wanted to learn, and the fieldworkers were concentrating on drawing the landscape properly which distracted them from listening to what community members were saying.

Participant Observations of Blantyre Water Project

I spent one week accompanying the fieldworkers responsible for the Blantyre Water Project to a number of communities. I was astounded at the amount of time they spent driving out to communities and making appointments with Traditional Authorities, picking up government extension workers they are collaborating with and dealing with logistics such as transport. One day we spent the whole day making appointments instead of holding meetings with communities. However, the fieldworkers indicated that it is crucial that they meet with the village Headmen to make and confirm meeting times.

We met with Chapasuka Village for the first time with the whole community. The fieldworkers were pleased with the turnout, there were a large number of women in attendance. After the meeting had been officially opened and introductions were complete, fieldworkers told the community that the organization would only be providing one borehole. This generated a lot of discontent, and many people were reluctant to participate in the rest of the meeting because they felt that more than one borehole was needed. After some discussion as to why the organization could not provide more than one waterpoint, the

fieldworkers introduced the first exercise.

A discussion focusing on why the community felt they need a water point was facilitated. Once this was completed, the community was asked to map their village. This exercise took some time, but a very detailed map was produced with ash representing rivers and rocks representing households. Participation of women in this exercise was initially very low, but eventually, as more of the map was produced a few women stood up and drew their houses and fields on the map.

Once the map was finished there was a short discussion about what was represented. For example, fieldworkers asked why the shallow well was located where it is, and how long it took women to walk to the existing water point from their homes. The map was used as an entry point for a discussion about where to put the new borehole that the organization would be providing. This was a long discussion with not much agreement as to the borehole's location. Different interest groups within the community wanted the borehole close to them. The Village Chief ultimately decided the site should be located along one of the rivers. However, there was discontent with this location, as it would place the new borehole close to the already existing waterpoint and people living in the north part of the village would not be helped because the borehole would be too far away.

The meeting was getting very long, and the fieldworkers felt that they should return later on in the week to continue this discussion. However, community members were concerned that at the next meeting not enough people would attend from all areas of the community to make a decision on the composition of the water committee, so the fieldworkers kept the meeting going. People got tired of the meeting and participation began to decline as the meeting continued.

Participant Observations from Mdala Village

This meeting started very late because of the heat and the fact that the meeting was not well publicized within the community. However, after approximately an hour attendance was sufficient to proceed. This meeting followed the same format as that in Chapasuka Village, beginning with a discussion as to why the community felt they needed a waterpoint. This discussion was much more detailed than that in Chapasuka Village. Another map was drawn and a site for the new waterpoint was selected very close to a broken borehole. This site was selected because they knew that the land should give water. Like Chapasuka Village, this community was upset that there would only be one borehole provided. The fieldworkers had to stop this meeting due to time constraints on getting the vehicle back to the office by 5:00 p.m.. The community wanted to keep going.

The fieldworkers felt that this community responded more positively to the participatory methods than Chapasuka Village. They thought that this may have been because Mdala Village had heard about the organization's work. One interesting point about the meeting in this community was that a woman chaired the meeting.

A follow-up meeting with a community that had already decided the location of their borehole was particularly revealing of some of the obstacles fieldworkers face when implementing participatory methodologies. Upon talking with the few people who had gathered for the meeting, it was made clear that the rest of the community had boycotted the meeting because they were not happy with the site that had been chosen for the borehole. Rather than cancel the meeting, the fieldworkers decided to meet with those in attendance to discuss what next steps could be taken. The Village Headman wanted to force the community to agree on the site. Instead of focusing on the site of the borehole, the fieldworkers

facilitated an exercise in which the community was asked to generate two circles, each representing what the community and the organization were going to contribute to the construction of the borehole. This was a productive discussion and we left feeling that those who attended the meeting clearly understood what was expected of them. The fieldworkers felt confident that the community would be able to resolve the conflict regarding the location of the borehole amongst themselves, but indicated to the Village Headman that if he wanted them to return for further discussions, they would be available.

I was also able to attend a monthly meeting of all the fieldworkers (NGO and government) involved with the Blantyre Water Project. The purpose of these monthly meetings is to review project progress and discuss any problems encountered since the last meeting. Of the 22 people in attendance, there was only one Malawian woman present, and she did not speak during the day long meeting. After specific issues such as educating communities about the hazards of washing clothes around waterpoints, and concerns about contributing to deforestation by having communities burn bricks to construct fences around waterpoints, the discussion shifted to the controversial issue of fieldworker allowances.

A number of people at the meeting felt that communities should be paid for their participation in the water project because they are poor. Fieldworkers also feel that they should receive allowances for their work with communities. However, the NGO administering the Blantyre water project refuses to pay daily allowances to its fieldworkers. The two fieldworkers I accompanied tried to communicate the fact that paying allowances, particularly to communities, totally contradicts what participation is all about and creates or perpetuates a dependency on NGOs. Paying allowances does not encourage community initiative, but rather encourages them to wait for organizations and government departments

to initiate projects and programmes for them. The meeting was concluded without any consensus and I expect that it will remain a hotly debated issue amongst Malawian fieldworkers for some time.

Just before leaving Malawi, I was able to attend a two-day meeting of fieldworkers involved with the World Bank Community Environmental Micro-Projects. This was a meeting to present the action plans that had been designed with the 16 pilot communities within Malawi. Fieldworkers were to present their action plans to the Coordinating Committee for funding approval. During these presentations, fieldworkers often mentioned the obstacles they faced in using participatory methodologies. Organizational barriers were also discussed throughout the meeting.

One community's priority was a water project whose focus was irrigation rather than human consumption. The Coordinating Committee decided that this type of project did not fit within the Micro-Project mandate. The project was supposed to be participatory, yet the community did not have the power to decide the nature of their action plan. Another example of such contradictions was evident when the Coordinating Committee expressed concern over the composition of the development committee established in one community, in which the members were from the same family.

During this meeting, there was little mention of how these action plans would be implemented. In fact, upon direct questioning, the Coordinating Committee revealed that the system of implementation had not been finalized. Fieldworkers indicated that they were in a very difficult position because they could not plan an implementation strategy with the communities since they have no idea how funds are going to be made available or who (which agencies or organizations) will be providing the resources the community had requested.

I found many contradictions within this project's process. The Coordinating Committee was asking fieldworkers to work within the participatory paradigm, but the project itself was not structured hierarchically. Fieldworkers were expected to work within strict time-lines and budgets, and were given little opportunity to provide any suggestions or evaluation of the project and its operating procedures.

Conclusion

This chapter has documented the wide variety of opinions expressed by Malawian fieldworkers, NGO Country Directors and independent consultants with regard to their experiences with participatory methodologies. The supporting documentation I consulted revealed that the experiences expressed by those fieldworkers I interviewed have been shared by other fieldworkers throughout Malawi. Chapter Six will attempt to synthesize the findings presented here and analyze them within the conceptual framework presented in Chapter Two.

Chapter Six

Synthesis and Analysis

Introduction

The large amount of information presented in Chapter Five calls for a synthesis and analysis in order to relate this information to the goals, objectives and conceptual framework which directed and shaped this research project.

Synthesis

My investigation of the mechanisms through which NGOs in Malawi seek to operationalize participatory development theory in order to strengthen indigenous natural resource management and organizational capacity revealed that the adoption of participatory values is marginal. Instead of focusing on building the capacity of communities to do the work themselves, many NGOs in Malawi still perceive themselves as service providers.

Based on my interview results and personal observations, NGOs within Malawi are adopting and implementing PRD methodologies largely through the training of their fieldworkers. Thus, it is primarily at the grassroots rather than organizational level that participatory methodologies are being implemented. There is some evidence of change in, or decentralization of, the decision-making structures within organizations and limited attempts to create a sense of ownership amongst staff for the organization and its activities. However, in Malawi, educational mechanisms such as arranging internal workshops on participatory development, appointing internal trainers and sending fieldworkers to other countries for extensive training predominate. Significant reorganization of the bureaucratic structures of

NGOs, redefining organizational goals, values and individual responsibilities, which Senge suggests are necessary for sustainable organizational change, are scarce amongst Malawian NGOs.

Within Malawi, there is a pervasive organizational reliance amongst NGOs upon the training of their fieldworkers to implement participatory methodologies so that project participants gain an understanding of natural resource management, take ownership of the development process and thereby improve their organizational capacity. However, as revealed by two NGO Country Directors and one fieldworker, this training has been too theoretical, and has consequently failed to have its desired effect. As one Country Director stated “they are not taking it (the participatory process) to its logical conclusion” and “it is difficult to break the assumption of status” that prevails amongst fieldworkers.

Furthermore, rather than utilize participatory methodologies at each stage of the project cycle, NGOs are adopting them solely in the planning and/or implementation stages, a practice referred to by one consultant as short-circuiting. The majority of NGOs in Malawi are using PRD as a research tool to collect baseline data, rather than as a development approach. While the intention is often to generate community action plans, this outcome is rarely the result. Instead, laundry lists of needs and priorities are produced, with little attention to action or follow-up. As a result, the intended empowerment and capacity-building of Malawian communities are often not realized.

The fieldworker responsible for the Blantyre Water Project indicated that the truncated version of PRD his organization has adopted in order to meet project goals has not contributed to the empowerment of participating communities. Rather than participate in problem identification or discussion of their root causes, communities are involved only in

implementation decisions and activities.

My observations of a Participatory Rural Appraisal in northern Malawi suggest that despite their training in participatory rural development and intentions to encourage community-based natural resource management, fieldworkers are unable to avoid creating dependency relationships between themselves and communities. The World Bank's Community Environmental Micro-Project was the only evidence that I found of PRD being used to identify community problems at the outset of the project and attempt to design an environmental action plan with the community. However, due to strict time constraints, the fieldworkers involved in this endeavour were restricted in the number of tools they could employ. While an action plan was designed by the community in Northern Malawi, I question how representative and realistic the action plan is, given the limited process and time period through which it was developed. Furthermore, the focus of the action plan - the environment - had been predetermined by the World Bank. Thus the degree of community influence in determining the nature of the development project is questionable.

Participatory rural development involves a wide variety of techniques and tools from which fieldworkers can choose and adapt to the particular context of the community they are working with. It was my observation that despite this wide selection, fieldworkers rely primarily on four tools - village maps, transect walks, pair-wise ranking, and daily calendars. In theory, these tools are to be followed by facilitated discussion of the information gathered during the exercises. Due to fieldworker bias towards collecting baseline information, these discussions are often brief, or do not occur at all.

My interviews failed to reveal the rationale behind the adoption of participatory methodologies by non-governmental organizations and government departments. This finding indicates that organizations and their fieldworkers in Malawi are largely unclear as to the rationale behind the adoption of participatory methodologies. It is my impression that most NGOs in Malawi adopt mandates to empower local communities to achieve their own development goals through participation in response to donor demands. Donors such as CIDA and USAID now require projects to have a participatory component and so NGOs must include participatory mechanisms in project proposals. Similarly, and with more resistance, government departments within Malawi are responding to international donors to adopt participatory methodologies. For instance, the Ministry of Research and Environmental Affairs (MOREA) which is currently being funded by the UNDP Capacity 21 Programme is attempting to utilize and promote participatory methodologies. From my work with the UNDP and MOREA, it is my observation that currently, the UNDP largely mandates the policies and activities of MOREA. The Department of Forestry has also composed a series of manuals on Community Based Forestry under the guidance and with funding from the UNDP's 5th Country Programme.

As I was conducting interviews, it became apparent that the difficulties mentioned by each group of interviewees - fieldworker, Country Director and independent consultant- could be separated into two main groups - field-level and institutional constraints. Figure 7 is a schematic diagram which attempts to graphically represent the various impediments to the participatory development process.

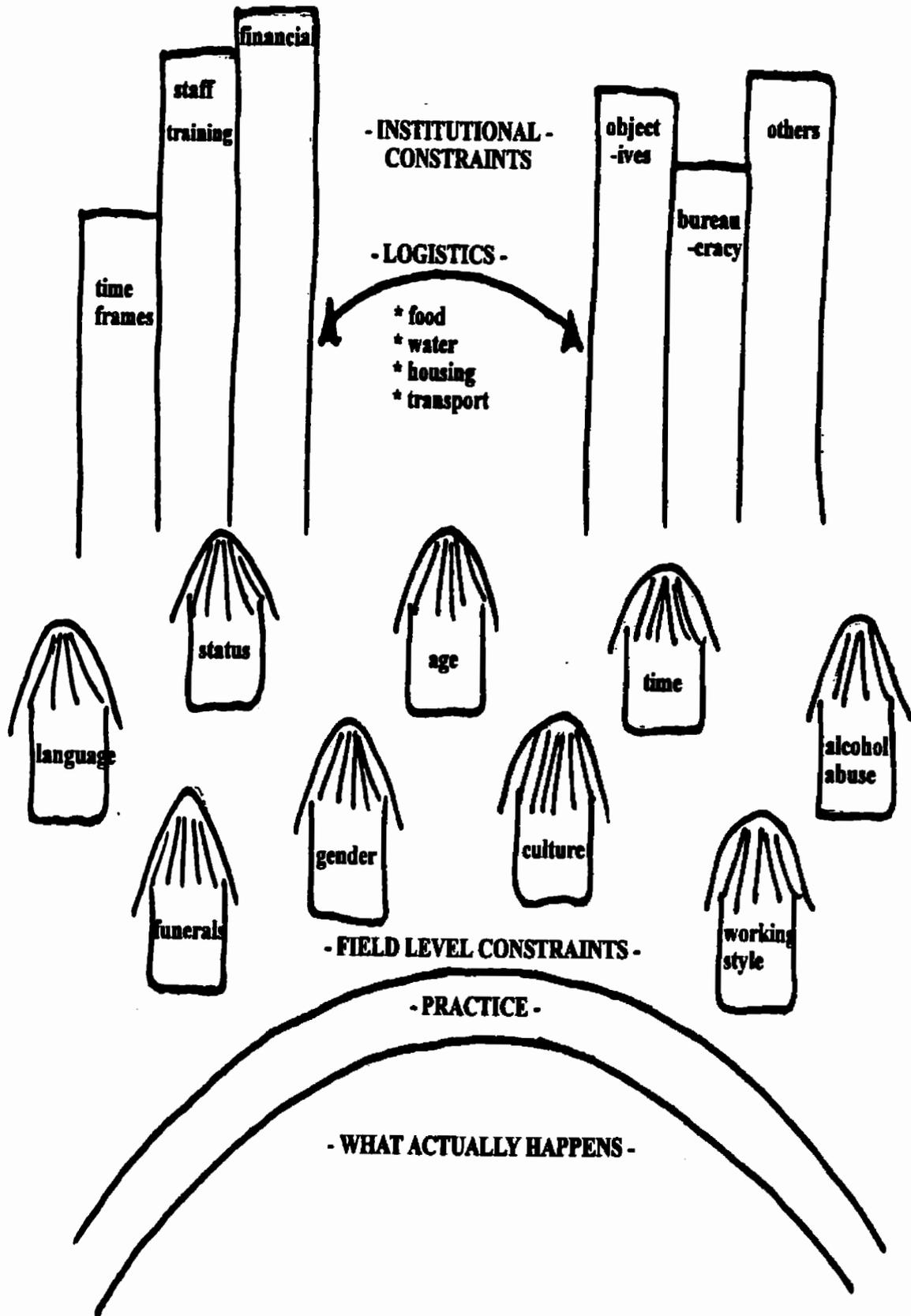


Figure 6 - Schematic Diagram

At the field level, the culture of dependency amongst Malawian communities, the need to see results, communication problems (personal visits required to make appointments, miscommunication of dates and times for meetings), and the large amount of time required to establish relationships with the community before work can begin were all difficulties encountered by fieldworkers using participatory methodologies. Language barriers, funerals and celebrations, politicians and the political climate, government extension workers and comparisons with other NGOs by communities were also field-level obstacles mentioned during interviews with fieldworkers. From my observations, the working style of fieldworkers, gender roles and bias, alcohol abuse, weather conditions and status differentials also affect the implementation of participatory methodologies.

Country directors and independent consultants also identified field-level constraints to implementing participatory methodologies. While the culture of dependency was mentioned again, the most commonly mentioned obstacle was the attitudes and commitment of fieldworkers. Inappropriate and unstandardized training (being too theoretical, varying in length and content) was also listed as a difficulty encountered by organizations attempting to implement participatory methodologies.

Institutional constraints to participatory methodologies that were revealed through my interviews included: lack of administrative understanding of participatory methodologies and the field situation, lack of supportive environment, pressure to follow project time-lines and meet deadlines, lack of support and reference materials, lack of decision-making power, attitudes of bosses, and restricted access to resources and transport.

One of the independent consultants identified the biggest obstacle to participatory rural development in Malawi as the structure of NGOs, which according to her, remains

untouched.

In most cases, the adoption of participatory methodologies has not been accompanied by a change in organizational structure, although it does seem to improve internal communication and middle management practices. While the relationship between organizations and the communities with which they work has changed in terms of the types and amounts of services provided, hierarchical decision-making processes within organizations limit communities to participating in the implementation stage of the development cycle. Furthermore, since the administrative structure remains top-down, training in participatory methodologies frequently results in field staff reverting to traditional extension methods or leaving the organization entirely.

Another institutional constraint mentioned by Country Directors and independent consultants in different contexts was that of timing. One organization had modified its use of participatory methodologies when it discovered that the process would prevent it from meeting their project target of providing 200 waterpoints in one year. Similarly, due to time and financial constraints, organizations cannot afford long training workshops for their field staff. Consequently, three-day or one-week training is all that can be provided, though according to the independent consultants and country directors, such training was often insufficient to change the attitudes of fieldworkers. “We need to create good animators”, one country director stated. However, based on the training I observed, the content and lecture format of participatory methodologies training currently being delivered in Malawi fails to meet this need.

These impediments to the participatory process are pervasive throughout Malawi, and yet recognition and discussion of their influence on project outcome and community

empowerment are limited. Instead of fostering popular participation, organizations are getting communities to agree with and/or accept the terms and conditions of their pre-determined projects.

Analysis

Within Malawi, as major donors and NGOs push their respective programmes and projects to use participatory methodologies and work in a PRD-like manner there appears to be little concept of what this policy shift entails. Few, in fact, have defined their approach clearly. Placing their faith in training courses, non-governmental organizations adopting participatory approaches now "...consider that participatory rural development facilitated by training is potentially the most effective approach..." (Ndalama & Sullivan, 1996; 5). The tendency amongst Malawian NGOs is to assume that their policy decisions and the acquisition of new skills by fieldworkers will convert their organizations into more people-centred ones.

With this assumption comes the hope that their activities will help communities to determine their own development priorities, policies and activities (Bornemisza, 1995).

Training

It is surprising how little attention has been given to the details of training. Short courses in which new facts and skills are transmitted in lecture format tend to isolate discrete bits of knowledge which prevents the development of holistic understanding by trainees. Furthermore, from my observations, these courses concentrate on the tools or 'science' of participatory rural development rather than engaging fieldworkers in a self-reflexive learning process in order to bring about deep shifts in attitudes, behaviours and personal development.

Most participatory approaches are taught in theory and it is left to the individual to practice it when in the field (Ndalama & Sullivan, 1996). This mechanistic, 'how-to' teaching of a limited number of participatory development methods or tools that can be used to achieve specific objectives leaves fieldworkers with the idea that participation is something which is 'done to' a community rather than a process that involves a fundamental change in their own attitudes and behaviours and that a determinable result will emerge from correct methodological application (Jiggins and Roling, 1994). Moreover, fieldworkers must deal with uncertainty, uniqueness and value conflict on a daily basis which escape the realms of technical training, and are often not discussed in the short courses currently delivered in Malawi.

The zeal to implement participatory methodologies within Malawi has in reality blocked the process. "If anything, there is evidence of too much training..." (Ndalama & Sullivan, 1996; x), endless workshops which frequently fail to benefit the organizations whose field staff attend. Participatory methods have become rigid techniques and fieldworkers have adopted a checklist mentality, perpetuated by the how-to training and formulistic participatory rural development manuals, thereby reducing the participation of Malawian communities to mere routine.

Finding ways of inculcating the spirit of experimentation and creativity into hierarchical and control-oriented organizations has eluded most administrative reformers.

(Mohan Mathur, 1986; 34)

However, it is not only the content of this training that is important in determining its efficacy. Typically, the content, methodology and setting of training are determined by trainers or NGOs, not by participants. This undemocratic, hierarchical and non-participatory approach to education encourages participants to be passive recipients of information and they frequently take no responsibility for their own learning. The manner with which the training is delivered is a reflection of the trainer's proficiency and practical experience implementing participatory methodologies.

The best way to teach about 'bottom-up planning', people's participation and decentralization is by practicing these very ideas in a training programme. If training is top-down, rigid, paternalistic, the change agents will learn the same attitudes. To bring out creative and innovative qualities in them, trainees should be given the maximum responsibility possible.

(Bhasin, 1976 as quoted in Burkey, 1993; 88).

Furthermore, the personality of the trainer, as well as his/her ability to effectively communicate the essence of participatory methodologies to trainees affects the success of the training workshop. Participants who leave a training session unsure of or confused about what they learned are unlikely to risk implementing the methods in a field situation. In Malawi, Bornimisza's evaluation and my observations revealed that fieldworkers often leave training sessions uncertain of how to use and combine different participatory rural development methods, present problems back to communities and promote discussions of solutions.

NGOs also tend to overlook the fact that fieldworkers are individuals and will react differently to the training they receive. The personality, values, beliefs, and experiences of

fieldworkers influence not only their receptivity to the ideas and concepts of participatory methodologies but also the manner with which they integrate participatory methods into their work with communities in various degrees. Behaviour and attitudes can sometimes be an irremediable impediment to the implementation of participatory methodologies and methods. Depending on personality and experience, NGO fieldworkers can take to PRD with enthusiasm or reject it (Chambers, 1995). The specific techniques of participatory methodologies, their purpose and importance as outlined in training sessions can be interpreted and thus used in very different manners by fieldworkers.

Training does not stop upon completion of its delivery; it must be followed up and supported. If fieldworkers do not feel that the organization has a significant interest in how the new methods are being used they are unlikely to spend time experimenting with new methods when their time is limited.

Staff support and development are probably the most important area of concern for programme managers after the initial selection and training of change agents. There is no use recruiting the best possible people for training as change agents if they are not given enough support for them to want to continue working.

(Burkey, 1993; 107)

Support in the form of resources and personal contact to research strategies and discuss problems can significantly improve the long-term implementation and success of participatory methodologies. Fieldworkers and support documents (Oxfam Mulanje Project Evaluation) indicate that in Malawi there is currently insufficient follow-up and support by NGOs adopting participatory rural development.

Field-level Constraints

External factors such as culture, politics, gender and status, profoundly influence the implementation of participatory methods at the field level. Each fieldworker must read the local context and work within the established cultural and political norms, values and hierarchies. In some cases participatory methods may not be appropriate at all, while in others they must be modified to suit the community's beliefs and politics. The culture of dependency which the Banda regime cultivated within Malawi continues to make initiation of the participatory process difficult for fieldworkers. Civil society within Malawi is in its infancy. The citizens of Malawi are struggling to understand the concepts of democracy, governmental accountability and community decision-making which accompanied the 1994 general elections.

It was during the national democratic election campaign that participatory projects organized by NGOs were being labelled by certain candidates as "thangata" (a word used to describe the forced involvement of Malawian communities in local work projects) which resulted in a temporary abandonment of various initiatives by community members. It was not until fieldworkers talked to each community and explained the difference between their approach and the traditional forced 'self-help' projects instituted by the Banda regime that participation was renewed.

Gender, although not mentioned by any of the interviewees, is, from my observations, a further variable which influences the participatory process. In large community meetings, women sit together at the fringe, and rarely speak in front of a group. It was not until separate gender groups were formed to draw village maps and daily calendars that their voices were heard. Women are frequently prevented from attending these meetings altogether

due to their responsibilities as caregivers. Furthermore, in one Malawian community women did not speak Chichewa whereas the men did. Despite efforts to translate, this gender-specific language barrier severely limited understanding and input by female community members.

The distribution of power within a community can also affect project action, as a specific protocol is followed when decisions are being made. Specific individuals must be consulted in a particular order before any action can take place. Internal power struggles between interest groups or families have impact on the level and nature of community involvement; preventing entirely or limiting the nature of participation by certain people or groups. For example, when the fieldworkers arrived for a meeting with one community participating in the Blantyre Water Project, few people were in attendance. It was discovered that a certain portion of inhabitants were unsatisfied with the location of the borehole that had been selected. In an effort to express this discontent, they boycotted the meeting. The chief expressed his desire to force these community members to agree to the chosen site rather than renegotiate the borehole's location. Uncomfortable, the fieldworkers felt that they should not proceed with the project until this issue had been resolved and adjourned the meeting with the understanding that the community would contact them when they had reached an agreement on the borehole's location. Consequently, geological testing and digging of the borehole were postponed, which thereby delayed the entire project.

Socio-economic factors also influence community actions and reactions to development projects. The economic condition of the community can both positively and negatively influence project action. During times of economic hardship, individuals are more likely to participate in projects of any sort in an effort to assure survival and minimal well-being. If

the community is doing well economically, participation may not be as high, especially if the project's objectives do not correspond to their priorities.

A project's timetable and its correspondence to the community's activities such as planting and harvesting exert a large influence on project action. If the project is designed such that the bulk of the community's participation is required during planting or harvesting periods, little action is going to actually be achieved due to their other commitments. Similarly, cultural and religious holidays and festivals can influence project action as they require the full attention and time of project participants for extended periods of time.

Another significant factor is the expectations and attitudes of the local community towards the fieldworker and the project. Though expectations are often not communicated, they influence the community's level of involvement and contributions throughout the project's duration. People want to see results quickly. Their physical needs are so great in many cases that if they do not see concrete results from their activities, they are unlikely to continue to participate. This is often a problem when attempting to implement environmental projects. Given the nature of environmental problems within Malawi - deforestation, soil erosion, overfishing etc.- and the nature of remedial projects - reforestation, conservation, limited fishing - results are not likely to be realized for five to ten years. Fieldworkers frequently have difficulty in communicating the long-term nature of these environmental projects, and thus recruiting and sustaining participation by community members.

However, it is not only communities that have expectations and attitudes. Fieldworkers and their organizations also begin projects with expectations of the community. In some cases a clash of expectations occurs which may block further action on a project entirely or negatively influence the process and subsequent action in other ways (personality conflicts,

internal power struggles and gender relation problems).

Organizational Constraints

Large institutions such as the World Bank and UNDP are turning increasingly to Malawian NGOs as executors of participatory initiatives with the expectation that they are more flexible and thus more able to successfully implement participatory projects. However, this expectation assumes that these organizations are managed effectively, are flexible and possess the necessary attitudes required to fulfill these expectations. As outlined in Chapter Two's conceptual framework and by my interview findings, the organizational environment within which participatory approaches are introduced plays a significant role in determining their practical use by NGOs and their fieldworkers. "Even highly qualified staff may be undermined by low morale, confused organizational management or poor working practices" (Eade and Williams, 1995; 405). NGOs themselves are inherently conservative, and supervisors are often more concerned to show that development funds are properly spent than with encouraging their fieldworkers to work innovatively with communities (Ndalama & Sullivan, 1996). The normal bureaucratic tendencies to standardize and impose top-down targets impede or can prevent fieldworkers from successfully implementing participatory methods. Decisions regarding project implementation are often made by those in head offices across oceans rather than those in the field with the understanding and connection to the local context and fieldworkers are often rushed to meet time-lines, limiting the tools they can use as well as the thoroughness of each exercise.

Organizations implementing participatory development in an effort to flatten their hierarchy and work towards grassroots development are often caught within an institutional framework which traps them into a system of top-down decision-making. Within such a hierarchical structure fieldworkers commonly have limited decision-making power and are required to submit applications for transport, materials and money, outlining the amount and purpose of the expenditure. "Financial accountability requires sophisticated controls, careful adherence to budgetary procedure, predictable cash-flows and so forth" (Burkey, 1993; 125). Observing the Blantyre Water Project provided a suitable example of this. One morning our departure was delayed due to a disagreement amongst fieldworkers of the Water Project and another project over access to a vehicle. After 45 minutes of discussion and appeals to the office administrator, the vehicle was granted to the Water Project for the day.

However, when fieldworkers cannot meaningfully participate in policy decisions with regard to the project they supervise, they have little vested interest in the projects and are therefore not motivated to pursue more difficult participatory processes. It is then highly unlikely that they will encourage participation on the part of those they are trying to help (Mohan Mathur, 1986).

Once the staff becomes aware that they need to promote participation, and what this means operationally, it does not take much form them to start saying: "How can we preach it if we do not practice it?"

(Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner (1978) in Burkey, 1993; 106)

In many cases, fieldworkers are being asked to work in a participatory manner yet are still expected to meet project objectives and budgets that may have been set prior to the organization's change in approach. Malawian fieldworkers have indicated that they find themselves doing things in non-participative ways because of their bosses demands (Ndalama & Sullivan, 1996). Moreover, in a crisis, fieldworkers frequently revert to top-down decision-making in an effort to rescue the project from going over budget or failing to meet its objectives. Without support and understanding from the organization as a whole for the changes and challenges they face in their efforts to integrate participatory methods into their work, fieldworkers are likely to lack commitment and enthusiasm.

Thus there are contradictions between the phenomenological underpinnings of participatory development - learning, empowerment and democratic communication - and the project approach Malawian NGOs continue to follow. Despite their adoption of a flexible approach to development which contradicts traditional bureaucratic practices of allocating staff, equipment and funds according to pre-made plans, NGOs in Malawi continue to conceive development as a sequential series of interventions with expected outcomes and predetermined time-lines rather than as a process.

Participatory development has a dynamic of its own which of necessity must lead to greater openness, straightforwardness and democratic decision-making and policy development. If attempts are made to stifle these developments, then the participatory process will wither and die - not only within the organization, but also in the community groups. The two processes are totally interdependent.

(Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner, 1978 as quoted in Burkey, 1993;106)

To Pretty et al. this problem is symptomatic of organizations that overlook the importance of simultaneously developing fieldworker proficiency in participatory methods, an organizational learning environment and providing sufficient institutional support.

It is these interdependencies, rather than training and education alone, that are crucial throughout the adoption of participatory approaches and methods. For instance, an interactive learning environment fosters an open-minded and sharing attitude amongst staff at all levels, creating interest, commitment and creative contributions to participatory field methods and changes in organizational infrastructure and action. Without this supportive atmosphere staff may wonder why they are adopting participatory rural development and what these changes are all about.

Similarly, as represented by the FDAC circle (See Figure 1.), institutional support encourages the spread of participatory methodologies between and within institutions. Without a reallocation of organizational and administrative resources, structural and attitudinal organizational change, no new methodology, especially participatory rural development can be effective, viable or sustainable (Cernea, 1985). Furthermore, without these changes, as is the case amongst Malawian NGOs, participatory approaches tend to be applied with rigid and standardized hierarchies, which not only constrict local decision-making but ultimately diminish the effectiveness of their efforts.

In Malawi, participation has been transformed from a process to a technique which rather than fostering popular participation, serves largely as a way to get people to agree with what the project wants to do. Organizations dictate when, where and what form the participation will take. The Blantyre Water Project and the World Bank Community Environmental Micro-Projects are both examples of this approach. Participatory methodologies are being used to

collect baseline information, yet the objectives of the projects are already set - to provide one water point, and to design an environmental action plan. Community participation is restricted to siting the waterpoint, provision of manual labour and forming a water committee. Thus despite the emphasis on making participation a concern of NGOs in Malawi, there continues to be a preference for planning and implementing 'participative' development projects which remain centralized.

Organizational Development

To date, NGOs in Malawi have not given enough attention to the difficult and messy process of building their own capacity for creative problem-solving and the integration of the technical and social components of participatory development. It is here where the most formidable barriers to participatory development are encountered. Too frequently, these organizations and their donors assume that a strong management capable of flexible and locally responsive action exists (Korten, 1980). Often, development policy is constructed or reconstructed and organizational goals are imposed without ascertaining whether suitable structures and processes can be created to match the requirements of the new strategies (Paul, 1986).

Participatory development involves not only the stimulation of the critical consciousness of local people and communities with regard to their situation, but also a reflection by the NGO and its fieldworkers of its assumptions, goals and values. This is an evolutionary process of building a collective self-confidence in what the NGO stands for both its staff and the communities it works with. Thus, project results are largely a function of the collaborative actions of the community, fieldworker and organization.

Conclusion

The belief in the undoubted virtue of involving people in development is not as straightforward or uncontroversial as it might at first appear.

(Midgley, 1986; 23)

The integration of participatory methodologies and methods by non-governmental organizations is about much more than simply increasing the level of involvement of the local community in a particular project. Furthermore, participatory methodologies alone are not enough to ensure effective participatory development outcomes. Such results require not only requires significant institutional change but also shifts in attitudes and behaviours throughout an organization and an ability amongst fieldworkers to think holistically or systematically in order to account for and adapt to the multitude of factors which influence project dynamics at the field level.

Chapter Seven

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

Participatory rural development is widely cited as the answer to past failures of development projects. Its benefits, such as empowerment of local people and communities and the design of more appropriate and sustainable development projects, dominate the literature. However, the literature rarely mentions strategies for implementing participatory methodologies and tools. Furthermore, documentation and discussion of obstacles encountered by practitioners is usually absent from academic writing on participatory rural development.

A modified form of illuminative evaluation, my research sought to examine, assess and describe the human processes, benefits, problems and structural elements involved when non-governmental organizations attempt to integrate participatory methodologies into their development projects as perceived by fieldworkers, NGO directors and independent consultants. The objectives of my research were:

1. To investigate and compare the rationale behind the adoption of participatory development methodologies by government departments and non-governmental organizations in Malawi.
2. To compare the mechanisms through which non-governmental organizations adopt and implement participatory development methodologies in community-based natural resource management initiatives in Malawian communities.

3. To explore the different uses of participatory methods by non-governmental organizations and their fieldworkers.
4. To examine the nature and cause of difficulties encountered by organizations and participatory methods practitioners during natural resource management project design and implementation.
5. To derive from the results of objectives 1,2,3, and 4, a set of operational guidelines for the operationalization of participatory development methodologies and methods suitable for both government and non-governmental organizations working in natural resource management in Malawi.

After a period of nine weeks during which I acclimatized to my new setting and served the United Nations Development Program as Participatory Methods Advisor I conducted a total of 31 separate semi-structured interviews with 26 individuals representing four non-governmental organizations. The interviews were supplemented by participant observation of participatory methods training workshops and the implementation of participatory methodologies by fieldworkers in local Malawian communities. The findings generated by the interviews and participant observations along with secondary data gathered from project reports and evaluations and other support documents were combined to provide the reader with a general understanding of participatory development as practiced by Malawian non-governmental organizations in the context of community-based natural resource management projects.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions emerge from the findings of this study based on its goal and specific objectives.

- 1. NGOs in Malawi are operationalizing participatory rural development primarily through the provision of Training for Transformation (TfT) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) training to their fieldworkers.**
- 2. The rationale behind the adoption of participatory rural development by NGOs and government departments within Malawi is often nebulous, although it appears to be heavily influenced by the demands of donors, funding agencies and international institutions like the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank. In most cases NGOs have not examined their motives for adopting participatory methodologies, nor their implications for their organization in terms of decision-making and resource allocation.**
- 3. Little organizational change is evident within NGOs in Malawi that have adopted participatory rural development.**
- 4. The focus on changing fieldworkers rather than the operations of NGOs and staff attitudes reflects a lack of understanding of TfT and Participatory Rural Development amongst NGOs in Malawi.**

5. **Most NGOs in Malawi follow a similar training strategy in order to implement participatory methodologies within their projects. This strategy begins with Tft training and progresses to PRA workshops.**
6. **There is no standardization of Tft training or PRA training in Malawi. Courses are offered by government training centres, NGOs and independent consultants and range in length from three days to two weeks.**
7. **Training courses alone have not produced fieldworkers with sufficient understanding of the basic concepts, principles and methods of participatory rural development in Malawi.**
8. **Currently, NGOs in Malawi are producing participatory rural development experts rather than good community animators who are creative, critical, confident, independent, accountable, responsible problem solvers with the capacity to sit down, listen and learn (Mwakanema, 1995).**
9. **In Malawi, many fieldworkers are confused in the field, unsure of how to translate the rhetoric of participation from their training into field realities given the multiple obstacles they face. Therefore, in many cases community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) projects remain traditional top-down in terms of decision-making and recruitment of participation only at the implementation stage of programmes.**

10. **The enthusiasm with which NGOs in Malawi are implementing participatory rural development has not led to the instilling of participatory values in the greater development process; instead it has made the process rigid and technique-focused.**
11. **At this point, participatory methodologies are being used within CBNRM programs as mechanisms to accumulate baseline information on community needs, priorities and dynamics and to recruit participation in project implementation. NGOs in Malawi are reducing participatory development to its methods and tools, avoiding the adoption of its philosophical underpinnings and failing to integrate participatory rural development methods at all stages of the project cycle.**
12. **The nature and cause of difficulties encountered by Malawian NGOs and their fieldworkers while implementing participatory methodologies in the context of natural resource management projects fall into two categories - field-level and organizational. Field-level obstacles include local culture, language barriers, time constraints, and politics. Organizational obstacles identified were lack of follow-up training, lack of understanding by management, inconsistent training, project objectives and time-lines.**
13. **The main bottleneck in the utilization and expansion of participatory rural development within Malawian NGOs is not a lack of expertise in the methods, but rather the lack of expertise in process management.**

14. **Management of participatory rural development is complex and requires the cultivation of advanced administration and facilitation skills. These skills are incorrectly assumed to be present within Malawian NGOs.**
15. **NGOs in Malawi have not recognized that their organizational structures and procedures must be reviewed if they wish to facilitate a participatory process at the field-level. In so doing, their strategies fail to integrate new methodologies with a learning environment and supportive institutional environment.**
16. **NGOs in Malawi are not providing their fieldworkers adequate time and space to reflect on and modify their attitudes and values.**
17. **Until fieldworkers in Malawi are granted and lay claim to the freedom to challenge the administrative structure of their organizations and the larger development institution, the bureaucratic management of NGOs in Malawi is unlikely to change.**

Recommendations

Aligning organizational structures and systems in Malawi to the objectives of participatory rural development projects and programmes has proven problematic. “The literature on participatory development is generally not written from the viewpoint of operability” (ILEIA Workshop, 1987; 13), nor does it adequately document potential obstacles to successful implementation of participatory methodologies. In their search for mechanisms to promote participation, Malawian NGOs have broken it down into its elements - training and participatory development tools - looking for instructions on how to use participatory methodologies. There is no prescription for implementing participatory development or improving the administration of NGOs. In order to more effectively implement participatory rural development, Malawian NGOs need to break free of their reductionist confines and focus on the systemic level of participatory development in order to gain an understanding and appreciation of the artistry needed to facilitate a participatory process.

Based on my research study and experience compiling The Guide for Community Environmental Action Plans I propose the following recommendations:

- 1. Malawian NGOs should come to a mutually shared understanding of what participatory rural development means in their context and how it should be integrated into their project cycles. There is a need to for organizations to decide how to incorporate elements of participatory development into their agendas and projects. Once they have developed their conceptual framework, organizations should communicate it clearly to the entire organization.**

2. **Establishing guidelines for TtT and PRA training could improve the consistency with which these approaches are implemented. “A core modular training programme will assist Malawian NGOs to develop their organizations and institutions on a systematic, and hence more solid foundation” (Ndalama and Booth, 1995; 40). The curriculum should reflect Malawian culture and context through the use of case studies.**
3. **Organizations and trainers should stop fixating on transferring participatory rural development as a fixed technology or set of methods and begin spending their time, energy and resources facilitating a fluid learning process in which each trainee is encouraged to improvise and adapt to each new situation and context.**
4. **Training in participatory methodologies should focus primarily on the process and approach of participatory rural development rather than specific tools. It is only when “...the parameter of a method, and its theoretical and phenomenological bases are well understood, that practitioners can adapt and create new modalities with confidence” (Jiggins and Roling, 1994; 24).**
5. **Malawian NGOs must develop an overall training strategy based on adult learning and participatory methodologies. The strategy should lead trainees through a self-reflexive process where they examine their values, beliefs and behaviours and how they influence their work with communities. The strategy should incorporate guided technical assistance - an opportunity for participants to put what they have learned into practice in the field so they become comfortable working with the methods and tools in field**

situations.

- 6. Training should emphasize how participatory methodologies are central to the project cycle and how they can be used to create action plans.**
- 7. Malawian NGOs should encourage and facilitate their fieldworkers to meet regularly to discuss their problems, opportunities and work progress. Fieldworkers should also be provided with and encouraged to circulate additional reading materials, such as newsletters, and manuals, on various development subjects including participatory rural development. It is also important that requests for assistance in practical implementation of participatory methodologies receive timely response.**
- 8. Incentives for fieldworkers' extra effort and time using participatory methods should be considered.**
- 9. Recruitment of fieldworkers should be based less on credentials and more on personal values, beliefs, knowledge of development issues and level of commitment to rural development.**
- 10. NGOs in Malawi should consider shifting their focus from developing and training fieldworkers to developing and maintaining the understanding of upper management staff of the changes in practice that the adoption of participatory rural development implies, as well as building their capabilities to manage participatory processes. This**

means that organizations should invest more time and money in administration, management and leadership.

11. Malawian NGOs should consider developing a long-term strategic plan for their organizational direction and structural change. This could be accomplished through a series of regular sessions of self-examination. These sessions should lead to a thorough understanding of the different elements of the organization and the evolution of a common value system and work philosophy.
12. Organizational development activities such as retreats, topic days, and team-building exercises should be encouraged and supported by donors and international institutions. These spaces for systematic reflection are essential for NGOs to develop as learning organizations (Ndalama and James, 1995). Professional associations such as the Participatory Development Methods Network should be supported in order to foster the basics of participatory rural development amongst NGOs through non-formal education, association formation and development of media. Such associations will improve the exchange of information and experience between NGOs implementing participatory rural development
13. Malawian NGOs should consider risking a change in policies and practices such as relocating project managers to the field. More important, NGOs should realize that both the integration of participatory rural development and the organizational change it requires are slow and painful processes whose benefits will not be immediate.

14. **When implementing CBNRM programs, Malawian NGOs should focus on their methodology rather than on pre-planned project activities so that the community develops its own organizations and networks capable of understanding their own problems and formulating their own projects.**
15. **Malawian NGOs should ensure that there are effective feedback and evaluation mechanisms for fieldworkers to contribute input into the construction and administration of the organization. Fieldworkers should be encouraged to share their feelings and ideas. NGOs should consider using this information to modify programmes and procedures.**
16. **Senior officials within NGOs need to be taken into the field more often in order to witness first-hand the field-level realities of implementing participatory approaches and the difficulties fieldworkers face.**
17. **NGOs in Malawi should consider approaching participation as an element of development planning and implementation as opposed to perceiving it as a building block for development, added on to projects and applied according to specifically designed guidelines (Dichter, 1992). Given that civil society is weak in Malawi, NGOs should also consider concentrating on developing a strong civil society upon which they can build CBNRM projects and programmes.**
18. **There is an urgent need to revise organizational and financial policies and procedures to eliminate bureaucratic hindrances encountered by fieldworkers. Power to allocate and distribute project funds should be transferred to fieldworkers (Burkey, 1993).**

19. **Donors should become more flexible and receptive to general outlines of proposed programmes. Since participatory projects and programmes do not have initial clear-cut profiles, donors should be willing to finance a process rather than a clearly defined project.**

Afterword

As academics, we are asked to report our research with a certain element of objectivity. Consequently, our first-hand experiences and reflections are often missing from the work we produce. However such accounts can be very illuminating for both us as researchers and our audience. Rather than write a preamble to this thesis, I have chosen to include this afterword in an effort to share my reflections on my research with you.

When I first received my job description from the UNDP I was astounded that they had given me the title of Participatory Methods Advisor. Not only did I feel unqualified for the position, but that the task of compiling a Guide for Community Environmental Action Plans was inappropriate. Given the fact that a multitude of participatory methodologies manuals already exist, I seriously questioned the appropriateness of adding yet another. Furthermore, the UNDP's vision to make this Guide specific to Malawi implied to me that a Malawian familiar with the implementation of participatory methodologies could do a much better job than a Canadian graduate student.

Being an outsider and embarking on the examination or evaluation of how NGOs were integrating participatory methodologies into their work had both advantages and disadvantages. I was able to remain objective, communicate my thoughts and ideas without fear of losing my job, avoid being affiliated with any particular organization, and take advantage of opportunities for field visits as they presented themselves. However, I believe that because I was not able to speak the local language and did not understand the socio-cultural context within which I was working, I was somewhat restricted in my research. Fieldworkers may not have shared everything that they would have shared with a Malawian

asking the same questions, and my interpretations of community reactions to fieldworkers implementing participatory methodologies were based on my beliefs, assumptions and conclusions rather than on those of another Malawian.

Therefore I was participating as a free agent, one with little or no accountability to the individuals I interviewed or worked with, nothing to lose by asking sensitive questions and who knew she had a limited amount of time to accomplish her task within what was to be a larger participatory process. There were organizational obstacles which prevented my work with the UNDP from being participatory, and the unavoidable result was an incomplete product with no local ownership.

While traditionally African societies are participatory and consultative in their decision-making, the political suppression of Banda inhibited community participation in Malawi outside of his forced self-help projects. Today, Malawian society is very much in transition. Civil society is fragile as individuals and groups learn what a democratic government is and how it functions. The heavy hand of Banda still looms in the memories of citizens making them hesitant to risk participating in NGO projects. Is participatory rural development appropriate for the current Malawian context, or should NGOs shift their focus first to the development of a strong civil society in an effort to establish a secure foundation upon which participatory rural development projects can be built? It is my hope that as NGOs in Malawi continue in their efforts to implement participatory rural development this question will one day be answered.

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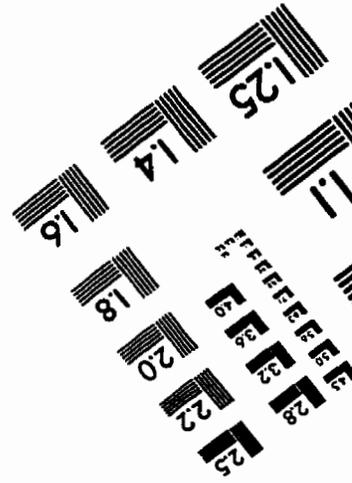
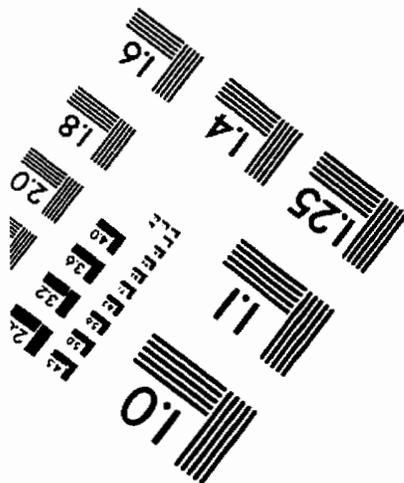
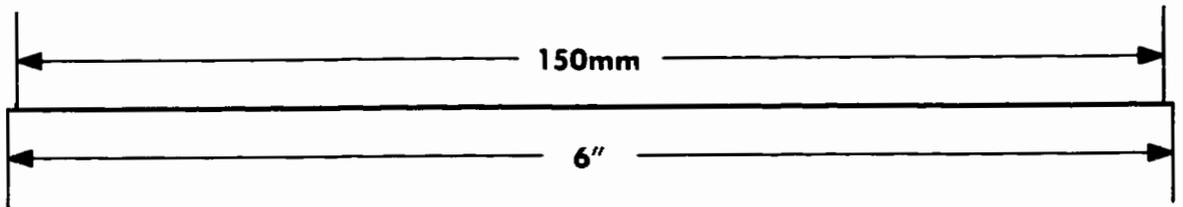
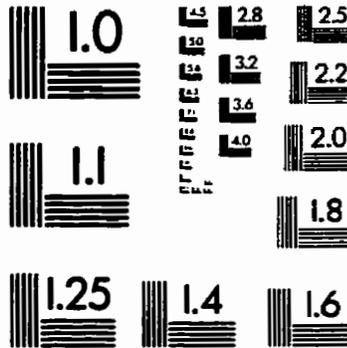
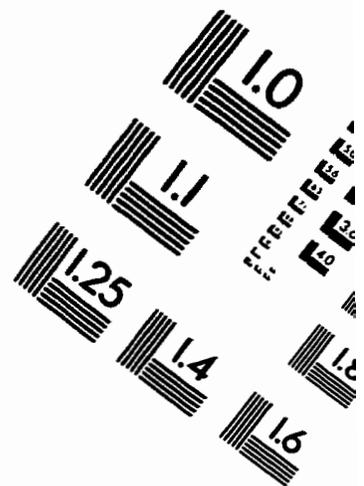
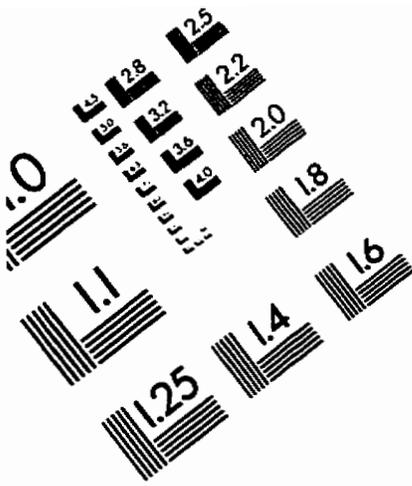
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