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A PROCESS APPROACH FOR INDIGENOUS VALUE EXPRESSION  
IN THE EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

By

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B.A., University of the Pacific, 1976

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of

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University of Montana

1985

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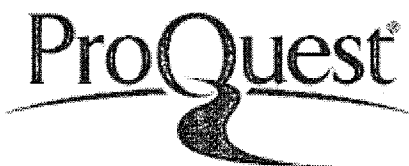


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
PEOPLE-CENTERED DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	3
POSITIVIST ECONOMIC THEORY . . . . .	10
LESSONS LEARNED . . . . .	14
DATA COLLECTION, INDICATORS, AND EVALUATIONS . . . . .	18
FRAMEWORK--WHAT AND WHO OF PARTICIPATION . . . . .	23
Kinds of Participation . . . . .	23
Decision Making . . . . .	23
Implementation . . . . .	23
Benefits . . . . .	26
Evaluation . . . . .	27
Who Participates . . . . .	27
FRAMEWORK OF HOW PARTICIPATION IS OCCURRING . . . . .	29
Eight Factors . . . . .	29
Initiative . . . . .	30
Inducement . . . . .	30
Organizational Structure . . . . .	31
Channels of Involvement . . . . .	33
Communication . . . . .	35
Time . . . . .	35
Scope . . . . .	36
Empowerment . . . . .	37
Summary . . . . .	37
METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATING HOW PARTICIPATION OCCURS . . . . .	39
Base Questions . . . . .	43
Degree of Participation . . . . .	44
Degree of Commitment . . . . .	44
Social Organization . . . . .	44
Communication . . . . .	44

Section	Page
Control . . . . .	45
Maintenance . . . . .	45
Empowerment and Efficacy . . . . .	45
Three Profiles of Participation . . . . .	46
Profile A . . . . .	46
Profile B . . . . .	47
Profile C . . . . .	47
CONCLUSION . . . . .	49
ENDNOTES . . . . .	52
APPENDIX . . . . .	57
Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement . . . . .	58
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	61

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Two Dimensions of How Participation Occurs . . . . .	20

## INTRODUCTION

Presently, in the area of international development there is considerable controversy over whether the amount of dollars expended is producing tangible results as measured in terms of economic self-sufficiency and economic self-determination in less developed countries (LDCs). This is evidenced by the failure of current aid programs in bringing about an improvement in indigenous people's lives, especially in Subsaharan Africa.<sup>1</sup> In fact, such aid acts as an obstacle to such an improvement by reinforcing structural barriers that reduce authentic economic self-sufficiency.<sup>2</sup> Economic self-determination refers to the empowerment of people to control their own lives and resources, and to direct and pursue their own development. Economic self-sufficiency refers to the ability of a community to obtain goods and resources in order to realize and create a livelihood. At a minimum, livelihood means that peoples' basic biological needs are sufficiently met so that they can devote part of their energies to affairs beyond subsistence.<sup>3</sup>

Social scientists have noted that indigenous values may allow for the expression of economic self-sufficiency and self-determination.<sup>4</sup> This suggests the possibility that if indigenous values are allowed to express themselves more fully in development policy, economic self-sufficiency and economic self-determination might result. At present, however, development policy tends to reject indigenous values in favor of the imposition of western values. The purpose of this essay is



to present and defend a means to evaluate the incorporation of indigenous values in project design. The proposed evaluation scheme is specifically oriented toward private voluntary organizations (PVOs) involved in international development. This orientation is chosen because PVOs are more likely to be responsive to a participative approach toward development given the political and bureaucratic restraints and obstacles confronted by governmental agencies. In assessing the incorporation of these values, we will address both levels and qualitative aspects of participation.

To obtain an assessment of the effectiveness of participation, we will first examine participation within the historical context of modernization theory and people-centered approaches. We will concentrate on the qualitative aspects of the people-centered perspectives. These perspectives approach development by looking to the creative initiative of the people and their participation in determining the material and spiritual well-being that the development process serves.

Have these perspectives led to participative development? To answer this question, we will examine PVO and small farmer and irrigation projects in search of useful lessons. The lessons learned regarding the effectiveness of participation in both approaches to development will be incorporated into the methodology to be derived for the application and evaluation of participation.

## PEOPLE-CENTERED DEVELOPMENT THEORY

The central concept of people-centered development is quite simple. It is an approach toward development that looks to the creative initiative of the people as the primary development resource and to spiritual well-being as the end that the development process serves. One of the central tenets of this approach is to shift away from the prevailing paradigm of development: the authoritarian, hierarchical, and centralized organization to a participatory, bottom up, and decentralized organization. David Korten notes that this "is a response to the recognition of the dehumanizing, inequitable, and environmentally unsustainable consequences of conventional models."<sup>5</sup> The central themes of this approach are participation, respecting indigenous knowledge and values, local self-reliance, community management, and social learning.

People are the central purpose of development and human will and capacity are its most critical resources. Participation is essential if we are to develop these resources. Many analyses and reviews of management and social development articulate this point.<sup>6</sup> The authors consulted stated that ultimately the people themselves must have some voice in how decisions are made that have a direct bearing upon their lives. Planning systems must be designed to be responsive to change. As articulated by James Y. C. Yen, founder of the Rural Development Committee of China in the 1920s, one should:

Go to the people,  
Live among the people,  
Learn from the people,  
Plan with the people,  
Work with the people,  
Start with what the people know,  
Build on what the people have,  
Teach by showing; learn by doing,  
Not a showcase but a pattern,  
Not odds and ends but a system,  
Not piecemeal but an integrated approach,  
Not to conform but to transform  
Not to relieve but to release.<sup>7</sup>

These principles remain valid today even though they are largely ignored. The evolving paradigm is reasserting these principles and integrating indigenous knowledge and values. Many authors have noted that rural peoples' knowledge is often superior to that of outsiders in the context of their environment and culture.<sup>8</sup> The key for a sustainable society is to reestablish an individual's lost sense of intimacy with and responsibility for his or her local community and natural environment.

One strategy that integrates the people's indigenous knowledge and values is the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement. The approach represents a search for a development model consonant with the unique cultural and spiritual heritage of the Sri Lankan people. The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement bases its theory and its practice on a clearly articulated value system drawn from the culture's religious heritage (see Appendix). The approach closely corresponds to the thoughts of the French School of development theorists who place emphasis upon ethical values.<sup>9</sup> The French School theorists' position centers on the qualitative improvement of societies viewed in the broadest historical context. This view of development, rather liberation, is of a complex series of interrelated change processes, abrupt and gradual, by which a population

and all of its components shift away from patterns of life perceived as less human toward alternative patterns of life perceived as more human.

The emphasis is on the ascent of all people and societies based upon three universal values: life sustenance, freedom, and self-esteem. The objective of development ethics is to define the priorities of each of these universal values and evaluate how they are implemented. As such, painful options are involved regarding which values must change within society. Rather than outside change agents imposing the conditions, it is imperative that the indigenous people make the decisions through the incorporation of external change within their value and cultural context.

Instead of seeking to transplant the institutions of the industrial society, the people-centered perspective posits that the focus should be on facilitating learning processes by which the indigenous people can use their own experiences to facilitate development. The role of the change agent is to augment those experiences. The best solution to any given community level problems is likely to be one in which change agents and the villagers have both contributed their respective knowledge. The outsiders must, however, first learn from the indigenous people, understand their knowledge systems, and elicit their technical knowledge. Second, change agents must try to experience the world as a poor and weak individual.<sup>10</sup> Denis Goulet articulated this as being vulnerable, the act of disposing of such concepts as superiority, paternalism, and ethnocentrism, and developing a critical perspective of his or her role as a change agent.<sup>11</sup>

The people-centered perspective is based on the concept of community resources management or development that calls for the external change agent to contribute toward building the capacity of the individual,

family, and community to manage local resources more effectively to meet locally defined needs. It recognizes that development is ultimately achieved by individuals, families, and communities that have the freedom and opportunity to create a new future through combining the local and external knowledge. It is a process that implies sitting, asking, listening, and learning from the rural poor. The linking of knowledge to action is imperative. The perspective stresses the integration of the change agent to work hand in hand with the villagers. Planning with the rural poor is paramount. Often rural people have a great deal to contribute to program design and development policies.<sup>12</sup>

Robert Chambers and David Brokensha note that indigenous people have a substantial capacity for learning and change.<sup>13</sup> By building on what the indigenous people already know with the resources they possess, the adjustments required are more easily made and the risks of the methods are reduced.<sup>14</sup>

The obvious implication of the above processes is the empowerment of individuals to control their lives and resources to create a livelihood based upon THEIR perceptions of the good life. In order for personal efficacy to remain a viable component of the villagers' social-political life, organizations must be created that facilitate it. These organizations work with the people to develop programs and policies responsive to the beneficiary's needs at a particular time and place. By addressing these needs over time, the programs and policies evolve toward new definitions.

Institutions must be organized around learning processes which allow Third World development institutions to use their experiences to drive the capacity building process. The process involves the loosening of

centralized control and strengthening feedback systems that increase the potential for self-direction and direct participation at local levels in ways consistent with the well-being of the community. These organizations are dynamic, integrating learning by trial and error to shape the theory and make adjustments to achieve a better fit with the beneficiary's needs.

David Korten posits that these organizations evolve through phases:

1. Learning to be effective. The concern is developing working programs in the setting of the village as a learning laboratory. The error rates will be high as the organization evolves toward achieving a fit between the program and beneficiary need. Initially, program efficiency will be low, but over time it will gradually increase.

2. Learning to be efficient. The concern is reducing the input requirements per unit of output. Through analyses of the initial stage, extraneous activities not essential are gradually eliminated and important activities routinized.

3. Learning to expand. The concern is with an orderly expansion of the program. The organization may turn its attention to new problems or if the beneficiary population has made such progress as to upset the fit previously attained, there may be a need to repeat the cycle based on newly defined problems.<sup>15</sup>

These organizations must provide substantial increases in productive output and meet the needs of an expanding population, but in ways that are consistent with participation and equity. John Friedman posits that this is best achieved through agropolitan development using a territorial approach.<sup>16</sup> The approach uses a territorial unit to define a people-inclusive development strategy based on the principle of

self-reliance. The objective is satisfying the basic needs of the people. Production and distribution are jointly solved within the territorial unit allowing for productive expansion constrained by ecological and social needs. Integration with the larger social economic system is accomplished through a concentric outgrowth, with each territorial unit fulfilling its needs first.

Robert Chambers goes beyond Korten's discussion. He states that if we are to assist those who are poor, physically weak, isolated, vulnerable, and powerless, this requires that the present process of development be reversed.<sup>17</sup> This reversal has dimensions in space, professional values, and specialization. Reversals in space mean that information, education, and resources must come from the peripheries to the core. The complementary reversal is that wealth, political authority, and resources must devolve from the core to the periphery. This applies not only on a national level, but to the international arena as well.

Professional values also have to be tempered. Chambers believes that there must be a stemming of cultural imperialism and an affirming of humility. What is perceived as modern, sophisticated, and urban loads the preferences of individuals who perceive their clients and their preferences as primitive, backward, and rural. This bias within the field of administration is contrary to the attributes and things that are directly important to poor rural people. The prejudices are endless: export oriented cash crops versus subsistence crops, larger centralized agricultural practices versus shifting cultivation and intercropping, introduction of sophisticated technology versus appropriate technology, etc. Specialization is a parallel problem. There is need for advocating

linkages among specialization and indigenous knowledge of the people. Disciplines and professions should not confine themselves to isolated intellectual territory. Rather, they should forge bridges to obtain an overall view of problems confronting the poor. Narrowness among change agents is a luxury that the poor should not be asked to afford. Likewise the specialist should be open to the knowledge of the people and augment his or her knowledge to address the problems. Chambers concluded that the best way forward is through small steps and little pushes putting the last (poor) first.



## POSITIVIST ECONOMIC THEORY (MODERNIZATION)

The prevailing paradigm for development for less developed countries is based upon the concept of modernity--a production-centered development paradigm. The dominant logic is that of production and the dominant goals are production-oriented. The theory is to compound rates of growth in economic output through massive investment in industrialization and/or large-scale, capital intensive, and centralized agricultural production. The call is for concentration of attention and resources on achieving the maximum possible increase in production. It is presumed that this single-minded emphasis on production will automatically translate into increased benefits for people. Values, systems, and methods are geared to the exploitation and manipulation of natural and human resources to create a consumer society based on standardized goods and services.

The paradigm emphasizes an authoritarian, hierarchical, and centralized organization. Central economic planning is promoted. The strategy presented is based on the models of open system economics which dominate the tools of economic analysis and decision making, externalizing environmental and social costs.<sup>18</sup> The standard criterion for measurement of performance is the GDP--a presumed measure of human well-being. The processes and administrative tasks are based upon methods of Western scientific knowledge. The paradigm involves a process of the analytic reduction of complex problems into discrete components. In application, the relationships between the components result in a design of deterministic or machine-like systems where specialists act

as external manipulators. Specialists define the problem, identify alternative solutions, evaluate the alternatives, select an alternative, then implement the solution.

This process often is ill-suited for complex problems within the social realm due to complexity and interrelatedness of human behavior in values and purpose. Due to the social reality of diverse values and interests, there is a reliance on coercive measures to achieve bottom up compliance with top down direction in implementation of the plan. This frequently stifles the creative local initiative on which solutions to complex social problems depend. The result is a bureaucratized, rigid planning activity divorced from the decision process.

Organizations involved in Third World development based upon this paradigm reflect such values through individual actors, institutional structures, and the frameworks and methodologies used in problem identification and solution processes. Under this "blueprint" approach to development, projects have definite goals, definite time frames, careful specification of resource requirements, and their goals are terminal.<sup>19</sup> The methodologies have an appealing sense of order, specialization, and recognition of the role of the intellectual (specialist). The blueprint approach, along with the production oriented paradigm, creates pressures for immediate results. There is less attention to institution building. The focus is on discrete outcomes and the virtual exclusion of any meaningful participation in decision making. Results in the field often are large-scale projects and programs which are poorly executed, ill-suited to the needs of the rural poor, and possess a tendency to treat every social problem as a problem of allocation of public funds.<sup>20</sup>

The past decade has been a sobering period for international development management. Program failures led to a reexamination of prevailing theory and prescriptions. The advocacy of rigid blueprint planning methodologies and control systems gave way to a search for new methodologies. The first of these reforms is the growth with equity strategy directed toward expanding the productive use of resources in small-scale agricultural and informal urban sectors.<sup>21</sup> The focus is to increase access of the small farmers to agricultural inputs and facilities that would allow them to increase productivity.

A subsequent reform is the basic needs school, where development is measured by the extent to which the basic needs of the rural poor are being met. Important as they are in advancing thought and reform, neither offers more than a partial alternative to the dominant development model. The integration of the rural poor into the decision making process, design, and implementation of the project or program is inadequate at best. Participation is superficial, with essential decisions and planning being done by expatriates. These expatriates--foreign technicians and government bureaucrats--are largely divorced from village reality.

One response to this lack of integration of the rural people by the growth with equity strategy and the basic needs school reforms is to increase the participation of the people affected by development. This is reflected in the increase in documents and pronouncements from various international agencies proclaiming the virtues of participation.<sup>22</sup> Yet, there is little systematic knowledge within the social sciences to draw upon concerning participation in development administration. John Cohen and Norman Uphoff provide the first attempt at a detailed analysis of

what participation means in the context of development and a framework for evaluation and implementation.<sup>23</sup> Although the authors prefer as much use of quantitative evaluation of participation as feasible, they note, however, that "there are many circumstances--and certain variables--which require use of qualitative judgments."<sup>24</sup> Taken together, the various quantitative and qualitative indicators can provide a reasonable picture of the patterns of participation that are important. It is the latter aspect that we will address in a subsequent section on the evaluation of how participation occurs.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The performance of development programs in the Third World has attracted considerable interest in developed countries. It is generating numerous studies focusing on management interventions. In this section, we examine selected studies to assess what lessons we can learn from the experience of innovative programs and projects. To understand the nature of participation in development administration, and to develop insights for improving participation, it is more enlightening to examine innovative projects rather than those perceived as failures.

While there is much to be learned from the experience of projects that fail, such studies concentrate upon the errors to be avoided. The concern here is the positive approach to be adopted. The removal of obstacles does not necessarily ensure participation. Samuel Paul stated that "there is considerable evidence to show that successful management interventions and practices cannot be deduced or predicted from an analysis of failures of poor performance."<sup>25</sup>

David Korten and Samuel Paul have investigated various innovative programs, ranging from those in Eastern Africa to Southeast Asia.<sup>26</sup> The analytical framework for assessing performance depends on the joint influence of four interacting organizational variables: environment, strategy, structure, and processes. Innovative performance is perceived as the "process by which those who manage development programs continually appraise and influence these variables and maximize their positive interaction effects or synergy in order to achieve the desired

program outcomes."<sup>27</sup> These programs represent a response to necessity and a proactive commitment to the ideal that the purpose is to serve the needs of the people, while facilitating the human growth of all participants.<sup>28</sup> The programs that we looked at are The National Dairy Development Program of India, the Philippine Rice Development Program, Kenya's Smallholder Tea Development Program, the Indonesian Population Program, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, and Thailand's Community Based Family Planning Services. The lessons pertinent to participation from these programs follow.

1. There is considerable reliance upon interorganizational cooperation through network structures rather than on hierarchical control through vertical structures. Programs emerged out of a learning process in which villagers and program personnel shared their knowledge and resources to create a program that achieved a fit between beneficiaries and the program.

2. The degree of decentralization matches the complexity of the program and the environment.

3. There is a moderate level of organizational autonomy that facilitated the orchestration of planning and implementations.

4. The complexity of the program and its environment influences the degree of beneficiary participation. Programs having simple information systems with fast feedback using a mixture of formal and informal mechanisms facilitate participation. Likewise, the degree of success in achieving program goals is influenced by the degree of fit between the beneficiaries' needs and the program.

Underlying the lessons is a high degree of negotiation to arrive at joint decisions between beneficiaries and program staff. Performance improved when the following common elements are present: a single goal or service, sequential diversification of goals, phased program implementation, organizational autonomy, the use of network structures, the use of simple information systems with faster feedback, flexible selection and training processes, and beneficiary participation, negotiation, and autonomy in the aforementioned elements.<sup>29</sup> David Brokensha, et al. have reinforced the above in a collection of studies concerning indigenous knowledge systems and development. The authors pointed out the reciprocal benefits that are derived from the cooperation between the two systems of knowledge, that of the Western specialist and of the village people.<sup>30</sup>

From his analysis of 52 USAID projects, Warren Van Wicklin III also concluded that participation is an "important determinate of project effectiveness."<sup>31</sup> Van Wicklin posited that participation tends to improve the project. Even though it is not necessary at the initial stage of the project, it is for maintenance and sustainability.<sup>32</sup> The degree of participation in the form of project responsibility, communication of the project goals, and of the beneficiaries' role has a correlation in facilitating the success of the project. Other evaluation analyses from the United Nations Development Programme concerning health care, as well as from the World Bank concerning decentralization experiences, indicate that rural participation is imperative for programs to show any tangible results.<sup>33</sup> In the above studies, participation meant the creation of a management process that provides for the expression of and a response to the beneficiaries' needs. Innovative

development depended upon the communication of the peoples' knowledge and values. The means by which this knowledge and value system are expressed is through the management process that continually appraises the people's needs and influences the variables to maximize their interaction to achieve a fit with the program's goals. The management process embraces error. Aware of the limitations of its personnel, this type of program views errors as a source of information for making adjustments to fit the beneficiary's needs. Errors also illuminate variables of participation that are ignored or overemphasized influencing the interaction of rural people in the development process.

To assess the impact of participation and the variables associated with participation, we must derive measures, provide indicators, and a means of evaluation. The use of various techniques can provide insights as to how effective participation is. The next section examines evaluation frameworks and indicators to determine which are most appropriate to assess the qualitative aspects of participation.



## DATA COLLECTION, INDICATORS, AND EVALUATIONS

Active community involvement and support are the key differentiating factors which distinguish the people-centered approach from the production-centered approach to development. The rationale for community involvement stems from the fact that the primary responsibility for development rests with individuals and families. While outside technical assistance and support are needed in the exercise of responsibility, the services rendered should not be delivered from the top down and received passively by the people. Rather, communities should be actively and fully involved in planning, implementation, and evaluations of development projects to ensure that the focus is on the perceived needs and problems of the people and is in conformity with their social and cultural perspectives.

Change agents should view their role as strengthening the skills of the rural poor instead of direct planning and transfer of Western values and concepts. Aid transfers should be viewed as augmenting the resources of the indigenous people who can then direct the course of their future. Innovative projects rely upon qualities which are facilitated by active participation. Given that participation is necessary, how are we to evaluate its role in development?

The evaluation of projects in a field that is cross-sectional and multidisciplinary is inherently difficult. By its nature, development is a complicated process. The ultimate evaluation in this regard depends upon how participation has impacted the daily life of the people. Is

there a reduction or an improvement in the capacity of people to work and function in society? Is there evidence that participatory activities have improved their quality of life? Quality of life refers to the creation of a livelihood. At a minimum, livelihood means that a peoples' basic biological needs are sufficiently met so that they can devote part of their energies to affairs beyond subsistence. The importance of the quality of life lies in the peoples' ability to direct energy to affairs beyond mere subsistence. Has the inclusion of participatory processes increased the effectiveness of the project? Effectiveness in this context refers to the ability of individuals, families, and the community to manage resources in ways that meet locally defined needs. These resources include productive assets in land, water, tools, financial resources, knowledge and skills, and social and political organization.

There are inherent problems concerning the evaluation of these concepts--quality of life, capacity of individuals, and effectiveness. The concepts are more concerned with the impact of participation on long-term development goals and the need for social change and reform. These concerns are qualitative. The evaluation is subjective and indicators can be elusive or misleading. These indicators of participation include a number of related variables which at times cannot be isolated and measured to assess their separate effort. John Cohen and Norman Uphoff show that these indicators vary greatly in the dimensions that they have outlined, ranging from socioeconomic indicators to the more judgemental qualitative measures.<sup>34</sup> There are difficulties in measuring the qualitative aspect of participation. The reason lies in the fact that it is prone to subjective interpretation. Cohen and Uphoff illustrate this using a two-dimensional matrix. The difficulty is in

Table 1

Two Dimensions of How Participation Occurs

Scope	Empowerment	
	High	Low
Broad	High empowerment Broad scope (A)	Low empowerment Broad scope (C)
Narrow	High empowerment Narrow scope (B)	Low empowerment Narrow scope (D)

Source:

Norman Uphoff, John M. Cohen, and Arthur Goldsmith, Feasibility and Application of Rural Development Participation: A State of the Art Paper, Monograph Series No. 3 (Ithaca: Rural Development Committee, Cornell University, 1979), p. 332.

determining whether there is less participation in a narrow scope of activities with high empowerment for individuals compared to a broad scope of activities with low empowerment (see Table 1).

The framework which will serve as the starting point for evaluation is largely derived from John M. Cohen and Norman Uphoff.<sup>35</sup> It consists of three dimensions of participation: what kind of participation, who participates, and how is participation occurring? The framework is a valid approach for analyzing participation, especially in the first two dimensions. The goal of this essay is to augment and expand the "how" dimension, which assesses the qualitative aspects of participation.

There are many kinds of indicators that can be constructed and applied to this framework which provide useful information. The use of disaggregated indicators (that break down a whole into component parts) and representative indicators (that summarize or stand for a wider set of

relationships) have been used in evaluation of participation.<sup>36</sup> For example, in the evaluation of the "who" dimension, one can compare the proportions of persons by age, gender, education level, economic status, etc., with that of the total population. The data derived will provide a profile of participation concerning the question: How overrepresentative are certain groups and how underrepresentative are others in the process? Indicators that would be useful for the "what" dimension of participation are the identification of beneficiaries, description of benefits to be received, and prescriptions of how the community integrated into the various phases of the project. The majority of these indicators for these two dimensions are direct and quantitative and can be measured. Contributions of labor or money can be measured or estimated according to groups. One can determine who uses the clinic or who receives the agricultural loans or inputs. Data can be derived on who receives project-related improvements. We do not suggest a random sampling of these indicators; rather, we recommend a deliberate bias in selection, choosing those which are the most important to the project under evaluation.

The measures for the "how" dimension are not reflective of quantitative indicators. Rather, they are qualitative or judgemental measures. The concern of this dimension is of matters of degree as well as kind. The measurement will usually be expressed in terms of categories. The indicators are reflective of initiative, inducement, organizational structure, communication, time, scope, and empowerment. The concern focuses on individual and community values, motivation, and decision processes.

Sources of information for participation are varied. The indicators for the dimensions "who" and "what" can be derived from socioeconomic data compiled by the project staff at the field level of economic indicators such as GDP or cost-of-living indices. Project monitoring will provide indicators concerning the number of participants and their characteristics, and the receipt and distribution of benefits or consequences. Project designs and descriptions yield information for indicators concerning the dimension of what kind of participation. The information for the "how" dimension is derived through interviews and other information-eliciting techniques. This is discussed in further detail in the section on the methodology for evaluating how participation occurs.

While it may be helpful in terms of saving time and funds to draw on existing sources, we would caution, for reasons raised by critics, that the data produced may be questionable. However, we cannot expect a detailed breakdown, for seldom have data been collected with a view to the kinds of distinctions necessary for evaluation. There may exist only aggregate comparisons of changes in income, education, or production in the project area. Due to these shortcomings, additional data collection may be required. We would suggest the use of small-scale, manageable substitutes.<sup>37</sup> In the next section, the first two dimensions of the framework are briefly outlined.

## FRAMEWORK--WHAT AND WHO OF PARTICIPATION

The framework which is briefly described herein is largely derived from two studies which deal quite comprehensively and analytically with rural development participation.<sup>38</sup> As a means for evaluation, it provides the base which can be rapidly quantified from pre-project surveys and records concerning socioeconomic data. It also provides the base upon which the qualitative aspects are built. This is accomplished by identifying the characteristics of the participants and the kind of participation occurring. These results, in turn, define the context in which the qualitative aspects are evaluated.

### Kinds of Participation

The first dimension concerns what participation is concerned with, that is (1) decision making, (2) implementation, (3) benefits, and (4) evaluation. These types of participation are reasonably well-defined by development agencies and together constitute a cycle for rural development activities.

### Decision Making

Decision making encompasses three aspects: (1) initial decisions, (2) ongoing decisions, and (3) operational decisions. Initial decisions concern the needs and priorities to be addressed, where to start, and what to do. They are influenced by where the decisions are made, how they are made, and who makes them. Ideally, the rural poor and their leaders should be involved. This is where they can provide information

on the local area and prevent misunderstandings on both sides about the problem confronting the community and the strategies for a solution.

Ongoing decisions share the same concerns as initial decisions. Many project features may be changed in the course of implementation and it is important to know who is included in these decisions. Of particular importance is the authority and/or influence various people have in the community in regard to the continuing search for and definition of needs and priorities, the continuation or termination of the project, and the flexibility in what to do.

Operational decisions concern the organizations--local government, associations, cooperatives, etc.--that are associated with the project and have significant impact upon daily decisions. We suggest that considerations be given to these organizations and decisions associated with them concerning (1) membership--whether universal or selective, (2) meetings--whether they are coercive or voluntary, (3) leadership--selection, socioeconomic background, and length of terms, and (4) control over personnel--types of motivation, discipline, and performance evaluation. Analysis of these characteristics of organizations can reveal impediments to sustained and effective participation. Take, for example, the selection of a manager for the agricultural cooperative. If the manager is a farmer, the membership will perceive that he/she identifies with its interests. Participation in the forms of access and representation will be enhanced. The members may feel more inclined to voice their concerns and needs to one of their own social status. Conversely, if the manager represents another social stratification and promotes interests contrary to those of farmers, an antagonistic relationship may surface. The beneficiaries may not feel

inclined to participate voluntarily and may only do so in the face of coercive measures.

### Implementation

Rural people can participate in implementation of a project in three ways: (1) resource contributions, (2) administrative functions and coordination, and (3) program enlistment. Resource contributions take a variety of forms such as provisions of labor, material inputs, and/or information. The relationship to the larger framework is easily demonstrated. It is important to know who is contributing, how the contribution is made--voluntary, coerced, or remunerated--and to what degree the contribution is provided on a collective or individual basis. If resource contributions are high in perceived cost and risk by the rural poor, participation would be diminished. Likewise, if certain socioeconomic groups are participating in contributions, others may perceive threats to social status or a reinforcement of existing social structures. How the contribution is made can influence the degree of commitment or ambivalence toward the project.

The degree of contribution may diminish costs and risks and enhance community identity. Administration and coordination are evaluated as to whether the local population or outsiders are involved. The assessment influences the degree to which the community perceives that it can manage development on its own terms.

Program enlistment, the most common form of participation, is evaluated in regard to what individuals are targeted for the project. Enlistment usually is associated with the receiving of benefits. Individuals willing to participate in a project often are perceived as



members of the "target population" that respond positively to program offerings. An example is the availability and uses of agricultural inputs for participating in the agricultural cooperative. Enlistments in projects does not, however, assure benefits. The focus is on participation in project activities implementing the project's purposes. This leaves open the question of whether the participant enlists himself or herself for the project or is enlisted by someone else.

### Benefits

There are at least three types of project benefits: material, social, and personal. These, in turn, are measured in terms of amount, distribution, quality, and quantity. Material benefits are primarily goods analyzed in terms of consumption or income. They act as a proxy for the benefits derived from the project. Data are available from aggregate statistics in terms of per capita income or consumption.

Social benefits are primarily public goods; that is, benefits related to social overhead investments or infrastructure. These are usually characterized as services or amenities provided by the project-- education, health, water supply, roads, housing, etc. They are analyzed in terms of availability, access, and quality.

Personal benefits refer to self-esteem, political power, and a sense of efficacy. These aspects are mainly attitudinal and can be evaluated only through means of the interviews discussed in a subsequent section concerning how participation occurs.

The accruing of benefits can reinforce or diminish certain socioeconomic groups. If benefits reinforce the local elite, the rural poor will not perceive any positive benefit from participation; in fact,

it may exacerbate their disenfranchisement even more. Conversely, if the rural poor perceive benefits accruing to them from participation, changes in consciousness may result. A sense of capacity within the community to respond to problems can develop, promoting self-sufficiency.

### Evaluation

As with implementation, it is important to concentrate on how evaluation is occurring and who is doing the evaluation. First, one needs to determine if the evaluation is project-centered. Does this process entail a formal review or an informal review? Formal processes have established procedures and actors which may not be cognizant of local conditions. The process could serve as an impediment for local feedback and modification. Informal processes are subjective, but can allow for more community control. In either case, we want to know who participates (local, national, and/or foreign personnel), how continuously, and with what power to modify. Ideally, a formal process with all three actors having informational feedback mechanisms and the power to modify in response to local needs would facilitate local participation.

### Who Participates

The participation of most concern to development agencies and governments historically is that of the rural poor. For the majority of project designers and evaluators, the dimension of who participates is most salient since it concerns the intended beneficiaries. Of concern here is the type of participant and the attendant characteristics which influence the dimensions of what kind of participation and how is participation occurring? We have selected four categories, although

other schemes have suggested more or fewer categories.<sup>39</sup> The four categories are local inhabitants, local leaders, government personnel, and foreign personnel.

Personal background characteristics are important because they substantially influence the kinds of participation. These characteristics vary greatly and one needs to discern how much influence each has. For example, the inclusion of foreign personnel initially in the project design and planning may not have much impact upon participation, but continued dominance can influence a professed goal of self-sufficiency. The personal characteristics of the various actors which are of interest are age, gender, family status, level of education, social division (ethnicity, religion, caste and language, occupation), agriculturalist (what type), and nonagriculturalist (what profession), income level and sources, length of residency, and land tenure/employment status. These characteristics are chosen because of the impact each category may have upon participation. The choice depends upon the context and task of the project. For example, knowing the age and social status of child-bearing women may have no correlation to the participation in the capital investment in appropriate technology for tool production, but it does concerning a nutrition program.

The above design relies heavily upon the framework posited by John Cohen and Norman Uphoff. This section is not meant to be an exhaustive examination of the first two dimensions--what kind of participations and who participates. For a further elaboration of the framework and justification of the measures, we refer you to Cohen and Uphoff's study on participation.<sup>40</sup> The third dimension, how participation occurs, is discussed in the next section.

## FRAMEWORK OF HOW PARTICIPATION IS OCCURRING

The need for more qualitative or judgemental participation arises when we focus on how participation is occurring. This is the main concern of the people-centered paradigm and the focus of this essay. The concern here is to assess the motivation, the values, and the decision processes by which an individual chooses to participate in the development process. It is the dimension that provides insights as to why participation takes place, continues, or declines. It also is one that is highly impacted by the environmental context. The environmental context is composed of political, social, historical, and cultural factors.

### Eight Factors

How participation is occurring can best be assessed in terms of eight factors that form the framework of participation. The list is not meant to be exhaustive; rather, it represents those factors that are useful for examination. As with other factors, one would choose those which are most relevant to the task at hand. The basic factors are initiative, inducement, organizational structure, channels of involvement, communication, time, scope, and empowerment. Each of these is discussed below and brief examples are presented to illustrate aspects of participation.

### Initiative

Initially, a determination must be whether the initiative for participation comes from below, autonomous participation, or from above, mobilized participation. An example would be where local people decide to form an agricultural cooperative to market its goods, contrasted with a Ministry of Agriculture official deciding that a cooperative is needed. If local people are involved in the decision making, administration, and implementation of the cooperative, the initiative is theirs. When the government and/or foreign personnel are involved, the initiative to participate is from above through coercion or inducement.<sup>41</sup>

With self-initiative, the local people define the problem they perceived confronting the village. Thus, it is a more appropriate response than that imposed from outside. The point is that the local people are perceiving the problem, know the local constraints, and use their knowledge in responding to the problem. By being sensitive to ways in which participation can be initiated from below and whether there exist possibilities and supporting features of a project, autonomous initiative can be facilitated. Participation in initiative provides for instillment of empowerment and capacity of the village to respond to new problems and needs.

### Inducement

Individuals or groups tend to enter into participatory activities voluntarily, or through coercion. It is these terms that define the continuum of motivation. The range of motivation is from open volunteerism to enforced coercion. It is likely that autonomous participation will be more voluntary than coerced, while mobilized

participation often will involve some kind of coercion. From the viewpoint of a participant, coerced participation is unlikely to be appreciated and, therefore, often will not be effective or lasting. People are most likely to prefer participation that comes from their own accord, though they can be induced through the provision of certain rewards: access to fertilizer, free agricultural extension services, positions of status, etc. The providing of rewards can imply the withholding of benefits, and this implies manipulation and coercion. We must assess to what degree participation is induced upon a continuum that runs from voluntary to coerced.

Coerced participation is most likely to occur with respect to implementation. It usually involves the use of a negatively enforced sanction in the form of participation--a management scheme, for example, operated by the agricultural cooperative requiring the members to plant specific crops on a certain number of hectares in order to receive access for marketing. Voluntary participation would permit the management to be controlled by the members, thereby allowing them to determine the crop varieties to be marketed. In the latter case, the inducement is based upon the farmer's initiative to improve his or her economic status.

### Organizational Structure

The concern here is: to what degree is the organizational structure associated with participation? This factor has two dimensions: (1) the extent of individual versus collective participation within the organization, and (2) the degree of complexity in the organization.

The first refers to how an individual enters the participative process--as an individual, or a member of a group. For example, using the cooperative, an individual farmer may be allowed to receive seeds and fertilizer, expecting repayment later. On the other hand, the cooperative may require the farmers to receive inputs on a collective basis if they are to receive credit. The latter allows the farmers' peers (the community) to control distribution and holds the group responsible for default of any individual borrower. In the first case, the farmer may have more input on the selection of seed varieties and choice of inputs he or she wishes to use. On a collective basis, the extent of individual participation can be minimized. It allows for decision making to be done by a representative. The extent of individual participation to influence the representative can be pronounced or minimal. That influence, however, is dependent upon the complexity of the organization.

The complexity of the organizational structure is determined by the extent of the rules governing behavior. The organizational structure can impede local people from participating and allow local elites or government personnel to dominate. Of concern here are leadership roles, organization rules, and evaluation standards governing activities. In more complex organizations, these are well-defined and established. Less complex organizations have more ambiguous roles, rules, and standards. This characteristic possesses the quality of a two-edged sword that cuts both ways. It should not be assumed that less complex organizations lead to control by the local elite. Informal patterns of participation can be more rewarding for people due to their unfamiliarity with formal structures.

Complex and formal organizations provide the means by which the government personnel or local elite can control the scope and intensity of participation. At the same time, there can exist situations in which formal organizations may provide the best assurance for participation by the rural poor in decision making and benefits.<sup>42</sup> Yet, the complexity of the rules and channels for involvement usually intimidate the rural poor, excluding them from any meaningful participation. This factor, the organizational structure, greatly affects the remaining five factors. It is to these factors that we now turn our attention.

#### Channels of Involvement

The concern regarding this factor is whether an individual is directly involved in the participation or indirectly through representation. The attention is focused on the channels between a rural person, the project, and the larger community. Direct participation allows individuals greater control and a sense of empowerment and efficacy. It is usually exhibited where rural people attend meetings, work personally on the project, or are involved in the cooperative. Indirect participation occurs when a spokesperson represents individuals at meetings, where the representative employs individuals for the project, and/or where the representative speaks for the farmers as a group and is involved in the functioning of the cooperative. Particular attention, therefore, is required regarding the degree to which individuals feel that their values and interests are represented through these spokespersons.

Direct participation can make decision making and implementation more complex, and the effects on benefits can be negative if conflicts



are deep rooted historically or socially. Direct participation can be cumbersome, involving negotiation and compromise between differing views. This aspect involves time and can result in delays in decision making and implementation. Direct participation can exacerbate divisions. If certain social groups dominate the development process, discrimination and exclusion of minority groups can occur. Additionally, administrators and planners who dislike any challenge to their decisions will point to instances where direct participation interfered with the project. Yet, direct participation allows for the expression of all views and opinions. If organizational structures and supporting features are designed to facilitate direct participation, these views and opinions will be debated and incorporated into the development process.

There exist situations where indirect participation would prove to be more feasible. Large-scale efforts invariably must rely upon methods of indirect participation at least in the initial stages. Direct participation in this regard proves to be cumbersome and time consuming. The greater number of actors involved implies a longer time frame and possible delays. Coordinating activities to allow expression of views and negotiating differences may prove to be beyond the capacity of the organization carrying out the project. Yet, indirect participation can ignore the needs and desires of the rural poor. The representatives may be identifying with the development agenda of the organization at the expense of the rural poor. The communication factor plays an important role here. It is to this we now turn our attention.

## Communication

Communication is an integral part of the participation process. It influences whether indirect channels are viable and the rural people's interests and desires are conveyed. Is there acquiescence to representatives and a means of appeal and influence? Using our example of a cooperative, the community, suffering extreme poverty and relying on imported food, decides to pursue a course for developing food self-sufficiency. The manager selects seed varieties and agricultural inputs for food crops. He or she also holds weekly meetings with the membership to develop an internal marketing structure between neighboring villages with the long-term goal of connecting to the larger marketing infrastructure. In this case, representation of the community's needs are addressed. There also exists a formal means of communicating those needs via the weekly meetings. Communication is closely related to other characteristics which can illuminate possible barriers for communication. The representative's personal characteristics are of value here. The beneficiaries may feel more inclined to communicate informally with one of their own social status. If the manager is a farmer, there exist possibilities for informal communication channels because the membership feels that he or she has its interests at heart and would be inclined to express opinions more freely. Participation can be enhanced since their views and concerns are being noted. A sense of individual efficacy can be developed.

## Time

The time required for the participatory process affects the amount and quality of the participation occurring. The longer and more regular

the participatory experience, the greater the probability of a formal pattern of participation. If participation involves just a one-time assessment of a need and the fulfillment of that need carried out by outsiders, there is little probability that individuals or the community would exhibit a sense of capacity or efficacy. On the other hand, if participation involves weekly meetings for decision making and implementation of policy by the cooperative, structures will evolve for expression of opinions that provide positive reinforcement in capacity building and efficacy.

### Scope

The scope of the participation process deals with the range of the project's activities. The concern is how comprehensive or limited is the approach to development undertaken by the project. In an integrated approach, a farmer may be involved in multiple activities beyond the cooperative, a savings program, and adult education program, and so on. Of particular concern is whether project procedures make participation in one activity a prerequisite for participation in other activities. A farmer may be overextended by multiple activities and inadequately participate in all of them. Conversely, the multiple activities may reinforce each other raising his or her consciousness about the importance of actively engaging in affairs that affect the community. In assessing the number of possible activities for participation, we offer a word of caution. Gross totals of individual participants and activities can distort reality, for it is likely that there is considerable variation in the quality of participation.

## Empowerment

Empowerment, the degree of power an individual or group has to make its participation effective, is one of the most crucial characteristics concerning participation. This is a difficult factor to evaluate, but there are differences in degree which have implications for participation. It can be described as a continuum ranging from no power or influence to extensive power. It is relevant, then, to pay particular attention to the organizational structure and channels for participation.

Can individuals or their representatives respond to new problems? To what degree is this spontaneous, voluntary, direct and continuous, and broad in scope? An ideal response to the question is: when individuals or a community perceive a problem and organize a dynamic response. Their response would change with the evolving environment of the problem and relate to other spheres within the community. The community is stepping on the path toward self-sufficiency. The community, by creating structures for participation and instilling attitudes that reinforce self-sufficiency, begins to direct its future on its own terms. It must be acknowledged that this concept is an ideal type. There are different perceptions and expectations about participation concerning empowerment.<sup>43</sup>

## Summary

From the review of the framework involved in assessing how participation is occurring, we can see that these factors are hardly reducible to quantitative measures. Although certain attributes of these factors have quantitative measures, they do not reveal much about participation. Knowing the personal characteristics of the actors in the

organizational structure can be instructive. Yet, there are other variables which enhance or impede participation. These can only be expressed in terms of descriptive categories, with each category describing part of a continuum of participation. The measurement is expressed in matters of degree. The distinctions that must be made are more complex than can be encompassed by counting the number of individuals present at meetings, labor and material contributions, or the material benefits received. In the next section, we develop a methodology to provide data for evaluating these qualitative aspects of participation.

METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATING HOW  
PARTICIPATION OCCURS

How participation occurs is not reducible to quantitative measures. Indicators based upon socioeconomic data provide little insight. The focus of evaluation shifts away from statistical measures to matters of degree of empowerment and efficacy. Measurement is expressed in terms of categories with descriptions. Information is derived through the use of interviews and/or surveys. Yet, surveys often embody the concepts and categories of outsiders rather than those of rural people and, thus, impose meanings on the social reality. This misfit can be substantial and the questions asked can construct artificial knowledge which distorts the reality of the rural poor. Neither are survey questionnaires appropriate in identifying the relationships of participation. They often are shallow, concentrating on what is measurable, answerable, and acceptable instead of exploring and probing the social relationships which involve qualitative aspects of community dynamics.

There exists a paradox in how we approach the evaluation of participation. If we take the approach of the external observer, we are often viewed as an outsider, an alien, and given information which is slanted or false by poor people. There are many reasons why this occurs--fear, prudence, ignorance, exhaustion, hostility, or hope of benefit. Often, through shortages of time and resources, the evaluation tends to be careless and misleading due to the bias inherent in rural development tourism.<sup>44</sup> Conversely, there is the participant-observer

approach, where the evaluator integrates himself or herself into the village life. The drawback here is lack of sufficient time and the biases that develop when the observer becomes intimately connected to and defensive of social norms.

The methodology described here is an attempt to provide a multi-method approach in evaluation. The benefits derived will be insights into the social relationships and values of the community which influence the motivation and decisions of individuals to participate in development activities. The techniques proposed range from the external-observer approach, using unobtrusive measures, to the limited use of participant-observer and questionnaire work combined with local innovations which are discussed later. If the methodology is carefully designed and cognizant of the cultural context, this approach can provide a variety of different learning formats and experiences for the rural individual and evaluator.

Social anthropology has provided various means by which we can assess decision factors, value systems, and motivation. The techniques suggested here are meant to be generic in content and to allow modifications that address the needs of the evaluation and constraints in the social environment. The techniques are to be applied to an underlying set of base questions. The applicable techniques include searching for and using existing information, identifying and learning from key informants (social anthropologists, social workers, farmers, religious leaders, and group leaders of various community associations), direct observation (including asking questions about what is seen), individual and group interviews, and the use of indigenous games to elicit information.

The first two techniques are self-explanatory while the latter two need expansion. The techniques of interviewing, direct observation, and game theory entail a more give-and-take approach in which the objective of the evaluator is to learn as a student. Interviews will be conducted through informal mechanisms. This means interviewing selected groups, e.g., women, landless tenants, landholders, and religious leaders, on a casual basis in the evening hours or when community activity is minimal. The approach facilitates understanding of group interaction and of the individual motivation within the group. Creativity by the evaluator is necessary keeping the basic questions in mind and expanding upon the nuances presented. Interviews also will illuminate to a certain extent the decision process and what motivates individuals to take certain risks. Many insights are developed this way. Relaxed discussions reveal questions outsiders do not know to ask in advance and give rise to important but unexpected answers.

Direct observation involves the evaluator working at rural tasks or participating in activities with the rural poor as a source of information. Researchers have found that by participating in rural activities they elicited information they would not have known to ask for and the informants would not have known to volunteer.<sup>45</sup> In fact, most informants volunteered information without waiting to be asked. The method also possesses the possibilities for capacity building. The opinions individuals express are acknowledged, instilling a sense of self-worth which can have an impact on perceptions of personal efficacy.

Games are another way that allow outsiders to learn about decision processes and motivation from rural people. Games have the advantage of suspending status and social differences, along with being enjoyable.



There are a variety of forms. To elicit values and social constructs, sentence completion has been used. David Barker, in David Brokensha's compilation on indigenous knowledge systems, has described the use of local games to elicit how local farmers quantify and scale their estimates and preferences.<sup>46</sup> The game, the Ayo Board, has been adapted to explore local farmers' decision making, their estimates of a pest outbreak, and their preferences in choosing farming practices. The game passes the initiative in providing information to the local people. This "seems to be very important in oral cultures where questionnaire schedules can act as a steering wheel and brakes on the free flow of discussion."<sup>47</sup>

Jeremy Swift devised a variant of the Ayo Board to generate discussion about priorities among the pastoralists of West Africa. He makes eight holes, then asks the group to name their eight most important problems, with a hole to represent each. An odd number of pellets is distributed. Ranking occurs by the total number of pellets in each hole. Lesser problems are eliminated each round and the pellets are redistributed. The game continues until there is a narrowing. What results is lively debate and justification arguments, providing insights as to how decisions are made.<sup>48</sup>

Both the above games have application concerning participation, the determination of benefits, and the ranking of activities or risks associated with participation (e.g., in the application of assessing participation in benefits of integrated approach to development). Integrated approaches may involve the farmer in activities beyond the cooperative--a health program, education programs, and so on. The multiple participative activities would be associated with each hole.

The question is asked to rank the priority of the benefits accruing to individuals. Through the discussion that takes place, we can evaluate the intensity of participation as opposed to the weakness. It may reveal ineffective participation in the various activities, or a reinforcing structure. What the game exposes is the qualitative aspects--decision factors, motivation, and value systems--that affect participation. It also possesses the capacity to provide information concerning the factors of the how dimension. The discussion can reveal the individuals' sense of empowerment and efficacy to modify the programs and accrue benefits they deem valuable. This may be related to other factors and reveal impediments within the organizational structure, channels of involvement, and/or communication. If the evaluator is conscious of the various signals concerning participation, the discussion can be directed to reveal a profile of participation by individuals and the community.

#### Base Questions

In the qualitative evaluation of participation, certain questions have to be asked concerning initiative, commitment, social organization, empowerment, etc. What follows is a set of base questions that are reflective of the characteristics of how participation is occurring. These are meant to be a general guide and can be framed, expanded, or diminished given the cultural context, abilities, and requirements of the rural community. The context in which these questions are most appropriately presented is through informal processes. The guide is as follows:<sup>49</sup>

### Degree of Participation

1. Do the beneficiaries participate in problem definition?
2. Do the beneficiaries participate in the design to respond to the problem?
3. Is the participation self-originated or engineered?
4. Can the beneficiaries modify the problem definition?
5. Is indigenous knowledge used to address the problem?

### Degree of Commitment

1. Do beneficiaries perceive any benefits accruing to them from participation in the project?
2. Do the beneficiaries perceive a need to change the conditions of the community?

### Social Organization (community and local institutions)

1. To what degree are there democratic processes? That is, to what extent are various viewpoints expressed within the organization with equal rights and privileges?
2. To what degree is there equality among various groups such as women, men, landless, landholders, etc.?
3. What is the organizational structure--hierarchically centralized to grassroot decentralization?
4. Does religion play a role? If so, how?
5. Is a social code of behavior present? If so, what is required?

### Communication

1. Do the beneficiaries know about the project? If so, how?
2. Do the change agents communicate the objectives of the project?

3. Is there periodic reporting to the beneficiaries of the progress of the project?

#### Control

1. Who runs the project?
2. Of those who run the program, do they reflect the values and the ideas of the individual and/or community?
3. Who are, from the individual's perspective, the powerful people of the community? Do they reflect the values and ideas of the individual and/or the community?

#### Maintenance

1. Who provides the infrastructure maintenance of the project?
2. Is the maintenance accomplished through the use of indigenous knowledge?

#### Empowerment and Efficacy (community and individual)

1. Can the beneficiaries respond to new problems?
2. To what degree is the response spontaneous or orchestrated?
3. Are channels for participation direct or indirect?
4. With indirect participation, do the beneficiaries have the means to influence and appeal decisions?
5. How broad is the scope of activities that the beneficiaries participate in?

The base questions represent the initial step of a decision-free model. Responses will lead to more specification in decisions and information. The responses also might refer to other sets of questions within the guide. For example, the evaluator receiving a positive

response to the question, "Do the beneficiaries participate in problem definition?" asks as a follow-up question "How--through self-initiation or inducement?" The purpose for expanding upon the base set of questions and asking follow-up questions according to the response is to develop a complete profile of participation.

We have purposely not specified the follow-up questions. This is left to the evaluator. As such, the evaluator using this guide needs to be a professional with a background in rural development participation. Ideally, the evaluator would be in consultation with the PVO's field staff in order to be knowledgeable of the sociocultural norms of the village in which the project takes place. The evaluator possessing this knowledge is allowed considerable creativity in framing the follow-up questions which will reveal an accurate profile of participation.

### Three Profiles of Participation

We can illustrate some of the interactions among some of the questions and what they imply by giving one example with three different profiles of participation. These questions could be elaborated on at considerable length, but we want to keep illustrations fairly simple. Readers can surely imagine details to fill in the descriptions which we provide below.

#### Profile A

Members of an agricultural cooperative organized at the instigation of a private voluntary organization have full control over administrative functions including distribution of inputs and purchasing and marketing of crops. Technical advice is provided by PVO subjects to the

cooperative's direction. The PVO, however, selects the manager and the membership cannot remove him or her, although there is a process of appeal if the manager's performance is thought unsatisfactory by the majority of the membership.

#### Profile B

The staff charged with building the agricultural self-sufficiency of villages selects an extremely poor village to work with. The project staff organizer calls a town meeting for the purpose of establishing a village self-help committee. The committee is established in accordance with the organizational format provided by the project staff. The committee in assessing the needs of the village decides that an agricultural cooperative is needed to market its crops and provide inputs. According to the format, individuals are elected to go to the project's regional training facility to acquire the knowledge and skills for managing a cooperative. The self-help committee is charged with the responsibility of building the cooperative structure and promoting the idea. The cooperative committee is charged with all the administrative tasks associated with the cooperative. All are subject to recall by the membership.

#### Profile C

A comprehensive integrated development program run by the government orders all farmers in the village to join a marketing cooperative. The project director, a civil servant, determines what crops the farmers will grow and what price is paid for them. He also determines the price and type of inputs needed. The farmers have no voice in the administrative tasks of the cooperative or the choice of crops to be grown and when they

are to be planted and harvested. Participation is through forced implementation with a personal share in the benefits that occur.

When reviewing the questions one can observe that the examples represent an autocratic approach toward participation (profile C), a mixture of orchestrated participation evolving to more local control (profile A), and more or less spontaneous participation (profile B). In the latter situation, the impetus for action came from outside, but the participation is voluntary and spontaneous. Empowerment and efficacy in decision making, implementation, benefits, and evaluation range from virtually none (profile C), to moderate (profile A), to significant (profile B). From this cursory inspection of the degree of participation, initiative, control, channels of involvement, empowerment, and efficacy, it seems clear that they often affect or reinforce each other. If there is the virtual exclusion of the rural poor in decision making, the control of the project remains in the hands of the instigator who may not be cognizant of the needs of the village since there exists few if any channels for communicating by the rural poor. By illustrating the possibilities, we alert ourselves to the range of relationships that may exist, providing for a sharper description and assessment of patterns of participation.

## CONCLUSION

Within the existing literature in the field of development policy and evaluation, many authors lament the fact that evaluation methodology and reporting of the role of participation in development projects are sadly lacking or neglected. They suggest that there be more generation of high quality, reliable data over a wide variety of projects, including those run by private agencies.<sup>50</sup> Quite often there exists insufficient evidence, exemplified by the virtual exclusion of qualitative measures, to provide a solid conclusion.

Evaluation has a dual purpose: (1) to provide information for an assessment of participation, and (2) to use that information in the design and implementation of the project to improve the participation process. Therefore, what can we determine to be the significant variables in the design of participation? As noted, it is important to examine the project's characteristics, the social and cultural environment, along with the historical and political context in which the project takes place. The framework presented in this essay should be extremely helpful in this context.

While making only modest claims for the work presented, we believe we have provided an outline of a method which can address the problem of qualitative evaluation and provide a guide for project design and implementation. The methodology addresses the needs of private voluntary organizations. The majority of these organizations are concerned with preserving indigenous value systems and promoting indigenous development



based on their knowledge and self-sufficiency. The methodology allows for the evaluation of the qualitative aspects of participation which are reflected in the concerns of the private voluntary organizations. These aspects of the methodology are the major contributions of the paper. One hopes that improved measures will emerge with extended use.

By highlighting the operational variables in participation, the methodology allows PVOs to modify the project, to remove the barriers, and to facilitate effective participation. Participation by rural people in the development process allows their values and desires to be expressed and the ability to shape development to serve their needs. Building the capacity of the community to respond to the problems confronting it instills a sense of efficacy and empowerment. Through the expression and incorporation of indigenous values in development policy, economic self-sufficiency and economic self-determination can occur. The methodology presented here, designed to assess the qualitative aspects of participation which are reflective of indigenous values, can facilitate these end goals. Pathways are illuminated through the exchange and communication of knowledge. It is the sharing of the two types of knowledge--western and indigenous--complementing each other, that may achieve advances which neither could do alone.

We conclude with a brief consideration of participation in the overall context. It must be emphasized that participation does not exist in a vacuum. Although the concentration is focused on the project at the village level, we must be cognizant that this occurs in a larger context. Empowerment of rural people is political and can be viewed as threatening at regional, national, and/or international levels. National power holders and their external supporters frequently are resistant to

development which benefits the rural majority. This is not meant to minimize the importance of rural participation, but to acknowledge the forces opposing it and to operate within the range of possibilities for productive participation in these contexts. It is the range of possibilities for productive participation which the evaluation process presented here has addressed.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Uma Lele, The Design of Rural Development (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1975), pp. 4-6, 176-192; and Cheryl Payer, "Is There A Better Way? Development and the World Bank," Monthly Review, 33 (September, 1982), 12-30.

<sup>2</sup>For the detailed support of this argument see Francis Moore Lappe, Joseph Collins, and David Kinley, AID as Obstacle (San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1981).

<sup>3</sup>These definitions are derived from the discussions on the purpose of development found in Denis Goulet, The Cruel Choice (New York: Atheneum, 1978), pp. 128-138; Coralie Bryant and Louise White, Managing Development in the Third World (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982), pp. 11, 14-17; and Robert Chambers, Rural Development: Putting the Last First (New York: Longman, 1983), pp. 146-147.

<sup>4</sup>For a good exposition of this concept see Joel S. Migdal, Peasants, Politics, and Revolution (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); Kusum Nair, In Defense of the Irrational Peasant (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); James C. Scott, The Moral Economy of the Peasant (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); and Kenneth Sharpe, Peasant Politics: The Struggle in a Dominican Village (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1977).

<sup>5</sup>David C. Korten, "Planning Frameworks for People-centered Development" in David C. Korten and Rudi Klaus (eds.), People-centered Development (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1984), p. 201.

<sup>6</sup>This theme has been articulated by Bryant and White, Managing, pp. 205-224; Chambers, Rural; Robert Chambers, Managing Rural Development: Ideas and Experiences from East Africa (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1974), pp. 84-113; John M. Cohen and Norman T. Uphoff, Rural Development Participation: Concepts and Measures for Project Design, Implementation, and Evaluation, Monograph Series No. 2 (Ithaca: Rural Development Committee, Cornell University, 1977); Lele, The Design; David C. Korten, "Community Organization and Rural Development: A Learning Process Approach," Public Administration Review, 40 (September-October, 1980), 480-511; David C. Korten and Felipe Alfonso (eds.), Bureaucracy and the Poor (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1983); Korten and Klaus (eds.), People-centered; Joanna Macy, Dharma and Development (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1983).

<sup>7</sup>Korten and Alfonso, Bureaucracy, p. 210.

<sup>8</sup>This is further elaborated in Chambers, Rural, pp. 75-100. For an excellent exposition of the value of indigenous knowledge in development, see David Brokensha, D. M. Warren, and Oswald Werner, Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Development (New York: University Press of America, 1980).

<sup>9</sup>The concepts of the French School development theorists are further elaborated in Goulet, Cruel; Denis Goulet, A New Moral Order: Development Ethics and Liberation Theology (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1974), pp. 23-47; Denis Goulet, The Uncertain Promise (New York: IDOC/North America, 1977), p. 5.

<sup>10</sup>This concept of humility of one's value perception and attempting to learn from and experience the world as being poor is the focus in Chambers, Rural; also see Goulet, Cruel.

<sup>11</sup>Goulet, Cruel, pp. 51-56.

<sup>12</sup>For the general thrust of this argument see Chambers, Rural; Brokensha et al., Indigenous; David C. Korten, "Strategic Organization for People-centered Development," Public Administration Review, 44 (July-August, 1984), 346-347; Korten, "Community," p. 498; and Jeremy Swift, "Notes on Traditional Knowledge, Modern Knowledge, and Rural Development," IDS Bulletin, 10, 2 (1979), 43.

<sup>13</sup>See Chambers, Rural, pp. 91-92 and Brokensha et al., Indigenous.

<sup>14</sup>Korten, "Community," p. 498.

<sup>15</sup>Korten, "Community," pp. 499-501.

<sup>16</sup>John Friedman, "Agropolitan Development: A Territorial Approach to Meeting Basic Needs," in Korten and Klauss (eds.), People-centered, pp. 210-222.

<sup>17</sup>Chambers, Rural.

<sup>18</sup>For a description of open versus closed system economics, see David C. Korten, "Currents and Soundings: The Management of Social Transformation," Public Administration Review, 41 (November-December, 1981), 611-612. For a more detailed elaboration of the concept from its source see Kenneth E. Boulding, "The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth," reprinted in Korten and Klauss (eds.), People-centered, pp. 63-73.

<sup>19</sup>The blueprint approach is outlined in Korten, "Community," p. 497.

<sup>20</sup>Examples of these results are illustrated in Lester Brown, Building a Sustainable Society (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1981); Lester Brown, State of the World 1984 (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1984); Lester Brown, State of the World 1985 (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1985); Lele, The Design; Lappe, AID; Payer, "Better Way"; Michael

Redclift, Development and the Environmental Crisis: Red or Green Alternatives (New York: Methuen, 1984), pp. 22-38; Peter Koehn, "African Approach to Environmental Stress: A Focus on Ethiopia and Nigeria," in Richard Barrett (ed.), International Dimensions of the Environmental Crisis (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982), pp. 253-298.

<sup>21</sup>The evolution of these strategies and the essential components are outlined in Korten and Klauss (eds.), People-centered, pp. 2-3.

<sup>22</sup>The pertinent statements are from the Commission for Social Development, Report of the 24th Session, January 1975, Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 58th Session, Suppl. No. 3, UN Document No. E/CN.5/525; Implementation of "New Direction" in Development Assistance (Report prepared by AID for Committee on International Relations on Implementation of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1973, 94th Congress, 1st Session, July 22, 1975); International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; Rural Development: Sector Policy Paper (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1975); International Labour Office, Meeting Basic Needs: Strategies for Eradicating Mass Poverty and Unemployment (Geneva: ILU, 1977) as reported in Norman Uphoff, John M. Cohen, and Arthur Goldsmith, Feasibility and Application of Rural Development Participation: A State of the Art Paper, Monograph Series No. 3 (Ithaca: Rural Development Committee, Cornell University, 1979), pp. 1-3.

<sup>23</sup>Cohen and Uphoff, Concepts.

<sup>24</sup>Cohen and Uphoff, Concepts, pp. 21-26.

<sup>25</sup>Samuel Paul, Managing Development Programs: The Lessons of Success (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982), p. 4.

<sup>26</sup>Korten, "Community," pp. 485-495 and Paul, Success, p. 11.

<sup>27</sup>Paul, Success, p. 103.

<sup>28</sup>For an exposition of the concept and what the authors call strategic organization, refer to David C. Korten, "Strategic Organization," pp. 342-352 and Paul, Success, pp. 7-10.

<sup>29</sup>These elements are fully elaborated in Paul, Success, pp. 179-218.

<sup>30</sup>Brokensha et al., Indigenous, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup>Warren A. Van Wicklin III, The Role of Participation in Development Project Effectiveness, paper presented to the 26th Annual Convention of International Studies Association (Washington, DC: March, 1985), pp. 1-35.

<sup>32</sup>Van Wicklin, Role, p. 21.

<sup>33</sup>See United Nations Development Programme, Human Resources Development for Primary Care, Evaluation Study No. 9 (New York: United Nations Development Programme, December, 1983), p. 33; Denis Rondinelli, John R. Nellis, and Shabir G. Cheema, Decentralization in Developing Countries, World Bank Staff Working Papers No. 581 (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 1983), pp. 59-62.

<sup>34</sup>Uphoff et al., Feasibility, p. 304.

<sup>35</sup>Cohen and Uphoff, Concepts, pp. 1-16.

<sup>36</sup>The framework represents the contributions of various authors and is structurally based upon Cohen and Uphoff's contribution in Concepts; refer also to Chambers, Managing, and Van Wicklin III, The Role.

<sup>37</sup>John Cohen and Norman Uphoff suggested referring to the emerging literature on field data collects. Their suggestions in this regard are in Bryant Kearn, Field Data Collection in Social Science: Experiences in Africa and the Middle East (New York: Agricultural Development Council, 1976) and Frank Lynch, Field Data Collection in Developing Countries: Experiences in Asia, Seminar Report No. 10 (New York: Agricultural Development Council, June 10, 1976 [both cited in Cohen and Uphoff, Concepts, p. 173],

<sup>38</sup>Chambers, Managing, pp. 84-113 and Cohen and Uphoff, Concepts, pp. 27-83.

<sup>39</sup>Chambers, Managing, p. 85, identified two groups: those government personnel at the local level who participated and the local inhabitants. Uphoff et al., Feasibility, p. 320, referred to Alvarro Chapparo's work concerning the participation of rural workers in which the author identified eight categories.

<sup>40</sup>Cohen and Uphoff, Concepts.

<sup>41</sup>For an excellent exposition of a conflict between the two forms of initiative, autonomous or mobilized, see Adrian Adams, "The Senegal River Valley: What Kind of Change?" in Hazel Johnston and Henry Bernstein (eds.), Third World Lives of Struggle (Exeter, NH: Heineman Educational Books Ltd., 1982), pp. 67-90.

<sup>42</sup>For a discussion on power versus co-optation in development participation, see Bryant, Development, pp. 163-164, 210-211 and Chambers, Rural, pp. 131, 134-137.

<sup>43</sup>Paul, Success, pp. 103-218, noted that in successful projects participation can be quite low initially. The project's activities during this phase are controlled by outsiders. As the project evolves, local people are integrated into the participative processes for administration and maintenance. This eventually expands in degree to where the local community controls the activities. His conclusion is that it is imperative for local people to eventually experience and sense a degree of participation and efficacy in the project for it to continue.

<sup>44</sup>The main characteristics of rural development tourism are reflective of time, physical orientation, and personal bias. It is the phenomena of the brief rural visit engaged in by urban professionals moving in an entourage of vehicles to greet and learn from local officials about the conditions of the project. The ideal situations are shown and individuals or groups are neglected, while formal actions and physical objects receive attention. For further exposition of the concept, see Chambers, Rural, pp. 10-13.

<sup>45</sup>Chambers, Rural, p. 202.

<sup>46</sup>David Barker, "Appropriate Methodology: An Example Using a Traditional African Board Game to Measure Farmers' Attitudes and Environmental Images," In Brokensha et al., Indigenous, pp. 297-302.

<sup>47</sup>David Barker, "Appropriate Methodology" in Brokensha et al., Indigenous, p. 205.

<sup>48</sup>This is reported in and expanded upon in Chambers, Rural, p. 205.

<sup>49</sup>These questions are derived from the studies on participation in Cohen and Uphoff, Concepts; Chambers, Rural, pp. 75-102, Paul, Success, pp. 167-196; and Van Wicklin III, Role, pp. 11-20.

<sup>50</sup>Chambers, Managing, pp. 118-121; Cohen and Uphoff, Concepts, pp.x, 160-165; Van Wicklin III, The Role, pp. 26-27.

**A P P E N D I X**



## SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA MOVEMENT\*

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement's (SSM) development work is centrally located in the individual's capacity to understand intellectually and to experience spiritually the interrelationship that exists between different manifestations of the world.

The SSM structure for developmental policy is from the bottom up. The process begins when a village invites the organization to initiate a program. The program begins with a "family gathering" of local inhabitants, monks, and other key village figures. It is at this meeting that the organizer initiates the discussion of self-reliance and urges the villagers to discuss what they perceive as their common needs. To focus the discussion, the village is challenged to undertake a shared labor project for which it takes responsibility for identifying, agreeing upon, and meeting a specific need. Through these ongoing meetings, the village enters a second phase where it is the initiator of projects. The movement now adopts a subordinate role providing contacts, specific skills, training, credit, and materials. Eventually, the village selects individuals who have demonstrated motivation and effectiveness to pursue further training in specific areas with the Sarvodaya Institute. This process promotes the emergence of local leadership that is an alternative to the power exerted by larger landowners and merchants.

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\*The sources for this material are two studies: Joanna Macy, Dharma and Development (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1983) and Nandasena Ratanapala, Study-Service in Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (Colombo: Sri Lanka: Sarvodaya Research Centre, undated).

Philosophically, the movement bases its developmental perception on its religious values. SSM is pluristic in the sense that it is composed of Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, and Muslim communities. Although the objectives are expressed in Buddhist and Gandhian terms, it is not the function of the movement to impose these religious or philosophical perspectives. It is perceived that the root of the problem of poverty and underdevelopment is a sense of powerlessness. SSM believes that by tapping the peoples' innermost beliefs and values, one awakens them to their swashakti (personal power) and janashakti (collective or peoples' power).

To facilitate this, SSM uses the Buddhist teaching of the Four Noble Truths:

1. Dukka. "There is suffering," translated concretely into "there is a decadant village" and used as a means of consciousness raising.

2. Samudaya. "That craving is the cause of suffering" presented in terms of egocentricity, greed, distrust, and competition that erodes village energies.

3. Nirodha. "That suffering can be eliminated through the cessation of the cause." Thus, a village can reawaken.

4. Magga. "The path toward reawakening is constituted in the Eightfold path: (a) right understanding and (b) right intention arise with the comprehension of the nature of life, the interdependence of all beings; (c) right speech arises as we give expression with honesty and compassion; (d) right action; (e) right livelihood and (f) right effort are immediate and tangible in the construction of the village well, latrines, etc.; (g) right mindfulness arises by being open and alert to

the needs of the village; (h) right concentration is accomplished through the vehicle of meditation.

An ethical foundation is expressed through four objectives:

(1) learning to respect life and, (2) accepting this, doing something to alleviate suffering--showing compassion, (3) being joyful, and (4) developing a balanced mental attitude. These correspond with the Sublime Abodes of the Buddha or the Brahmaviharas and are used as a means and the measure of personal awakening. They are: (1) meta--lovingkindness, (2) karuna--compassion, (3) muditha--joy in the joy of others, and (4) upekkha--equanimity.

By pursuing these objectives, one steps onto the Eightfold path toward awakening an enlightened self which then is carried to the local, national, and world communities. In the SSM, self-reliance is set within this larger goal of community awakening and is seen as integral to self-fulfillment. The concepts of self-development, self-fulfillment, and self-reliance are understood as udava--awaking. This is consistent with the Buddhist principle that salvation lies in the hands of the individual and/or the community.

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